

Prepared Testimony

Good morning esteemed committee members. My name is **Luke McCannell**, and I am the **Vice President of Bangor Motorsports** in Bangor, Maine.

My testimony today focuses on the service department, which is the backbone of any powersports dealership and critical to consumer safety and satisfaction.

At our dealership, we employ eight mechanics. Many of our employees are long-tenured, highly skilled technicians with years of on-the-job training, and several began their careers through programs at the United Technologies Center. These technicians perform a wide range of work, including vehicle setup, installations, preparing units for sale, routine maintenance, and many repair tasks. While not every technician is certified on every system, they are competent, experienced, and essential to keeping vehicles moving efficiently and safely to customers.

The challenge we face is the structure and volume of mandatory in-person manufacturer training. Using Honda as one example, full compliance requires approximately nine to ten weeks of out-of-store training. As shown in the handout provided, the cost for just one manufacturer totals approximately **sixty-six thousand dollars**, driven largely by travel expenses and lost billable technician time.

Our dealership represents four manufacturers, each with similar training requirements. When these costs are layered together, the financial burden on the service department becomes unsustainable. To simply break even after absorbing this expense, the service department would be forced to significantly increase labor rates — in fact, more than double them — which would inevitably be passed on to consumers. This means that our consumers are subsidizing our manufacturers for warranty work required on a unit the manufacturer made.

That is not what we want. We want customers safely using their equipment and enjoying Maine's outdoor recreational opportunities, not delaying or avoiding repairs because of cost.

There are also real workforce realities that compound this issue. From time to time, employees may need to take leave under the Paid Family Medical Leave program. While that program is important and necessary, when a technician is out it places additional strain on the remaining staff. Remote training helps address this reality by allowing education to continue without further reducing available labor in the shop.

Remote training is, in most cases, very effective. The majority of training can be completed remotely without compromising quality, safety, or competency. In-person training should be reserved for specialized, hands-on instruction where it is truly necessary. Allowing remote training for most requirements gives dealers flexibility, keeps technicians productive, controls costs, and ultimately protects consumers from unnecessary price increases.

Thank you for your time and for the opportunity to testify.

Mandatory In-Person Manufacturer Training: Cost Impact on Service Departments

Estimated Cost of Mandatory In-Person Training (Per Manufacturer – Example: Honda)

Cost Category	Assumption	Cost
Hotel Lodging	50 nights \times \$200/night	\$10,000
Meals	150 meals \times \$20/meal	\$3,000
Airfare	10 round-trip flights \times \$500	\$5,000
Lost Billable Technician Time	400 hours \times \$120/hour	\$48,000
TOTAL (Per Manufacturer)		\$66,000

Key Context for the Committee

- This \$66,000 cost satisfies only one manufacturer
- Our dealership represents four manufacturers with similar requirements
- These costs are absorbed by the service department and are not reimbursed
- Recovering this expense would require service labor rates to more than double
- These costs are ultimately passed on to consumers

Key Takeaway: Allowing remote training for the majority of instruction maintains technician competency while controlling costs and protecting consumers from unnecessary price increases.