

July 14, 2020

The Honorable Nita M. Lowey
Chairwoman
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Kay Granger
Ranking Member
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Mike Quigley
Chairman, Financial Services and General
Government Subcommittee
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Tom Graves
Ranking Member, Financial Services and
General Government Subcommittee
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairwoman Lowey, Ranking Member Granger, Chairman Quigley, and Ranking Member Graves:

We strongly support language included in the FY2021 Financial Services and General Government appropriations bill report, which calls on the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) to provide a report on anticompetitive practices related to repair markets. Specifically, the Committee report notes the FTC's ongoing review of how manufacturers may limit repairs by consumers and repair shops, and how those limitations affect consumer protection, including increasing costs, limiting choice and impact consumers' rights under the Magnuson-Moss Warranty Act.

Last July, the FTC hosted an event entitled Nixing the Fix: A Workshop on Repair Restrictions to address "the issues that arise when a manufacturer restricts or makes it impossible for a consumer or an independent repair shop to make product repairs." Respondents and participants in the workshop highlighted areas for more investigation by the FTC, including original equipment manufacturer practices in the cellphone, appliance, and automobile marketplaces. As one example, the FTC received comments describing the anti-competitive practices of car companies, including "the increasing use of technology... to control how vehicles are repaired" and "repair procedures and marketing statements... used to divert consumers away from aftermarket parts and third-party auto repair shops." Similar tactics have been used in other industries, including the threat to void warranties for reasons prohibited by the Magnuson-Moss Warranty Act.

We appreciate the Committee's commitment to ensuring the FTC continue this important work studying potential actions by manufacturers that limit consumer repair rights and how they impact consumer protection.

Sincerely, the undersigned,

American Economic Liberties Project
American Property Casualty Insurance
Association
Automotive Body Parts Association
Certified Automotive Parts Association
Consumer Reports
Digital Right to Repair Coalition

EFF (Electronic Frontier Foundation)
iFixit
National Association of Mutual Insurance
Companies
Public Citizen
U.S. PIRG