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Surveillance Technology Oversight Project
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May 19, 2026

The Honorable Brett Guthrie, Chairman
House Committee on Energy and Commerce
2125 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Hon. Frank Pallone
Ranking Member
House Energy and Commerce Committee 2323
Rayburn HOB
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Hon. Gus Bilirakis
Chairman
House Commerce, Manufacturing, and Trade
Subcommittee
2306 Rayburn HOB
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Hon. Jan Schakowsky
Ranking Member
House Commerce, Manufacturing, and Trade
Subcommittee
2408 Rayburn HOB
Washington, D.C. 20515

Subject: Privacy4Cars and STOP's strong opposition to the REPAIR Act (H.R. 1566) due to consumer affordability issues and data privacy concerns

Dear Chairmen Guthrie, Bilirakis and Ranking Members Pallone and Schakowsky

Privacy4Cars, the leading privacy-technology company and authority on vehicle privacy and data security dedicated to protecting personal data in the automotive ecosystem, along with the Surveillance Technology Oversight Project (STOP) write in the **strongest opposition to the REPAIR Act (H.R. 1566)**. While this bill is being championed as a win for "owners" - implying this being mainly consumers, in reality this bill benefits only those fleets, rental operators, insurers, and lenders who are salivating at the prospect of getting data they are paying for today for free and, as a bonus, to be empowered and emboldened to exploit data about how Americans use vehicles for their businesses' benefit with little safeguards. For everyday Americans, this bill creates a series of new threats to privacy by fragmenting the landscape of companies that can engage in surveillance-on-wheels on an unprecedented scale. Furthermore, should this bill pass, it would make vehicle affordability worse because manufacturers will seek to pass on to consumers the missed revenue from vehicle data

sales that they are selling today to sophisticated, large-scale vehicle buyers. We hope that you will not support a bill that asks Main Street to subsidize Wall Street, and that - just as news of privacy rights consistently being turned into privacy wrongs - would make it virtually impossible for consumers to have privacy in their vehicle as the numbers of companies that can get their data and profit from the detailed monitoring of a family vehicle will explode.

This bill is a constituent privacy disaster hiding behind a disclosure checkbox.

The bill treats an engine error code and a driver's precise geolocation as the same category of data. There is no line between technical information a mechanic needs and personal data that reveals where someone lives, works, worships, and sleeps at night.

The bill allows an unlimited number of simultaneous designees to obtain access to drivers' sensitive personal data. Once a designee has access, the practical constraints on what they do with the data are thin to nonexistent. **For example, a designee can then sell the driver's data, use it for purposes entirely unrelated to repair, and there is no meaningful deletion right that follows the data downstream.** By way of example:

> ***Constituents Sold Out:*** *A consumer takes their car to a repair shop and, buried in the service paperwork, designates the shop and its "service providers" as designees to their personal vehicle generated data. The shop now has access to the vehicle's full data stream which paints a picture of the driver's daily life. It shares that data with a marketing affiliate, an insurance analytics firm, and a data broker. The consumer never knew, never consented to those specific recipients, and has no practical way to force deletion from parties they don't even know exist.*

> ***Puts Constituents Auto Financing in Jeopardy****: A lender or leasing company requires designation as a condition of a person accessing auto financing. The lender now receives continuous driver's vehicle data such as their precise geolocation, driving behavior, usage patterns and uses it for credit scoring, repossession targeting, or resale to insurers. The driver signed a checkbox at closing. They never understood they were granting a personal data pipeline to an unlimited chain of downstream recipients.*

> ***Domestic Violence - a new stalking tool written into federal law:*** *An abusive partner, as the vehicle owner, designates themselves or an associate to receive a continuous data stream including real-time location. Under the bill, manufacturers cannot limit the number or types of designees. The abuser is the only one notified. There is no clear or accessible mechanism for*

> *a survivor of abuse to discover who has been designated, or to revoke access they didn't authorize. For domestic violence survivors, this is not a hypothetical, it is a stalking tool written into federal law.*

This bill will make vehicles more expensive for consumers.

Today, rental companies, insurers, and lenders pay manufacturers for access to vehicle-generated data. This bill would require manufacturers to now provide this data for free. This is why this bill is championed by rental car companies, mobility companies, fleets, insurers, and other big corporations: their budgeted expenses for data will drop straight into their bottom line. But this is not a harmless transfer of wealth from the pockets of the manufacturers to the pockets of those big companies. Their windfall will become consumers' downfall. Vehicle manufacturers are already under significant financial pressure so they are unable to absorb this additional cost. As a consequence, this bill will result in OEMs passing the cost of this "subsidy" to consumers through higher vehicle prices, subscription costs, or service fees. In this tale of two owners, it will be the best of times for Big Co, and the worst of times for your constituents who already struggle with vehicle affordability.

This bill was written to serve the commercial interests of the industry groups, not your constituents whose lives are embedded in this data. A paragraph in a lease or a checkbox at a service counter is not informed consent. It is a legal fiction. And the bill includes federal preemption clauses that would override stronger state privacy laws already on the books.

We urge the Committee to reject this bill until its language is amended to address two main issues:

1. The error code for a warning light on the dashboard and your precise geolocation are not the same: the bill must draw a distinct line between "personal data" (i.e. data from a vehicle that can be reconducted to an individual) and "technical data" (i.e. everything else). If the bill focused on access to "technical data" only and clearly excluded access to "personal data" (and in fact, require companies who have access to vehicle data have fiduciary duty to protect any personal data), consumers and corporate fleets could equally benefit from using data for repair and maintenance without the spectre of surveillance.

2. Rights are given to "owners", not to data subjects (to use GDPR parlance for clarity). An enormous amount of corporations can be "owners" under many scenarios. If this Committee reads headlines about privacy, security, safety, and financial harms emerging from a few handfuls of vehicle manufacturers using this data for their profit with little regard for consumers, this bill in its current form would allow tens of thousands of companies get access to the same data and be allowed to do

those very same things because of a paragraph or a checkbox somewhere in the paperwork when they bought a car, signed a lease, used a rental, took their car to a shop, etc.

The right to repair your own car is worth defending. But it does not require handing every person's driving life to any corporation that can get its name on a title or its checkbox on a form.

Respectfully,

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