



The Voice of the Electronic Security & Life Safety Industry



## Right to Repair Legislation and the Security & Life Safety Industry

We understand the importance of providing consumers greater access to repair options for personal electronic devices, and our industry supports finding effective ways to extend the lifecycle of consumer electronics and reducing electronic waste.

But far beyond fixing broken smartphones, right to repair legislation applicable to electronic products has the potential to create real risks if applied too broadly. The integrity of security and life safety systems would be unnecessarily put at risk if manufacturers are forced to make sensitive technical information and other means of compromising these systems broadly available to the public, enabling both exploitation by bad actors and harm from inadvertent misuse.

Policymakers throughout the U.S. have acknowledged the need to address these potential risks to public safety, through exclusions for security and life safety systems included in groundbreaking right to repair laws in New York, California, Minnesota and Colorado.

**POSITION: As additional states consider enactment of right to repair legislation, we strongly urge policymakers to include appropriate exclusions for security and life safety systems and devices to ensure protections for consumers are not compromised.**

We have seen that some state right to repair proposals that are broadly applicable to manufacturers and sellers of digital electronic equipment, would inadvertently capture companies that sell, install, diagnose, maintain, repair, monitor, and update electronic security and fire alarm systems in homes and businesses. This could have unintended negative consequences for the public, which relies on these devices and systems to maintain a high level of safety for themselves, and their property.

For example, right to repair proposals typically require covered companies to release “documentation” to owners or independent repair providers upon request, meaning any manual, diagram, reporting output, service code description, schematic diagram, security code, passwords, or other guidance or information that enables a person to diagnose, maintain, repair or update the equipment. Manufacturer-specific alarm system codes, schematics, radio communications and cybersecurity information can help someone figure out how to disable the system, and through release could end up on the dark web and be used to unlock or disable systems of many consumers and businesses using the same type of alarm system across the U.S. and worldwide. With these codes, a bad actor could drive around a particular area and look for signs and stickers advertising a particular alarm company and potentially be able to break in and override their alarm system. Not only would alarm panels be impacted in the security field but also cameras, motion detectors, door sensors and more. Right to repair proposals would allow any person claiming to be an owner or repair provider of the device, even potential criminals, to request and obtain such information.

Fire alarm systems and medical devices would also be made vulnerable to not just bad actors but also negligent ones. Fire alarm technicians are given rigorous training and, in most states, require certification to inspect, repair, and install these systems. If a landlord attempts to repair a fire alarm, smoke detector, or sprinkler system and they are not qualified to do so, we could see an increase in the failure of these systems to save lives. Medical pendants that are improperly repaired leave the life of the pendant wearer in jeopardy.

**Appropriate Exclusion:** Nearly all states that have adopted a right to law to date have specifically excluded fire and security systems, including Colorado, California, and New York, and proposed legislation in other states such as Arizona, Connecticut, Hawaii, and Illinois have included similar exclusions. Our industry suggests the following exclusion language to be used in legislation to better protect state's residents:

**"Nothing in this Act applies to security or life safety systems and devices, or to manufacturers of security or life safety systems and devices."**

This language is understood to protect manufacturers, dealers, distributors, integrators, installers and monitoring service providers of a security or life safety device and/or system (including but not limited to all central station alarm systems and any other digital electronic equipment used to prevent, detect, protect against, or respond to fire, carbon monoxide risks, falls, medical alerts or security incidents or control access to residential, commercial, and governmental property, services, or information systems). This would still allow applicability of right to repair obligations to the intended range of consumer electronic equipment, while maintaining critical product integrity and safety that consumers expect from the security and life safety industry.

The security and life safety industry is, quite literally, in the consumer protection business and takes this mission very seriously. Security and life safety employees undergo extensive training and background checks to ensure that the technicians who are sent into customers' homes and businesses can be trusted. Right to repair legislation has the potential to inadvertently jeopardize the safety of residents and businesses and erode trust in our industry, at a time when concern for public safety is at an all-time high and the incidence of hacking and misuse of sensitive information is rapidly increasing. We urge that any right to repair proposals include an appropriate exclusion for security and life safety systems and devices to address this public safety concern.

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