

NOZZLE & WRENCH



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KIRK'S CORNER

Opportunity Missed



By Kirk Mccauley,
Director Of Member
Relations &
Government Affairs

I have been trying to get members to testify, turn in written or just send an email to your legislators. I have heard every excuse, such as I forgot, did not read the email, I would not be effective, I do not know what to say, I do not speak good English (I do not either). These all sound like the dog devoured my homework. The bills I am talking about are bills that directly cost you thousands of dollars if passed and one that would make you thousands of dollars if passed.

All this said, we have had members step up. Bruce Spenser, Mark Seney, Riaz Ahmad, Ken Quasney, and Nasir Cheema to name a few. I am sure many emailed that I do not know about.

Do not despair, I am going to take away all your guilt and second thoughts. What happens after a bill is heard in hearing? Is it all decided that day and they take a vote?

I have seen committees vote on a bill immediately but more often it is weeks before a bill is voted on. Family and medical leave bill SB275 was heard on 2/10 and has not been voted on yet.

Here lies an opportunity to advocate and communicate with legislators why you like or dislike a bill and what it would mean to your business, simple and effective. Go to committee link and click on membership, all committee members and emails will come up. Put all committee members email address on one email and tell them how a bill would help or hurt you. Nobody tells the story like the one that lives it every day. A moment in time today, could save or make you thousands of dollars. Every message to a legislator count and a small investment in time, for such a large return.

Family and Medical leave bill

HB0008 and **HB0496** – Economic Matters Committee – Family and Medical leave Bill
[Economic Matters Committee \(maryland.gov\)](http://maryland.gov/EconomicMattersCommittee)

SB0275 - Finance Committee - Family and Medical leave Bill <https://mgaleg.maryland.gov/mgawebsite/Committees/Details?cmte=fin>

Address the email to Chair Wilson and Members of Economic Committee, Reference Bill number and in this case in opposition to HB8 and HB496. Send one email with everyone's address on it. Your name and business name on the email.

Then send the same email to the Finance Committee and do not forget to change names and bill number. Chair Kelly and Members of Finance Committee in opposition to SB 275.

Go to the committee website and click on membership of the committee and members pictures and emails come up. Same with all committee all committee websites.



Continues on page 4

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Talking points and suggestions when sending your email to committee members should say what you think but say it in a respectful way. Do not attack anyone in the email. Just tell them what bill if passed and how it would hurt or help your business.

Hb496 takes away employer contributions for a business with 14 employees and under and raises employee contributions. The problem is not the employer half, although it is significant. The problem is 12 weeks of lost income and associated costs with an employee being off 12 weeks. Everything else is the same bill as HB8 and SB275.

- Our small businesses do not have the employees to fill in when someone is off for 12 weeks, let alone 24. For 24/7 businesses and repair shops, this is a business killer
- Employee works 17 (680 Hrs.)

weeks and can access 24 weeks of paid leave. 12 for very liberal family definition and 12 if employee is sick. This equation is off balance to say the least.

- Hire a replacement for 12 weeks would be next to impossible. Temps double the costs, paying overtime is not much better,
- Technicians are really a problem, with labor and parts sales from technicians gone for 3 months and more. 3 technician shop -1 off for 12 weeks- 33% of billing power gone.
- Department of Legislative Services estimated \$536 dollars a year per employee would be the max cost for the employer which is significant. The cost to replace the employee, if possible and dealing with loss of income from losing a technician,

could be far greater.

- Businesses have not recovered from past two years and can ill afford another drain on resources.
- Bills of this nature make artificial intelligence (A.I.) look less expensive.
- Verification of portions of this bill would be impossible.
- Any of the shops that have 401k for their employees, could be looking to cut matching amounts if this bill were to pass.

While we all understand the well-meaning of this bill, it is so far out in left field it is hard to look at it as anything besides a business killer as written.

Address email to Chair Wilson and Economic Committee Members, Reference Bill number and in this case in opposition to HB8 and HB496. Send one email with everyone's address on it. Your name and business name on email.

Then send same email to the Finance Committee and do not forget to change names and bill number. Chair Kelly and Members of Finance Committee in opposition to SB 275.

Tobacco Bills

[HB0442](#) Economic Matters Committee and [SB0249](#) –

Finance committee - would give

Baltimore City control over all tobacco regulations.

[HB0477](#) Economic Matters Committee and [SB0099](#) Finance Committee – Local laws

authorization and Would affect all of Maryland Municipalities and counties, (181locations) giving them control over tobacco laws.

Links to Finance and Economic Matters is in Family leave bill above

Points on Tobacco bills

Confusing to employees and owners that have multiple sites, Confusing to enforcement,

WMDA/CAR
General Membership Meeting
MARCH 22, 2022 - 10 am
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WMDA
Maryland Wholesale Motor Distributors Association

CAR
Council of Automotive Repair

CONTACT YOUR LEGISLATORS

signage, training.

1. Age and product line could be different just across the street, setting up conflict and confrontation with customers. We see it now with different rules for masks.

2. We have the high tobacco tax now and lose business to neighboring states. Do we set up more competition with 157 municipalities and 24 counties?

3. We have criminal activity selling products on the street now. This would only enhance that trade that asks for no I.D. and collects no tax. It would promote illicit locations on the street giving youth more opportunity to buy while putting them in harm's way.

4. Retail business is struggling now with COVID hangover, spending on safety protocols for customers, employees, while inflation amplifies every day. The fact is tobacco, OTP, and ESD is a large part of store sales. Customers want convenience and one stop shopping, you would lose not only tobacco sales but gas, and other store sales.

5. Tell them what percentage of store profit comes from tobacco, what percent of sales are flavor products.

6. Tell them from your heart as a small business what it means to you and your employees. Make sure you tell them that you and your employees check I.D. and enforce age 21. Before an employee can run a POS terminal, they go through tobacco sales training. You are the best defense against underage smoking or OTP and ESD purchase as opposed to internet and street sales.

HB1341 Economic Matters Committee - Would Give Prince

Georges County control over OTP and ESD products and ban sales within 1500 feet of certain locations.

1. Opens the door to a total ban on OTP and ESD products

2. Age requirement could change

3. Banning sales from within 1500 feet of certain locations (schools) when age requirement already limits who can buy.

4. Illegal outlets and street buying would give youths a place to buy with no I.D. check

5. Hurt retailer, store sales and other items including gas that would be purchased at same time

6. Bill is not clear if established locations are grandfathered in and lets county pick winners and losers

Lottery

HB1179- Ways and Means Committee – Sales of Lottery tickets and tickets from Instant Ticket Lottery Machines. Would increase agents from 5.5% to 6% of sales

<https://mgaleg.maryland.gov/mgawebsite/Members/Details/atterbeary01>

Text to chair and all members of ways and means, one email, all addresses of committee members on that email.

Here is my testimony on the Lottery bill, take what you want out of it, tell them how costs have gone up, employees salary cost, benefits and space inside your business. Last increase was 2014 and agents' cost of doing business has gone up every year.

The 2012 gaming expansion legislation which was adopted during the special session,

included a provision that increased retail lottery agent commissions from 5% to 6% in a two-step process.

Step One:

From 5% to 5.5% beginning Jan. 1, 2014

Step Two:

From 5.5% to 6% upon the issuance of a license for a video lottery facility in Baltimore City. A promise broken when the Budget reconciliation and financing Act of 2014 struck step two commission increase that would have brought agents to agreed on 6%.

8 years later agents still receive 5.5% even though costs of salary and benefits, retail space and in general business costs have all gone up.

Time has come to Honor a promise broken by passing this legislation.

Delaware

Legislators coming back in session March 6th, and family leave bill will be first on senates agenda. See amended bill in comparison with original bill that will come out of senate committee to senate floor (see page 6). I think amended bill will pass in senate and then go to house. Original bill was SB 1, now is called SS 1 (Senate Substitute 1).

District of Columbia

Tobacco and Gouging bill are still the main topics. WMDA/CAR have had meetings with council members and chairman of council on unintended consequences of flavor ban and a harsh gouging bill. Will keep you posted. ■

SB 1/SS 1 for SB 1/Other State Comparison

- Bold** = More restrictive than any other statewide paid leave insurance program
Italic = Equals the most restrictive of any other statewide paid leave insurance program
 Regular = Comparable to the average of other statewide paid leave insurance program

Original SB 1	SS 1 for SB 1	Compared to Other Statewide Insurance Programs
12 weeks of paid parental leave, 12 weeks of paid family caregiving leave, 12 weeks of paid medical leave, 12 weeks of paid military leave, and 12 weeks of paid safety leave annually.	12 weeks of paid parental leave annually, up to 6 weeks of paid family caregiving leave, paid medical leave, or paid military leave within a 24 month period.	All but two states have 12 weeks of parental leave (with new law adopted by DC allowing an increase to 12 weeks), Delaware will have the most limited family caregiving and medical leave in the country by far. Medical leave is the most common leave used. Several states have upwards of 20 or 50 weeks of medical leave.
Cumulative total of up to 16 weeks annually across multiple pillars.	<i>Cumulative total of up to 12 weeks annually across multiple pillars.</i>	The lowest cumulative total is 12 weeks annually (with new law adopted by DC allowing an increase to 12 weeks), with several states having 16-30 weeks as an annual total.
Applies to all private employers regardless of size.	Parental leave only applies to employers with 10 employees and above in DE, other forms of leave only apply to employers with 25 and above employees in DE.	Every other state applies their paid leave program to private employers of all sizes.
Workers are eligible once they've earned \$2,500 in Delaware across any employer. Applies to all employees: full time, season, temporary.	Workers are eligible once they've worked for their specific employer for a year and worked at least 1,250 hours in the previous 12 months. Does not include most part time, seasonal, and temporary workers.	No other state utilizes an employer-specific eligibility criteria, except for New York's family leave benefit. New York's employer-based eligibility criteria is half our time (6 months). Every other state and New York's medical leave is simply based on working in the state for a period of time/wages earned.
Covered relationships included extensive list of relations including someone with "significant personal bond"	Covered relationships are limited to spouse, child, and parent.	Delaware's covered relationships are severely limited compared to other states, including several with the "significant personal bond."
Premium of 0.8% split between employer and employee with no cap	Premium of 0.8% split between employer and employee with 1% cap	Premium breakdown varies by state. Some place entirely on employee, some split, and one is entirely employer based. Only one other state has a cap to prevent a rise above a certain amount. Delaware would be only state with capacity for DOL to cut benefits.
No employer role in eligibility determination.	Employers are empowered to make eligibility determination.	While other states have employer eligibility determination for job protections, none empower employers to make eligibility determination for monetary benefit.
Wage replacement by insurance program is 80% of wages up to a maximum of \$900 weekly	Wage replacement by insurance program is 80% of wages up to a maximum of \$900 weekly	Six states have higher wage replacement rates, one is equal to ours, and three are lower. Our max would be second lowest.
If both parents work at the same employer, they could both take 12 weeks of leave	If both parents work at the same employer, they can only take up to 12 weeks of leave between both of them.	No other state restrains access if spouses work for the same employer.
Only applied to private sector, but included public sector opt-in.	<i>Treats the public and private sector the same.</i>	Many states hold private employers to a higher standard than public employers. Some do, as Delaware will, automatically include public sector employers on par with private sector.
Allows private plan opt-out in whole or in part.	Allows private plan opt-out in whole or in part.	DE's private plan opt out is the most flexible by allowing employers to opt-out entirely with private plan or any one of (or combination of) the three parts of the program: parental, family caregiving, and medical. Other states require either entire opt-out or bifurcated opt out.

Bottom Line: In its totality, SS 1 for SB 1 would be the most restrained statewide paid family and medical leave insurance program in existence.

As of Feb. 17, 2022

MOSH

Maryland Occupational Safety and Health



By Sandi Weaver
BA Auto Care, Inc.

For the last two years we have been dealing with Covid and all that has come along with it. Now things seem to be heading towards a more normal way of life, it's time to get back to all those things we've put aside. The safety of our employees should always be our top priority and what better way to protect them than by having a free consultation with a MOSH Safety Consultant.

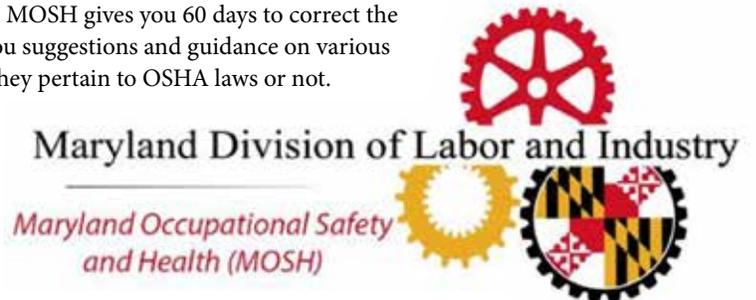
If you received a letter from MOSH in the last few months and haven't contacted them to set up your free consultation, do it now! For those less fortunate who have had a visit from OSHA, you know the trauma and expense that comes with their visit and it is nothing something you'd wish on your worst enemy.

MOSH offers a consultation which includes an in depth discussion of how the visit will go, review of your safety communication practices, a comprehensive evaluation of your entire building, a review of violations and a follow up to make sure any violations have been corrected. The violations do not come with a monetary fine like OSHA. MOSH gives you 60 days to correct the violations. They also give you suggestions and guidance on various items they notice whether they pertain to OSHA laws or not.

I have personally handled 3 of these consultations for my shop and each one has taught me something new or reminded me of something I had forgotten. While my shop hasn't had any major issues, there were still a few things that needed to be fixed and had OSHA come in to do the inspection, could have cost a fair bit of money as well.

During the 60 days you have to fix any violations, OSHA can't visit your business. They can call or show up and all you have to do is telling them you are working with MOSH and provide the name and contact information for the consultant you are working with and they will handle the rest.

If you would like more information on a free consultation with MOSH, go to <https://www.dllr.state.md.us/labor/instructions>. ■



The safety of our employees should always be our top priority and what better way to protect them than by having a free consultation with a MOSH Safety Consultant.



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Automotive Training Institute (ATI), 705 Digital Drive, Suite V, Linthicum Heights, MD 21090

Check-in and breakfast opens at 8am

MORNING SESSIONS: 9:00 a.m.–Noon

- 1** Are You Prepared for Succession Planning?
Presenter: Bryan Stasch, ATI
- 2** The New Back of House Superstar – Your Tech Mentor
Presenter: Jim Bennett, ATI
- 3** Advisor Mistakes & How to Avoid Them
Presenter: Rick White, 180-Biz
- 4** Understanding European Data, Schematics and Diagnostic Test Plans
Presenter: Gary Smith, DiagNation.com
- 5** Advanced Driver Assistance Systems and Calibration (ADAS)
Presenter: Steve Dawson, Hunter Engineering

AFTERNOON SESSIONS: 1:00–4:00 p.m.

- 6** Overcoming Overwhelm
Presenter: Rick White, 180Biz
- 7** Understanding and Diagnosing CAN Bus and FlexRay Networks
Presenter: Gary Smith, DiagNation.com
- 8** Simple Secrets to Great Phone Skills
Presenter: Geoff Berman, ATI
- 9** Advanced Driver Assistance Systems and Calibration (ADAS)
Presenter: Steve Dawson, Hunter Engineering

ALL-DAY SESSIONS: 9:00 a.m.–Noon & 1:00–4:00 p.m.

- 10** Basic Electrical Diagnosis
Presenter: Harold Babb, CCBC
- 11** Maryland State Inspection
Presenter: William Hemling, CCBC

See reverse side for session descriptions.

REGISTER TODAY!

Attendee 1: _____

Attendee 2: _____

Attendee 3: _____

MORNING # _____ AFTERNOON # _____ ALL DAY # _____

MORNING # _____ AFTERNOON # _____ ALL DAY # _____

MORNING # _____ AFTERNOON # _____ ALL DAY # _____

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Mail (by April 15): WMDA, 1532 Pointer Ridge Place, Suite F, Bowie, MD 20716

Email: ssripada2@wmda.net

Training Day 2022 Session Descriptions

MORNING SESSIONS – 9:00 a.m.-Noon

1. Are You Prepared for Succession Planning?

Presenter: Bryan Stasch, ATI; **Audience:** Shop Owners

What's next for you and your business? Have you made the right decisions for your future and what are the steps needed to validate that you are on the path to moving your business toward that goal? Retirement, retaining ownership and having a second in command take over for you, do you have the right folks in place? During this presentation we will discuss many of the topics that a business owner must consider before they are ready for the next big steps for the business and for themselves. What you find in this class might surprise you.

2. The New Back of House Superstar - Your Tech Mentor

Presenter: Jim Bennett, ATI; **Audience:** Shop Owners

Come hear Jim Bennett, ATI Executive Coach and Tech Training Program Manager, discuss the importance of a Technician Mentor for any shop. Jim shares the importance of the Technician Mentor for your new techs, any apprentice techs, for the tech themselves and for you, the shop owner. Jim will talk about the importance of soft skills training and the growth opportunity being a mentor presents for the shop and all of your techs. He will share what a good mentor looks like and what a mentor needs to know to ensure success. Perfect for experienced techs looking for their next step professionally.

3. Advisor Mistakes & How to Avoid Them

Presenter: Rick White, 180-Biz; **Audience:** Shop Owner, Service Advisor

Half-Day Workshop AMI Certified Description: This course reviews the top mistakes Advisors typically make in a selling situation in a fast-paced, fun way shows you what you can do to avoid them! The class will be interactive and will combine instruction, stories, role-playing to showcase each mistake. At the end of each section there will be an easy to implement action list to avoid these common pitfalls. You will learn how to identify the most common mistakes made on the front counter every day and discuss best practices. You can use tools that will be provided in these situations to guarantee success.

4. Understanding European Data, Schematics and Diagnostic Test Plans

Gary Smith, DiagNation.com; Audience: Technicians

Are you missing out on an important and profitable sector of your market? In this class, you will be presented a useful; flow and basic understanding of European diagnostics including:

- DTC Structure, Descriptions, Diagnostic Resources and Tips
- VW - Audi Diagnostic Overview and flow; Channel Blocks and Module Addressing Using Information Systems
- European Schematic Flow and Tracking: Interpreting European Schematics, Symbols, Terminology and Flow
- Energy Management Systems Overview
- Engine Management Systems Overview: Valvetronic, VVT,
- Diagnostic Test Plan Overview, Guided Fault-Finding Functions

5. Advanced Driver Assistance Systems and Calibration (ADAS)

Presenter: Steve Dawson, Hunter Engineering; **Audience:** Technicians

The World of Autonomous driving systems and what impact that they will have on the industry. We will look into the system types, the service opportunities, the support and equipment needed and the technicians skills for calibrations of these advanced systems. We will discuss the opportunities, limitations and how it could impact your business both positively and negatively over time.

AFTERNOON SESSIONS – 1:00-4:00 p.m.

6. Overcoming Overwhelm

Presenter: Rick White, 180Biz; **Audience:** Shop Owner, Manager

With shops either busier than they've ever been or desperately needing more cars, dealing with the roller coaster ride of the pandemic, the challenge of finding qualified people to join your team, or the raw demands of your customers, feelings of overwhelm are in an all time high. In this session you'll learn:

- Where the overwhelm is coming from
- The very real danger overwhelm poses to your business
- How to recognize overwhelm in your and in your team members
- About the tools you need to get out of the quicksand of overwhelm and back to chasing your dreams With your level of overwhelm down where it belongs, you'll find things run smoother, you'll get more done, and have fun again!

7. Understanding and Diagnosing CAN Bus and FlexRay Networks

Gary Smith, DiagNation.com; Audience: Technicians

- Study the theory of the CAN Bus and FlexRay protocols and understand the communication methods.
- Study CAN Bus and FlexRay physical and transport lines (Wiring), voltages, termination and operating characteristics
- System Topology (Layout), Gateways and newer multi-protocol communications are covered
- Companion protocols, Flex Ray, MOST, LIN covered
- Learn diagnostic methodology using simple test approaches for locating data bus faults
- Learn the analysis of communication bus lines using lab scope waveforms for clues to the source of the problem.

8. Simple Secrets to Great Phone Skills

Presenter: Geoff Berman, ATI; **Audience:** Service Advisor/Manager/Shop Owners

Most businesses do ok over the phone but very few take the time to hone this skill into a profit center. An underutilized phone creates a huge revenue loss in any business. In this class, you will learn the pitfalls that most fall into and what you can do about it. You'll likely be surprised because it is much easier than you might think. Let's face it, the job of your advertising is to get the phone to ring, not to get the car in the door. That's the job of whoever answers the phone. This session will uncover the 18 components to an exceptional phone experience, which will have you converting more first-time callers in no time, while at the same time maximizing your advertising dollars and making the shop even profitable.

9. Advanced Driver Assistance Systems and Calibration (ADAS)

Presenter: Steve Dawson, Hunter Engineering; **Audience:** Technicians

The World of Autonomous driving systems and what impact that they will have on the industry. We will look into the system types, the service opportunities, the support and equipment needed and the technicians skills for calibrations of these advanced systems. We will discuss the opportunities, limitations and how it could impact your business both positively and negatively over time

ALL-DAY SESSIONS – 9:00 a.m.-Noon & 1:00-4:00 p.m.

10. Basic Electrical Diagnosis

Presenter: Harold Babb, CCBC; **Audience:** Automotive Technicians

Electrical theory to prepare technicians for basic diagnosis of electrical systems. Focusing on the understanding of Ohm's Law, meter usage, reading schematics, Series and Parallel Circuit Laws with a series of practical exercises working with SET boards.

11. Maryland Safety Inspection

Presenter: William Hemling, CCBC; **Audience:** Automotive Technicians



Diving into a Digital Marketing Ads Campaign

Brought to you by Netdriven

Are you familiar with the marketing rule of seven? It's the idea that leads will interact with a business an average of **seven times** before they are ready to make a purchase. The key to navigating the rule of seven without losing touch with your leads is to make sure your brand stays in front of prospects during the shopping process. And digital ads are a key tool to make this happen.

Digital ads are all about drawing shoppers into the sales funnel by building brand awareness and then driving traffic to your inventory and services or even right to your store. With most shoppers starting their journey online, digital ads have the potential to snag their attention from the very first search and follow them through the rest of the research process and beyond.

Types of Digital Ads

Depending on your marketing goals, you may run multiple types of digital ads or focus your campaign on one to two different strategies. Luckily, when it comes to digital ads, you have plenty of options. Here are the main types of search engine and social media ads:

- **Search ads** are the commonplace ads that appear at the top of the search results page. These ads drive traffic back to your website and can link to any webpage – and are especially valuable in redirecting online users to your inventory listings and service pages.
- **Click-to-call ads** are keyword-based and appear only on mobile devices. Instead of driving traffic to your website or to a landing page, leads click on the ad to call your business and get connected with a technician or salesperson. It's important to remember to only run these ads during your store hours so that prospects aren't trying to reach your store when no one is around.
- **Display ads** retarget bounced leads – prospects who visited your website but didn't make a purchase or contact your store. Retargeting keeps your display ads in front of shoppers as they're searching on Google, ensuring they remember your brand as they consider their options. This strategy goes beyond Google to reach shoppers on social media platforms such as Facebook and Instagram.
- **Facebook Ads** target the exact audience you want to reach on social media. Considering the average American adult spends about 34 minutes on Facebook every day, you have significant potential to reach a high volume of qualified leads.



Maintaining an Ad-Friendly Budget

One of the greatest concerns around starting an ad campaign is the cost. If you have a tight marketing budget, you may be wondering if you can afford to run digital ads. Fortunately for you and your wallet, there are many ways to keep your ad spend within the parameters of your budget without sacrificing results.

...digital ads have the potential to snag their attention from the very first search and follow them through the rest of the research process and beyond.



E-mail

DIGITAL MARKETING



Businesses who use search ad campaigns pay a set cost per click, meaning their budget is charged each time a prospect clicks on the ad. The cost of ads varies depending on the popularity of the keywords used. Highly sought-after keywords accrue a higher cost because businesses are bidding higher to get to the top of the results page.

However, there are ways to reduce the ad spend. For example, achieving a good quality score on the ranking of the landing page associated with the ad can lower the cost without compromising the ad placement. Furthermore, you can set a daily and monthly budget for your ad spend so that you're never surprised at the end of the month.

From Ads to Email Marketing

As you build your brand recognition through digital ads, consider opportunities to convert leads into a loyal audience. The ultimate goal is to build a relationship with leads and foster customer loyalty. Email marketing is a great way to transition from broader digital advertising to more personalized marketing that delivers content tailored to their specific interests.

You can gather email addresses when shoppers visit your website and fill out a lead form or sign up for your newsletter. Consumers often opt to receive emails from a brand if they're promised exclusive content they can't get anywhere else – new inventory arrivals, flash sales and other opportunities that occur on a first-come-first-serve basis. As your email list grows, you can group leads into audiences based on their interests, whether they are shopping around for auto services or are a previous customer due for a maintenance checkup. Email marketing means that no matter where your leads are searching and shopping, your content is still landing right in their inboxes.

Digital ads guide shoppers

from the very first step (discovering your business) to the end of the sales funnel (creating an ongoing relationship with your brand). Once shoppers realize your business is there, you can use digital ads to periodically tap them on the shoulder and remind them that you have the inventory and services they need. The more they encounter your brand, the faster your credibility grows, until they're ready to buy online or visit the store to make a purchase. And once you receive their contact information – either through a digital form or at the store – you can transition naturally to personalized emails that keep shoppers coming back to your business for more. ■



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WMDA/CAR Supports Recently Introduced REPAIR Act



By Roy Littlefield IV

On February 3rd, U.S. Representative Bobby L. Rush (D-Ill.), a senior member of the House Committee on Energy and Commerce, introduced the Right to Equitable and Professional Auto Industry Repair (REPAIR) Act ([H.R. 6570](#)). This legislation would preserve consumer access to high quality, affordable vehicle repair by ensuring that vehicle owners and independent repair shops have equal access to repair and maintenance tools and data as car companies and licensed dealerships.

WMDA/CAR supports the legislation.

Consumers prefer independent auto repair shops over licensed dealerships by a wide margin – 70% of the 288 million registered vehicles in the U.S. are maintained by independent repair facilities. However, inadequate and outdated laws and regulations have made it increasingly difficult for independent repair shops to access critical vehicle data needed for repairs, benefiting car companies and licensed dealerships at the expense of consumers and mom and pop repair shops.

“Americans should not be forced to bring their cars to more costly and inconvenient dealerships for repairs when independent auto repair shops are often cheaper and far more accessible,” said Rep. Rush. “But as cars become more advanced, manufacturers are getting sole access to important vehicle data while independent repair shops are increasingly locked out. The status quo for auto repair is not tenable, and it is getting worse. If the monopoly on vehicle repair data continues, it would affect nearly 860,000 blue-collar workers and 274,000 service facilities.”

“The lack of meaningful consumer choice in the repair market harms low-income Americans and those in underserved communities most,” Rush continued. “A single mother who relies on her vehicle to go to work and get her kids to school can’t afford to wait days or weeks to have her car repaired at a dealership that is hours away and more expensive than the auto shop around the corner. That is why I am proud to be introducing the first federal Right to Repair legislation for the auto sector. The REPAIR Act is commonsense, necessary legislation that will end manufacturers’ monopoly on vehicle repair and maintenance and allow Americans the freedom to choose where to repair their vehicles.”

By way of a [2014 Memorandum of Understanding](#) (MOU), vehicle owners and technicians are supposed to have the same access to information, tools, and software that car companies make available to their franchised dealers.



...inadequate and outdated laws and regulations have made it increasingly difficult for independent repair shops to access critical vehicle data needed for repairs...

GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS

However, as cars become more technologically advanced, vehicle data is increasingly being transmitted wirelessly and sent only to vehicle manufacturers, who then have the ability to determine who can access the data and at what cost. Independent repair shops – which are cheaper than dealerships and preferred by the vast majority of car owners – are effectively locked out.

The resulting landscape has reduced choice and raised costs for consumers, who spend an average of 36 percent more on vehicle repair at dealerships than at independent repair shops. Limited access to data has already impacted repairs for 37% of vehicles in the U.S., and this number is set to increase dramatically in the coming years – by 2030, 95% of new vehicles sold around the world by 2030 will have wireless data transmission capabilities.

The REPAIR Act will update existing laws to reflect the modernization of automobiles and the importance of consumer

choice in auto repair. The legislation is written to foster a competitive environment for vehicle repair while prioritizing cybersecurity and safety for vehicle systems.

Specifically, the REPAIR Act will:

- Preserve consumer access to high quality and affordable vehicle repair by ensuring that vehicle owners and their repairers of choice have access to necessary repair and maintenance tools and data as vehicles continue to become more advanced.
- Ensure access to critical repair tools and information. All tools and equipment, wireless transmission of repair and diagnostic data, and access to on-board diagnostic and telematic systems needed to repair a vehicle must be made available to the independent repair industry.
- Ensure cybersecurity by allowing vehicle manufacturers to secure vehicle-generated data and requiring the National Highway Traffic Safety

Administration (NHTSA) to develop standards for how vehicle generated data necessary for repair can be accessed securely.

- Provide transparency for consumers by requiring vehicle owners be informed that they can choose where and how to get their vehicle repaired.
- Create a stakeholder advisory committee and provide them with the statutory authority to provide recommendations to the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) on how to address emerging barriers to vehicle repair and maintenance.
- Provide ongoing enforcement by establishing a process for consumers and independent repair facilities to file complaints with the FTC regarding alleged violations of the requirements in the bill and a requirement that the FTC act within five months of a claim. Right to Repair remains a top issue and priority for WMDA/CAR. ■

WMDA/CAR ANNUAL

EXPO

& AWARDS

DINNER 2022

SAVE THE DATE

Tuesday, October 25, 2022
Martin's West, Baltimore, MD



Paying for the Infrastructure



By Roy Littlefield III

SSDA-AT is working closely with Congressman Seth Moulton (D-MA) and Congressman John Katko (R-NY), two influential members of the House of Representatives who led the bipartisan effort to pass the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, as are now preparing to circulate a bipartisan letter urging the House and Senate leadership to support a fully funded Appropriation Bill.

SSDA-AT was one of the first transportation related organizations to be added to the letter.

The new congressional letter is in response to the January 24 letter that SSDA-AT and other organizations sent to Congress.

The new letter is signed by:

- Rosa DeLaura (D-CT), Chair, House Committee on Appropriations
- Kay Granger (R-TX), Ranking Member, House Committee on Appropriations
- Patrick Leahy (D-VT, Chairman, Senate Committee on Appropriations
- Richard Shelby (R-AK), Vice Chairman, Senate Committee on Appropriations

The letter calls for full year funding for FY 2022 for the infrastructure bill. The recently passed bipartisan legislation authorizes \$1.2 trillion over five years, a much-needed record amount for roads, bridges, metro trains, and safety programs. The continuing of current funding levels will leave a gap of approximately \$90 billion a year.

SSDA-AT is actively contacting members of the House Ways and Means Committee, the House Committee on Appropriations, the Senate Finance Committee, and the Senate Committee on Appropriations urging them to tap other unused and available Federal funds to fill in the void rather than looking to the tire related industry to raise, reinstate past Federal excise taxes, or to impose new Federal Excise taxes. Since 2020, over 40 bills have been introduced to collect more from our industry through taxes.

SSDA-AT continues to oppose:

- Reinstating the FET on passenger tires.
- Reinstating the FET on retread rubber.
- Raising the FET on truck tires.
- Raising the FET on trucks.
- Raising the FET on truck parts.
- Placing a new FET on automotive parts.
- Oppose LIFO repeal.
- Oppose Estate Tax increases. ■



The letter calls for full year funding for FY 2022 for the infrastructure bill.



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ELECTION 2022:

WMDA/CAR PAC needs funds to Participate

Governor, Attorney General and Comptroller, along with delegates and senators are up for election in Maryland.

- ▶ **Ban on menthol cigarettes** in District of Columbia means there will be copycat bills in Maryland and Delaware this year.
- ▶ California **bans gas powered cars** by 2035, will MD, DE, or DC be next?
- ▶ Baltimore council members want to **ban new service stations** in the city, ban plastics, Styrofoam & sugary drinks. They have shut down many retailers with pad locks on doors, blaming business for crime. Police are telling our retailers you are on your own, hire security guards. They need to focus on crime, not plastic bags. The absurdity of actions like this underscores the need for new legislators.
- ▶ Labor and employee bills in all three jurisdictions would add thousands of dollars in **payroll cost** per year. While we have been successful in stopping or amending most bills, they will all be back this year.
- ▶ **Right to Repair** – New cars manufactured are installing devices in vehicles that send information over wireless networks to dealerships automatically.

As absurd as some of these bills are, they are real and affect all our members. These issues will be or already are in the legislative process. We need legislators who support retail business, do not be on the side lines.

Support your PAC and PROTECT your business.

We suggest \$150 per location however, any amount is welcome.

Please send contributions to: WMDAPAC 1532 Pointer Ridge Place, Suite F Bowie, MD 20716

Your fellow business owners and PAC officers,

Rick Agoris, *PAC Chairman*
Riaz Ahmad, *PAC Treasurer*

