

Automotive industry debates REPAIR and SAFE acts in US House subcommittee hearing

19-Jan-2026 15:57 GMT

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Supply Chain and Technology, Automotive

Some industry groups oppose the REPAIR Act over safety and data access concerns, suggesting the SAFE Act as an alternative

A hearing by the US House Subcommittee on Commerce, Manufacturing and Trade recently discussed bills, including the Right to Equitable and Professional Auto Industry Repair (REPAIR) Act, according to a report by Repairer Driven News.



Source: Getty

Automotive industry organizations opposed the act, arguing it would disrupt the sector, weaken safety and increase risks by expanding access to sensitive driver data. They suggested the Safety as First Emphasis (SAFE) Repair Act as a better alternative to ensure repair parity for the independent market.

A coalition, including the Society of Collision Repair Specialists (SCRS) and the Alliance for Automotive Innovation, expressed its opposition to the REPAIR Act, citing that the US already has a competitive repair ecosystem, with 74% of out-of-warranty repairs being handled by independent repairers. The coalition argued the act would disrupt the existing system and increase cybersecurity vulnerabilities while attempting to federalize issues beyond right-to-repair.

Hilary Cain, Auto Innovators' senior vice president of policy, testified that the alliance is committed to a comprehensive federal right-to-repair law that does not force automakers to provide unnecessary data. A written testimony added more detail on its views and other bills.

SCRS, through a separate letter, also opposed the REPAIR Act, arguing that independent repairers already have access to the necessary information and tools for safe repairs. It supported the SAFE Repair Act, suggesting that the Act provides necessary access while ensuring safety and competition. Central Florida Paint & Body echoed this sentiment, emphasizing existing access to data and tools, and criticizing the REPAIR Act for potentially benefiting large insurance companies and corporate entities.

Meanwhile, the US-based aftermarket industry body Auto Care Association advocated for the REPAIR Act. In testimony provided to the subcommittee, Bill Hanvey, Auto Care Association's president and CEO, emphasized that safe, affordable and accessible vehicle repair is essential to highway safety and consumer protection, particularly as vehicles become increasingly software-driven and data-dependent.

“Today’s vehicles are computers on wheels,” Hanvey said, noting that manufacturers are increasingly restricting access to critical repair and maintenance data. “When vehicle owners and independent repairers are locked out of that data, repairs are delayed, costs increase and safety can be compromised.”

Hanvey pushed for the inclusion of the REPAIR Act in the Surface Transportation Reauthorization Act, citing its benefits in enhancing safety and addressing data access issues faced by vehicle owners due to restrictions by manufacturers. He cited a survey showing that restrictions prompt repair shops to refer vehicles back to dealerships, thereby increasing costs. The Auto Care Association supported the REPAIR Act due to the increasing need for data access for repairs.

Organizations such as the CAR Coalition and the National Federation of Independent Business also supported the REPAIR Act, highlighting issues with restricted data access and its impact on repair costs and small businesses. They argued that technological advances have allowed manufacturers

to limit data access, negatively affecting repair options and costs for small businesses.

In early 2025, a new group of service associations and automakers proposed the SAFE Repair Act, drawing criticisms from associations that are promoting the REPAIR Act, which was at that time reintroduced in Congress. In an [analysis](#) in March 2025, S&P Global Mobility took a closer look at both the bills and spoke to associations on both sides of the debate.

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