



Paul Roberts

Founder

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Dear Honorable Members of the House Committee on Corporations

My name is Paul Roberts and I am the founder of Secure Repairs (securepairs.org), an organization of [more than 350](#) cyber security and information technology professionals who support the right to repair. I am writing to you on behalf of our members in support of H5246. I also wish to make clear that the fair access to repair materials sought by this bill *will not increase cyber risk*. In fact, it can contribute to healthier and more secure ecosystems of smart, connected devices.

No Cyber Risk In Repair

H5246 simply asks the companies that manufacture devices and that *already provide* repair information and tools to their *authorized* repair providers to also provide them at a fair and reasonable price to the owners of the devices - and to third party, independent repair professionals those owners may hire.

By definition, the information covered by the proposed legislation is not sensitive or protected, as evidenced by the fact that manufacturers distribute it widely to hundreds, thousands or tens of thousands of repair professionals working on behalf of their authorized providers. That includes everything from auto mechanics working at car dealerships to hourly workers staffing the Geek Squad at Best Buy.

Hacked via schematics? Not a thing.

However, you have been told by manufacturers and industry lobbyists that right to repair bills such as the one you are considering creates new cyber security risks that will lead to hacks, data theft and other undesirable outcomes. Let me be blunt: these claims *are simply not true*.

Opponents have yet to cite, and we have yet to find any evidence that schematic diagrams, service manuals, diagnostic software and replacement parts -the types of information covered by right to repair laws- are a portal to cyber attacks. Instead, the vast majority of attacks on Internet connected devices exploit weak device configurations or vulnerabilities in embedded software produced and managed by the manufacturer and pushed to businesses and consumers.

Dig into the details of reports on successful hacks of everything from [broadband routers](#) to [home appliances](#) and [automobiles](#), and buggy, vulnerable software that was pushed to businesses and consumers by manufacturers is the common thread you will find. These security weaknesses are epidemic. [A study of the security of IoT devices by Phosphorus Labs](#), a cybersecurity company, found that 68% of Internet of Things devices contained high-risk or critical software vulnerabilities.

A Right to Repair is key to a secure Internet of Things

As this Internet of Things ages, those cyber risks will multiply. At the same time, manufacturers will start to walk away from their responsibility to support and maintain deployed products. The passage of right to repair laws like H5246 will nurture a market based response to these challenges: a diverse ecosystem of small, aftermarket service providers that step into the shoes of OEMs: supplying needed software updates and security patches, servicing and repairing deployed devices and so on.

Such policy changes will also foster a range of business and employment opportunities up and down the economic ladder by updating basic, consumer and private property rights for a digital age, protecting us from manufacturers who would seek to turn hundreds of millions of *owners* into *tenants* of their own technology.

In a world that is increasingly populated by Internet-connected, software powered objects - the so-called "Internet of Things" - a digital right to repair is a vital tool that will extend the life of electronic devices, ensure their safety, security and integrity. In the process, it will make homes, businesses, schools, cities and towns more secure and less vulnerable to cyber attacks and other malicious behavior.

Repair: Pro-Consumer, Pro-Competition, Pro-Environment

To sum up: the right to repair legislation like H5246 will greatly improve the quality of life for consumers, families, and communities by boosting both the cybersecurity and resilience of connected devices. At the same time, it will promote small businesses and reduce e-waste throughout the country. On behalf of our more than 350 members, I urge this committee to support its passage.

I would be happy to answer any questions you may have about cybersecurity and the right to repair.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "P. Roberts". The signature is stylized, with the first name "P" and last name "Roberts" clearly visible.

Paul Roberts | paul@securerepairs.org