

Right to repair (SB 1596)

Once upon a time not that long ago, when you bought a product it came with a manual, it was relatively easy to repair, and its parts were widely available. Not so much anymore. Manufacturers of electronics and appliances too often require consumers to go back to the manufacturer or their “authorized service providers.” These legal, digital and physical barriers make it all but impossible for the owner of the product to repair their own stuff.

The Right to Repair Act would require manufacturing companies to make the diagnostic tools, information, replacement parts and tools available to consumers and third party repair shops, so Oregonians can more easily and affordably fix our stuff.

Saving Families Money: Being able to fix phones, computers, and appliances instead of buying new would save the average Oregon household \$382 per year. That adds up to \$649 million in savings across all Oregon households.

Supporting Small Business: Repair work is typically done by small local businesses, and more repair means more opportunities for those businesses to grow or new businesses to start. Employees gain valuable STEM skills.

Reducing E-Waste: Partly because repair and reuse is so difficult, Oregonians dispose of an estimated 4,800 cell phones every day. E-waste is the fastest growing waste stream in the world, and it adds toxic heavy metals like lead, mercury, and cadmium into our landfills. With more repair, these materials will remain in use instead of filling up landfills, be more useful for recyclers, and reduce the burden of new source material, manufacturing, and transportation of new devices.

Cutting Pollution: Since 85% of the energy and climate impact associated with a smartphone comes from manufacturing, it’s estimated that if every Oregonian extended the life of their phone by just one year, it would be the equivalent of removing 8,100 cars off the road in terms of climate emission.

Closing the Digital Divide: Early in the pandemic, a nationwide laptop shortage left millions of students unprepared for virtual learning. Due to disruptions in the supply chain, families in Oregon experienced delays before receiving their laptop orders. In May 2020, it was estimated that more than 75,000 students across the state were without a device at home. Right to Repair would give schools and other institutions the information they need to maintain equipment, and empower the refurbished computer market, saving taxpayer dollars and improving digital access for Oregon families.

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