

Testimony in favor of LD 2211 – An Act Implementing the Recommendations of the Automotive Right to Repair Working Group.

Chair Curry, Chair Gere, Honorable members of this committee –

My name is Jeffrey Groves. I live in Yarmouth, Maine. I was a member of the Maine Attorney Generals Working Group regarding the 2023 referendum that 84% of Maine voters approved. I was the representative in that working group of the automotive aftermarket distributors and retailers. I retired from O'Reilly Auto Parts in 2023 as its Chief Legal Officer. I am here today to testify in favor of LD 2211.

The Attorney General's working group met 10 times from August 2024 through final report submitted near the end of February 2025. The group was made up of a cross section of interested stakeholders including a representative from the Alliance (made up of most automotive manufacturers) and Tesla, as well as representatives from parts manufacturers and Maine Independent Repairers. While we didn't agree on all issues, we did unanimously agree on what you now see before you as LD 2211 – with one exception – and that exception is a provision pushing back the effective date an additional 18 months to September 1, 2027 for automakers to comply with what they should have been preparing to comply with since the November 2023 election.

It should be noted that the charge of the Attorney Generals working group was to “convene a working group to develop recommendations” respecting the establishment of an Independent Entity as well as to “otherwise implement and enforce the requirements of Section 1810” the right-to-repair law. During the five months of the working group, we fully explored the statute, debated not only its language but also various hurdles to implementation raised by automakers.

LD 2211 represents a change from the referendum language in that it does not establish an independent entity with rule-making authority that the state would have to create, house and fund. Rather, LD 2211 creates an unpaid commission to be appointed by the Governor made up of a cross section of stakeholders, industry and technical experts and a Chair who is a Maine resident representing the public interest, that would monitor implementation of the law, informally resolve complaints regarding non-compliance and would designate experts with technical knowledge and expertise with whom the attorney-general may consult. The commission is accountable to the legislature annually by way of a report of its activities, compliance with the law by auto makers and to make recommendations to the legislature for proposed changes as may be needed to address issues related to implementation and compliance. In short, LD 2211 represents a fair and measured approach to vehicle right-to-repair issues where all voices can be heard. Additionally, this change should also render mute

certain issues raised by Automakers in litigation filed by the Alliance for Automotive Innovation now pending against the Attorney General and the State of Maine relating to the Independent Entity.

I support LD 2211 because, although it changes some referendum language, it does so in the spirit of compromise, and it leaves in tact the provisions that protect thousands of Maine jobs by allowing independent shops the ability to continue to repair newer vehicles; it allows Maine consumers and car owners to have a choice about who fixes their car and what parts go on their car. And, by denying automakers the ability to monopolize and monetize repair data, non-warranty repair of vehicles will take less time and be more affordable for Mainers.

In short, support for LD 2211 is support for small businesses owners, for consumer choice, for affordability and against the monetization and monopolization sought by those who would oppose this bill.