

Good Day Senator Curry, Representative Gere, and members of the joint standing committee on housing and economic development.

My name is Sheldon Arford and I am in support of LD 1908 and Right to Repair.

I own a small computer repair shop in Augusta and I think right to repair is important because it would help Mainers get access to much cheaper and easier repairs to their computers and tablets. Working on devices I often have problems with manufacturers using proprietary screws and fasteners and obfuscating their location in order to prevent local repair shops and individuals from repairing their devices. Parts are often difficult or impossible to get and if I can get them the prices are so inflated my only option is to buy them second hand and hope they are in working condition. All of this adds time and cost to repairs.

The most common replacement items on a laptop are the screen and keyboard, items which are very important to the use of the machine but should be relatively easy to replace. To do a simple screen replacement or a keyboard replacement on most modern laptops requires access to specialty screwdrivers and pry tools, schematics that aren't provided by the manufacturer, and parts that are difficult to source whether from the OEM or the company they purchased the part from. Many manufacturers use the same parts but will not disclose their part number or obfuscate them with an internal part number to make sourcing a replacement more difficult for anyone without the documentation and parts the OEM has access to. This drives up the cost and time required to do the repair. All of this causes people to replace otherwise perfectly fine equipment that could be repaired rather simply if only they had access to the parts and tools.

My hope is this bill will encourage companies to provide access to documentation, parts, and tools allowing local shops and individuals to repair their own machines.