



Preserving consumer choice and affordable repair in the automotive collision parts industry

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CAR Coalition Applauds Reintroduction of Bipartisan ‘Save Money on Auto Repair Transportation (SMART) Act’

Federal Legislation Reforms Broken Patent Laws to Strengthen Consumer Choice, Lower Car Repair Costs, and Promote a Free and Fair Automotive Repair Market

SMART Act Joins ‘Right to Equitable and Professional Auto Industry Repair (REPAIR) Act’ as First Pair of Right to Repair Bills Introduced in 118th Congress

WASHINGTON, D.C. (March 23, 2023) – The CAR (Consumer Access to Repair) Coalition, a growing group of independent automotive parts and repair companies, associations, and insurers committed to preserving consumer choice and affordable vehicle repair, applauds United States Reps. Darrell Issa (R-CA-48), Chairman of the House Judiciary Subcommittee on Courts, Intellectual Property, and the Internet, and Zoe Lofgren (D-CA-18), David Joyce (R-OH-14), Sheila Jackson Lee (D-TX-18), Laurel Lee (R-FL-15), and Marie Gluesenkamp Perez (D-WA-3) for reintroducing the “Save Money on Auto Repair Transportation (SMART) Act”. As car repair prices continue to climb, the SMART Act will empower consumers to choose quality, safe, and affordable aftermarket car parts, while respecting the intellectual property rights of automakers.

“Legislative reform is critical to lowering auto repair costs, restoring consumer choice in the car repair market, and encouraging industry competition,” said Justin Rzepka, Executive Director of the CAR Coalition. “The bipartisan SMART Act will put the power of choice back in the hands of consumers and local businesses, providing much-needed relief in the face of rising prices and supply chain breakdowns.”

“According to AAA, a third of American drivers can’t afford the costs of an unexpected car repair bill without going into debt,” said Congressman Issa. “As repair costs continue to rise, consumers deserve access to as many auto part repair options as possible. The SMART Act will increase consumer choice, encourage competition, and foster innovation to drive down the cost of expensive repairs.”

Over the past two decades, automakers have increasingly applied for design patents to restrict consumer access to basic functional parts, including headlamps, doors, and fenders. This

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anticompetitive practice hurts vehicle owners' ability to choose from a variety of brands and products when making repairs and costs American consumers more than \$1.5 billion per year, according to [recent research](#) from the CAR Coalition and DePaul University College of Law.

The SMART Act will put an end to automakers' unfair use of patents by reducing from 15 years to 2.5 years the time that automakers can enforce design patents against alternative parts manufacturers on collision repair parts, including common parts like side mirrors, quarter panels, and bumpers.

The introduction of the SMART Act comes on the heels of the [recently reintroduced](#) "Right to Equitable and Professional Auto Industry Repair (REPAIR) Act" (H.R. 906), which will ensure consumers have access to their car's data and the repair tools needed to maintain modern cars.

As the first pair of federal right to repair bills to be unveiled in 2023, the introduction of the SMART and REPAIR Acts builds on growing momentum for the consumer-led movement, including continued endorsements from [The White House](#) and [Federal Trade Commission](#), along with an unprecedented show of support from federal lawmakers in the [FY2023 government funding package](#) and spotlights at two [congressional hearings](#).

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ABOUT THE CAR COALITION

The CAR Coalition is committed to preserving and protecting consumer choice and affordable vehicle repair by ensuring competition in the automotive collision parts industry. Members include: Allstate, American Property Casualty Insurance Association (APCIA), Automotive Body Parts Association (ABPA), Automotive Manufacturers Equipment Compliance Agency, Inc. (AMECA), AutoZone, Certified Automotive Parts Association (CAPA), Diamond Standard, KSI Auto Parts, and LKQ Corporation.

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