CS FOR HOUSE BILL NO. 162(CRA)

IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

THIRTY-FOURTH LEGISLATURE - SECOND SESSION

BY THE HOUSE COMMUNITY AND REGIONAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

Offered: 4/22/26
Referred: Labor and Commerce

Sponsor(s): REPRESENTATIVE DIBERT

A BILL

FOR AN ACT ENTITLED

"An Act relating to the diagnosis, maintenance, modification, and repair of digital products; adding an unlawful act to the Alaska Unfair Trade Practices and Consumer Protection Act; and providing for an effective date."

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA:

*** Section 1.** The uncodified law of the State of Alaska is amended by adding a new section to read:

SHORT TITLE. This Act may be known as the Digital Right to Repair Act.

*** Sec. 2.** AS 45.45 is amended by adding new sections to read:

Article 12A. Digital Product Diagnosis, Maintenance, and Repair.

Sec. 45.45.800. Digital product diagnosis, maintenance, and repair. (a) A digital product manufacturer shall, as required under AS 45.45.800 - 45.45.899, make available to an independent service provider or owner of a digital product manufactured, sold, or leased by or on behalf of the manufacturer any documentation, parts, and tools provided to an authorized service provider for the diagnosis,

maintenance, or repair of the digital product.

(b) The documentation, parts, and tools made available under (a) of this section must include any changes made by the digital product manufacturer to update, fix, or improve a computer program, including the program's data, or firmware used in the product or part.

Sec. 45.45.810. Security features. If a digital product contains an electronic security lock or other security-related feature that is disabled during the diagnosis, maintenance, or repair of the product, the digital product manufacturer shall make available to the independent service provider or owner of the product the documentation, parts, and tools necessary to reset the security-related feature. The manufacturer may use appropriate secure release systems to make the documentation, parts, and tools available.

Sec. 45.45.820. Unavailable parts. A digital product manufacturer is not required to make a part available under AS 45.45.800 - 45.45.899 if the part is no longer available to the manufacturer.

Sec. 45.45.830. Terms of providing documentation, parts, and tools. (a) Except as provided in AS 45.45.840 and (b) and (c) of this section, a digital product manufacturer shall make available to an independent service provider or owner of the product

(1) documentation required under AS 45.45.800 - 45.45.899 if the provider or owner requests a physical copy of the documentation; the manufacturer may charge the provider or owner for the reasonable, actual cost of preparing and sending a copy of the documentation;

(2) parts required under AS 45.45.800 - 45.45.899, directly or through an authorized service provider, on terms that are the same as the most favorable terms the manufacturer provides to an authorized service provider of the manufacturer;

(3) the tools required under AS 45.45.800 - 45.45.899 without

(A) charge, except that, if the provider or owner requests a tool in physical form, the manufacturer may charge the provider or owner for the reasonable, actual costs of producing, preparing, and sending the tool;

(B) impeding access or use of the tool to diagnose, maintain, or

repair and enable full functionality of the digital product;

(C) impeding the efficient and cost-effective use of the diagnostic, maintenance, or repair functions of the tool; and

(4) upon request, product information and repair materials the manufacturer provides to an authorized service.

(b) A digital product manufacturer may not charge an independent service provider or an owner a price that is greater than the price the manufacturer charges its authorized service provider, after discounts, rebates, and other incentive programs, to make the same documentation, part, or tool available.

(c) Notwithstanding (a)(2) and (b) of this section, a digital product manufacturer shall, directly or through an authorized service provider, provide parts to an owner or independent service provider on terms and at costs that are reasonable considering the conditions agreed on, the quality of the parts, and the timeliness of the delivery, for a digital product that is

(1) power-sports equipment;

(2) power-driven farm, forestry, construction, industrial, utility, mining, road-building, material-handling, or similar equipment; or

(3) a stand-alone or mobile engine, generator, battery bank or other power producing or storing device.

Sec. 45.45.840. Commercial and industrial equipment. Notwithstanding AS 45.45.830, a manufacturer of a digital product that is commercial or industrial equipment may

(1) notwithstanding AS 45.45.830, require reasonable training or certification of an independent service provider or owner of the product, or verification of the independent service provider's or owner's competency, before providing the independent service provider or owner with access to specialized documentation, tools, or other information that allows a person to modify the product's safety or critical systems;

(2) provide an independent service provider or owner of the product with access to a product's secure systems, including by way of remote authorization or through a controlled software platform; and

(3) offer to an independent service provider or owner of the product parts for the product as an assembly, rather than individual components, if the manufacturer provides those parts as an assembly to an authorized service provider.

Sec. 45.45.850. Independent service provider. A person is considered to be an independent service provider under AS 45.45.800 - 45.45.899 if the person

(1) engages in the business of diagnosis, maintenance, or repair of digital products in the state; and

(2) is not a digital product manufacturer, does not have a license or contract with a digital product manufacturer under AS 45.45.860(a), and is not affiliated with a person that has a license or contract with a digital product manufacturer under AS 45.45.860(a).

Sec. 45.45.860. Authorized service provider. (a) A person is an authorized service provider under AS 45.45.800 - 45.45.899 if the person has a

(1) license to use a trade name, service mark, or other proprietary identification of the digital product manufacturer to offer diagnosis, maintenance, or repair of digital products under the name of the digital product manufacturer; or

(2) contract that is not described in (1) of this subsection with the digital product manufacturer to provide diagnosis, maintenance, or repair of digital products that are manufactured by the digital product manufacturer.

(b) A digital product manufacturer that offers the services of diagnosis, maintenance, or repair of its own digital products is considered an authorized service provider for those products for the purposes of AS 45.45.800 - 45.45.899.

Sec. 45.45.870. Trade secrets. Nothing in AS 45.45.800 - 45.45.899 may be construed to require a digital product manufacturer to disclose a trade secret to an independent service provider or an owner. In this section, "trade secret" has the meaning given in AS 45.50.940.

Sec. 45.45.880. Limitations on application and liability. (a) An agreement or provision that waives, restricts, or otherwise limits the obligations of a digital product manufacturer under AS 45.45.800 - 45.45.899 is void and unenforceable.

(b) A digital product manufacturer or authorized service provider may not be held civilly liable for damages or injuries caused by an independent service provider

or owner during the course of the independent service provider's or owner's diagnosis, maintenance, or repair of the product.

Sec. 45.45.890. Interpretation. Nothing in AS 45.45.800 - 45.45.899 may be construed to

(1) require a digital product manufacturer or an authorized service provider to make available to an independent service provider or an owner the information, other than documentation, that a digital product manufacturer makes available to an authorized service provider under a license or other contract described in AS 45.45.860(a); or

(2) alter, impair, or supersede the terms of a lease or commercial contract.

Sec. 45.45.895. Exemptions. (a) The provisions of AS 45.45.800 - 45.45.899 do not apply to

(1) a digital product that is a medical device intended for use in the diagnosis of disease or other conditions, or in the cure, mitigation, treatment, or prevention of disease, in humans or animals;

(2) the diagnosis, maintenance, or repair of a digital product that is

(A) a motor vehicle or a part for a motor vehicle; or

(B) critical infrastructure, a part for critical infrastructure, or related equipment; or

(3) a digital product that is

(A) a fire alarm or other life safety system;

(B) a physical intrusion detection system monitored by a person providing a security service; or

(C) physical access control equipment, including electronic keypads and building access systems.

(b) In this section,

(1) "critical infrastructure" has the meaning given in AS 26.23.900;

(2) "medical device" has the meaning given to "device" in 21 U.S.C. 321(h)(1).

Sec. 45.45.899. Definitions. In AS 45.45.800 - 45.45.899,

(1) "authorized service provider" means a person that is an authorized service provider under AS 45.45.860;

(2) "digital product" means a product that depends for its functioning, in whole or in part, on digital electronics embedded in or attached to the product;

(3) "digital product manufacturer" means a person engaged in the business of selling, leasing, or otherwise supplying new digital products manufactured by or on behalf of the person to another person;

(4) "documentation" means a manual, diagram, reporting output, service code description, schematic diagram, security code, password, or other guidance or information used in effecting the services of diagnosis, maintenance, or repair of a digital product;

(5) "independent service provider" means a person that is an independent service provider under AS 45.45.850;

(6) "motor vehicle" means a vehicle designed for transporting persons or property on a street or highway and certified by the manufacturer under all applicable federal emissions standards and requirements for distribution and sale in the United States;

(7) "owner" means a person who owns or leases a digital product;

(8) "part" means a new or used replacement part that a digital product manufacturer makes available for the maintenance or repair of the product;

(9) "powersports equipment"

(A) includes an all-terrain vehicle, a personal watercraft, snowmobile, or similar vehicle or craft, and attachments and repair parts for powersports equipment;

(B) does not include a motor vehicle required to be registered under AS 28.10;

(10) "tool" includes a software program, hardware implement, or other apparatus used for diagnosis, maintenance, or repair of a digital product, including software or other mechanisms that calibrate, update, program, pair new parts, or otherwise perform a purpose that ensures the product's functionality.

*** Sec. 3.** AS 45.50.471(b) is amended by adding a new paragraph to read:

(58) violating AS 45.45.800 - 45.45.899 (digital product diagnosis, maintenance, and repair).

*** Sec. 4.** The uncodified law of the State of Alaska is amended by adding a new section to read:

APPLICABILITY. This Act applies to a digital product that is sold or leased in the state on or after the effective date of this Act. In this section, "digital product" has the meaning given in AS 45.45.899.

*** Sec. 5.** The uncodified law of the State of Alaska is amended by adding a new section to read:

SAVING CLAUSE. This Act may not be construed to change the terms of a license or contract that is in effect immediately before the effective date of this Act.

*** Sec. 6.** This Act takes effect January 1, 2029.

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE

REPRESENTATIVE MAXINE DIBERT

House District 31- Downtown Fairbanks

Session Contact
State Capitol, Room 126
Juneau, AK 99801-1182
(907) 465-2138

Interim Contact
1292 Sadler Way, Ste. 306
Fairbanks, AK 99701
(907) 451-4347

Chair Tribal Affairs Committee
Co-Chair House Resources Committee
House Education Committee
Joint Armed Services Committee

House Bill 162

Sponsor Statement 3/06/26

"An Act relating to the diagnosis, maintenance, and repair of products that use digital electronics to operate; adding an unlawful act to the Alaska Unfair Trade Practices and Consumer Protection Act."

In recent decades, manufacturers have often used the inclusion of digital components in modern equipment to limit consumer repair opportunities. By refusing to publish repair documentation, welding replaceable parts together, and using privately owned tools, they create artificial monopolies that result in unnecessarily high barriers to product repair.

House Bill 162 offers a balanced solution to this issue, ensuring fair access to the information and tools needed to repair digital equipment including consumer electronics, household appliances, and ATVs, as well as small snow removal, lawn care, and farm equipment.

The undue burden manufacturers place on consumers through policies that force them to replace rather than repair their products results in unsustainable product purchasing cycles, increased e-waste that can be difficult for small communities to manage, and higher financial burdens on consumers. The problem is exacerbated in Alaska, where official repair avenues are even less accessible and more expensive than in the Lower 48, and sometimes aren't available at all. In rural and remote areas, equipment like ATVs, snow machines, and small tractors are critical to daily life. The barriers to self-repair created by manufacturers are not only costly; they can also be dangerous.

HB 162 will ensure Alaskans have access to essential documentation, tools, and parts at fair market prices. This will empower consumers to repair rather than replace their equipment, saving money where it matters and reducing waste that often overburdens small communities. Additionally, it will foster a competitive marketplace for independent repair businesses, keeping jobs and resources in-state.

Alaskans are known for self-sufficiency and resourcefulness. We don't just like to make things work—we need to. HB 162 supports this vital tradition by making repair options accessible, reducing waste, and helping Alaskans maintain the equipment they rely on.

In closing, I would like to thank the members of the legislature for their consideration and urge you to support HB 162 in order to empower our residents and put the power back in their hands.

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE

REPRESENTATIVE MAXINE DIBERT

House District 31- Downtown Fairbanks

Session Contact
State Capitol, Room 126
Juneau, AK 99801-1182
(907) 465-2138

Interim Contact
1292 Sadler Way, Ste. 306
Fairbanks, AK 99701
(907) 451-4347

Chair Tribal Affairs Committee
Co-Chair House Resources Committee
House Education Committee
Joint Armed Services Committee

House Bill 162 Sectional Analysis Version O

Section 1. Establishes the short title.

Section 2. Amends AS 45.45 Trade Practices by adding Article 12A. Digital Product Repair and the following sections:

Sec. 45.45.800 requires that digital product manufacturers:

- Make documentation, parts, and tools necessary for diagnosis, maintenance, or repair of digital products available to independent service providers or owners of their products.
- Include changes to documentation, parts and tools made through updates, improvements, or repairs.

Sec. 45.45.810 requires digital product manufacturers to make available documentation, tools, and parts needed to reset security-related features that may be disabled during the diagnosis, maintenance, or repair of the product.

Sec. 45.45.820 states that digital product manufacturers don't have to make parts available if they no longer have access to the parts.

Sec. 45.45.830 requires digital product manufacturers to make documentation, parts, and tools available to independent service providers or owners of the products at a reasonable price. Manufacturers cannot charge independent service providers or owners a price higher than what they charge authorized service providers for the same documentation, parts, or tools. Exempted from the independent service provider requirement are:

- Powersports equipment;
- Power-driven farm, forestry, construction, industrial, utility, mining, road-building, material-handling, and other similar equipment; and
- Power producing and storing devices.

Sec 45.45.840 states that commercial and industrial equipment manufacturers may:

- Require certification or verification of competency before providing access to materials that would alter a device's safety or critical systems.
- Provide independent repair providers and owners with access to a product's secure systems.
- Provide parts as an assembly rather than individual components.

Sec. 45.45.850 states that an independent service provider:

- Works in the business of diagnosis, maintenance, or repair of digital products in Alaska

- Is not a digital product manufacturer, doesn't have a contract or license with, and isn't affiliated with anyone who has a contract or a license with a digital product manufacturer.

Sec. 45.45.860 states that a person is an authorized service provider under AS 45.45.80045.45.890 if they have:

- A license to offer digital product diagnosis, repair, or maintenance under the manufacturer's name, or
- A contract with a digital product manufacturer to provide diagnosis, repair, or maintenance of the manufacturer's products.

A digital product manufacturer who offers diagnosis, maintenance, or repair of its own products is considered an authorized service provider for the purposes of AS 45.45.800-45.45.890.

Sec. 45.45.870 states that digital product manufacturers don't have to disclose trade secrets to independent service providers or owners.

Sec. 45.45.880 states that:

- Agreements that waive, restrict, or limit obligations of digital product manufacturers are not enforceable.
- Digital product manufacturers cannot be held liable for injuries or damages that occur during diagnosis, maintenance, or repair of products by independent service providers or owners.

Sec. 45.45.890 states that information other than product documentation in a license or contract between digital product manufacturers and authorized service providers isn't required to be made available to independent service providers or owners and clarifies that the bill does not alter, impair, or supersede the terms of a lease or commercial contract.

Sec. 45.45.895 provides the exemptions for:

- A digital product that is a medical device, life safety systems, physical intrusion detection systems monitored by a person providing a security service, and physical access control equipment.
- The diagnosis, maintenance, and repair of a digital product that is a motor vehicle or motor vehicle part; or critical infrastructure, a part for critical infrastructure, or related equipment.

Sec. 45.45.899 provides definitions.

Section 3. Amends AS 45.50.471(b) by adding violations of HB 162 Digital Product Repair statutes AS 45.45.800-45.45.890 to the list of unfair methods of competition and unfair or deceptive acts or practices declared to be unlawful.

Section 4. Amends the uncodified law of the State of Alaska by adding a section describing the applicability of this Act.

Section 5. Amends the uncodified law of the State of Alaska by adding a section stating the Act cannot change the terms of a license or contract that is in effect before the effective date of this Act.

Section 6. Provides the effective date of January 1, 2029.

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE

REPRESENTATIVE MAXINE DIBERT

House District 31- Downtown Fairbanks

Session Contact
State Capitol, Room 126
Juneau, AK 99801-1182
(907) 465-2138

Interim Contact
1292 Sadler Way, Ste. 306
Fairbanks, AK 99701
(907) 451-4347

Chair Tribal Affairs Committee
Co-Chair House Resources Committee
House Education Committee
Joint Armed Services Committee

HB 162 Version O Summary of Changes

House Community and Regional Affairs Committee

Page 2, Sec. 45.45.830

Removes the requirement for manufacturers to provide documentation without charge, except that if the owner or provider requests it in physical form, they are allowed to charge the reasonable, actual price for preparing and sending the documentation; the section now only requires manufacturers to provide documentation if the owner or provider requests it in physical form, and allows them to charge for the reasonable, actual price of preparing and sending it.

Page 2, Sec. 45.45.840

Deletes this section that prohibits parts pairing and renumbers following sections accordingly.

Page 5, Sec. 45.45.895

Adds critical infrastructure as defined under AS 26.23.900, parts for critical infrastructure, and related equipment to the list of products exempt from the scope of the bill.

Page 5, Sec. 45.45.880

Adds “or provision” to agreements that are void if they violate the terms of the bill, clarifying that only the provisions of a contract that violate HB 162 are void rather than the entire contract.

Page 7, Sec. 6

Changes the effective date of the bill from 2027 to 2029.

Electronics, waste, and Right to Repair in Alaska

A woman in Kodiak waited months for her broken washing machine to be replaced. A frustrating moment for her, but scratch the surface and there is a far reaching environmental and consumer problem to solve in Alaska: the right to repair.

RIGHT TO REPAIR

APRIL 15, 2025
UPDATED OCT 18, 2024

Repairing a digital camera

Dyani Chapman
State Director, Alaska Environment Action

One of our top priorities is Right to Repair: making it so we can fix our own electonic stuff- everything from cell phones to tractors and blenders. Unfortunately, manufacturers often limit our ability to repair our electronics. This has environmental and financial repercussions everywhere, and the issue is even more stark in Alaska.

Environmental Impacts of Limiting Repair

E-waste

Electronic waste, or e-waste, is the fastest growing waste stream in the world. While that is distressing, it's not surprising, because when you own something (especially something electronic) and it breaks, there are only two primary courses of action. One is to repair it- either yourself or by taking it to someone. The other is to get rid of it- whether that be right away or after a few years of storage in your garage or junk drawer.

We wish recycling was more prevalent, but in 2022, only 22.3% of E-waste was collected for formal recycling and actually recycled because it's challenging to separate out the non-recyclable components and can be dangerous.

E-waste being collected in Seward, Alaska.

Photo by Dyani Chapman | TPIN

When we throw electronics away, toxic chemicals can get into our water, soil, and air. Folks processing electronics are exposed to lead, mercury, arsenic and other chemicals risking cancer, miscarriages, and neurological damage. In Alaska, rural landfills are unlined, and most burn to reduce volume. This can cause even bigger problems for people and wildlife as permafrost melts. Continued use is safer, making access to repair essential.

Buying new

Occasionally when we throw something out, we decide we're done with whatever that thing was. Maybe it's not worth buying it again, either because the thing is a VHS or DVD player and almost obsolete, or because we're feeling inclined towards a less tech heavy method. However, most of the time when our electronics break, we're going to replace them. The average person in the U.S buys a new phone every 2-3 years, a new computer every 4-5 years, new appliances every 10-15 years. Some farmers buy new tractors and combines every single year because they can't afford for their equipment to break (and not have an easy fix) at key points in the growing season.

While some buying behavior is people seeking the newest fancy features, a lot of folks would be thrilled to use their electronics for a few more years if they could easily fix minor problems from wear and tear. Unfortunately, they often can't because manufacturers withhold the necessary spare parts or tools. Buying those new electronics is even more detrimental to our environment than throwing old ones in the landfill. So, where do our new electronics come from and why are they so bad for the environment?

Mining

The first step is mining the minerals necessary to produce our electronics. Some of that mining is of rare earth minerals like lithium and cerium, which mostly happens in other countries. There is a cerium (used for the gloss on iPhone screens) mine in Inner Mongolia. They have a one to one ratio of rare earth mineral production and radioactive waste, so when they extract one ton of cerium, they also end up with one ton of radioactive waste along with 2600 cubic feet of acidic wastewater.

Other mining is for more well known minerals like gold and copper. There are efforts to destroy beautiful and essential ecosystems right here in Alaska for more of those metals- think the Pebble Mine in the Bristol Bay region or the Donlin Gold Mine in southwest Alaska. Many mining operations end up polluting nearby water, contaminating soil, emitting greenhouse gas emissions, and destroying vulnerable ecosystems.

Production

After extraction comes production. Over 275 million laptops are made globally each year. Making those laptops produces about the amount of CO_2 as 15 million cars driving on the road for a year. If Alaskans could all extend the lifetime of our televisions by just one additional year on average, it would reduce the amount of pollution produced by the equivalent of 1,127 typical cars coming off the road.

Distribution

Finally, new often means that a product has to be transported great distances- both to the places we buy our stuff, and then to our homes.

Every good not made in Alaska either goes by sea, air, or crosses an international border. Every additional mile means the use of more energy and more air pollution.

Financial Impacts of Limiting Repair

New is gnarly for the environment, but it's hard on us as consumers as well. There is a mark up on everything in Anchorage, and the more rural you get, the bigger that mark up is. Most of it comes down to shipping. We're a huge hub, and countless goods are shipped through Alaska, but with a population of around 700K, not that much gets unloaded here. Along with cost, the time it takes to get something new can be just as big of a problem. For rural farmers, when a tractor or other equipment breaks during the growing season, it can be devastating to their harvest. Regardless of where people live though, it's a financial hit to buy something, and then have to replace it instead of fixing it when it breaks. Repair would save the average family an average of $382/year.

Why don't we repair our stuff more often?

Repair obviously has a lot going for it from an environmental standpoint, and it's good for us-less cost than replacing it, self sufficiency, and fulfilling a good ethic of making full use. So, why doesn't repair happen more often? It's because manufacturers make it really hard. The information, tools, spare parts needed are often not available. Independent repair shops don't have access to those things either. Your only option is bringing it back to the manufacturer who can charge you so much or is so far away that it often is more cost effective to just buy the new one.

- More than a third of Alaskans (including all residents of Fairbanks and Juneau) live more than 100 miles from an authorized repairer of Apple products.
- 100% of Alaskans live more than 500 miles from an authorized repair provider for Samsung phones. The closest option in the U.S with a major airport is in Seattle.
- More than a third of Alaskans live more than 100 miles from an authorized repairer of LG appliances.
- 100% of Alaskans live more than 500 miles from an authorized Maytag service provider. The closest option in the U.S with a major airport is in Seattle.

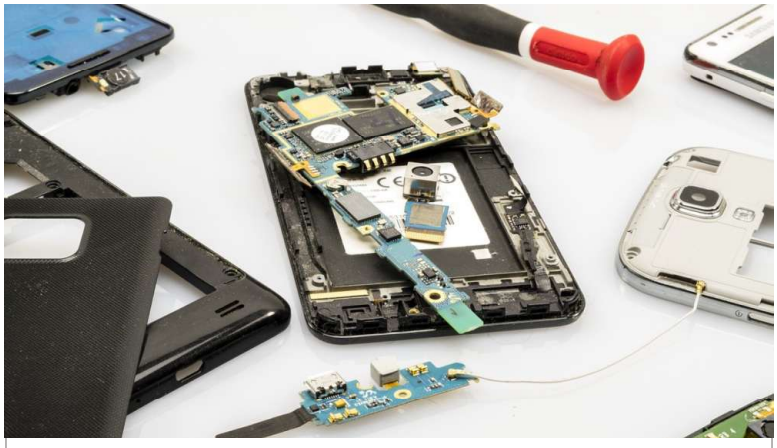
Additionally, when a phone screen breaks or a battery stops holding up in the cold, it's common for people to be told that it will cost more to fix than it's worth or that the device can be sent in, but it will take time to be returned. Putting your phone in the mail for a few weeks is debilitating to many people- people rely on their phones for work and communication. Independent repair is vital here in Alaska especially because it allows for timely repair.

With a lot of new farm equipment, specific software is needed to diagnose problems, and manufacturers restrict access to that software. That can mean transporting a tractor hundreds of miles to find out what's wrong regardless of how big the problem is, and hundreds more if a second opinion seems prudent. In Alaska, those hundreds of miles can be thousands. A farmer doesn't have that kind of time during the growing season. Limiting repair is a crummy business practice to boost profits at the expense of consumers and our environment.

So, what do we do?

The first step is to make sure that we get all of the use we possibly can out of our stuff before replacing it. That means we have to be able to fix our stuff when it breaks and choose repair before replacement. This is good for our air and water, and it also makes our local communities more resilient by using our local businesses and talent to keep our devices running instead of needing the global supply chain to constantly bring us new stuff.

All fifty states have introduced bills to improve repair access for electronics. New York, Minnesota, Colorado, California, and Oregon all have passed bills that improve repair access for at least some electronics. Alaska needs to join that group by passing a strong and comprehensive Right to Repair bill in the 2025-26 session. The good news is that we have a strong bill, the Digital Product Repair Act, which has been introduced in both the Senate (SB 111) and the House (HB 162)



repair.org

Right to Repair: Myths and Facts

Myth: Independent repair is dangerous.

Fact: **Independent repair has the same track record of safety as manufacturer-authorized repair.**

Independent repair businesses hire from the same labor pool of trained and experienced technicians as manufacturers' brand-authorized repair centers.

Manufacturers attempted to argue to the US Federal Trade Commission (FTC) that their repair providers are safer, but the FTC found no evidence to support this claim.[1] Instead, the FTC found evidence that manufacturers sometimes deliberately design products to make independent repairs less safe as a strategy for undercutting independent repair businesses.[2]

Electronics repair is, in general, quite safe. The US Bureau of Labor Statistics reports that the electronics repair industry has six times fewer occupational injuries than the national average.[3]

Bottom line: Electronics are complex—but most repairs are not. Many manufacturers make diagnostic and service information that makes finding and replacing failed parts easy. The best way to ensure that all repairs are done safely, and that everyone has the training needed to repair their devices, is to give people the information, replacement parts, and tools they need.

---

[1] US Federal Trade Commission (FTC), "Nixing the Fix: An FTC Report to Congress on Repair Restrictions" (2021), FTC.gov, https://www.ftc.gov/system/files/documents/reports/nixing-fix-ftc-report-congress-repair-restrictions/nixing_the_fix_report_final_5521_630pm-508_002.pdf, p. 28

[2] US FTC, "Nixing the Fix," pp. 19–21

[3] In 2020, the electronics repair industry reported 0.3 cases of injury requiring time away from work per 100 workers, compared to 1.8 cases per 100 on average. US Bureau of Labor Statistics, "Injuries, Illnesses, and Fatalities" (2021), https://www.bls.gov/web/osh/summ1_00.htm#soii_n17_as_t1.f.1

Myth: Lithium-ion batteries cannot be safely replaced.

Fact: **People replace billions of lithium batteries without incident.**

Batteries are consumable components that need to be replaced over the life of any product. iPhone batteries are rated to last just 16 months of daily charging,[4] which is less than half the average lifespan of a smartphone.[5] It should not take an authorized repair technician to replace a battery. A 2021 Environmental Protection Agency report described lithium-ion batteries as "quite safe when not improperly disposed."[6] Lithium-ion batteries have a failure rate of less than one in a million, and most of those failures happen at the recycling or waste management stage.[7] (For comparison, the lifetime chance of being struck by lightning is about 1 in 15,000.[8])

Much of the risk of working with lithium-ion batteries could be mitigated if manufacturers followed common sense safety regulations like labeling 18650 batteries (which can have different internal chemistries) and securing batteries with screws or removable adhesive strips instead of glues.[9]

With access to the proper information and tools, consumers, independent repair providers, and recycling facilities are able to remove and replace lithium-ion batteries safely and successfully—and regularly in this country and around the world. Many things we allow people to do, such as changing tires on a car, pose more risk.[10]

Bottom line: Battery replacement isn't dangerous, and manufacturers have the power to make it safer. You can't claim it's dangerous to replace batteries without proper instructions or original parts, and then withhold those instructions and parts. People manage risks all the time, many of which are more volatile than swapping a battery.

---

[4] Radu Vrabie, "How Long Do Cell Phone Batteries Last?" (2021), Power Bank Expert, https://www.powerbankexpert.com/how-long-do-cell-phone-batteries-last/

[5] Statista, "Average Lifespan (Replacement Cycle Length) of Smartphones Worldwide from 2013 to 2020" (2020), https://www.statista.com/statistics/786876/replacement-cycle-length-of-smartphones-worldwide/

[6] United States Environmental Protection Agency, "An Analysis of Lithium-ion Battery Fires in Waste Management and Recycling" (2021), EPA.gov, https://www.epa.gov/system/files/documents/2021-08/lithium-ion-battery-report-update-7.01_508.pdf

[7] Allen St. John, "Why Lithium-Ion Batteries Still Explode, and What's Being Done to Fix the Problem" (2016), Consumer Reports, https://www.consumerreports.org/safety-recalls/why-lithium-ion-batteries-still-explode-and-whats-being-done-to-fix-the-problem/

[8] United States National Weather Service, "How Dangerous Is Lightning?" (2018), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, https://www.weather.gov/safety/lightning-odds

[9] US FTC, "Nixing the Fix," pp. 19–21

[10] The automotive repair industry has nearly four times the occupational injury rate of electronics repair—despite the fact that automotive repair is *also* below the national occupational injury average, at 1.1 incidents requiring time away from work per 100 workers, compared to the 1.8-incident average. US Bureau of Labor Statistics, "Injuries, Illnesses, and Fatalities" (2021), https://www.bls.gov/web/osh/summ1_00.htm#soii_n17_as_t1.f.1

Myth: Right to Repair harms environmental or safety features.

Fact: **Right to Repair helps make sure repairs are done right.**

Right to Repair legislation only requires manufacturers to provide the parts, tools, and information necessary to diagnose a problem and complete a repair. This does not include illegal modification tools.

The owner of the device is still responsible for ensuring that they comply with all relevant safety and environmental regulations. Those regulations are enforced aggressively by organizations like the United States Environmental Protection Agency, which has levied many millions of dollars in civil penalties against sellers of illegal devices that defeat emissions control systems for engines.[11] Right to Repair legislation would keep these emissions control systems, these regulations, and their enforcement scheme intact.

Right to Repair legislation is a huge boon for the environment, keeping working products in use longer. The claim that Right to Repair legislation will harm environmental features is a red herring.

Bottom line: Right to Repair legislation helps the environment by keeping products working longer, and owners must still comply with environmental and safety regulations.

Myth: Right to Repair legislation will expose manufacturers to liability for faulty repairs.

Fact: **Manufacturers aren't liable for someone else's bad repair.**

If a repair provider makes a mistake that results in an injury or loss, existing bodies of negligence and tort law govern the assignment of liability. Right to Repair legislation does not assign any additional liability to manufacturers for a badly repaired product. When manufacturers have made parts, tools, and information available to independent shops and consumers, they typically include liability release in the terms of service.[12] This legislation wouldn't restrict that practice.

Bottom line: There are many ways for manufacturers to protect themselves from liability from someone else's bad repairs and to resist overreach of assigned liability.

---

[11] United States Environmental Protection Agency, Office of Enforcement and Compliance Assurance, "Enforcement Alert: Aftermarket Defeat Devices and Tampering Are Illegal and Undermine Vehicle Emissions Controls" (2020), EPA.gov, https://www.epa.gov/sites/default/files/2020-12/documents/tamperinganddefeatdevices-enfalert.pdf

[12] For example, see Apple, "Repair Terms and Conditions" (2022), https://www.apple.com/legal/sales-support/terms/repair/generalservice/servicetermsen/

Myth: Right to Repair legislation is a risk to cybersecurity and privacy.

Fact: **Repair access protects cybersecurity and privacy.**

The common so-called "cybersecurity concerns" raised by manufacturers are "disingenuous and false," according to Dr. Richard Forno (Stanford, Computer Science) and Dr. Avi Rubin (Johns Hopkins, Technical Director of the JHU Information Security Institute). They co-authored a rebuttal that found "no cybersecurity risk in third-party repair."[13]

Securely designed products cannot be undermined by repair technicians, whether manufacturer-authorized, independent, or consumer. Manufacturers do not provide authorized repair technicians with information that would undermine security, because they know those secrets would not be kept by their broad service networks. Right to Repair legislation asks only for the same tools already provided to authorized repair technicians. The FTC's "Nixing the Fix" explained, "The record contains no empirical evidence to suggest that independent repair shops are more or less likely than authorized repair shops to compromise or misuse customer data."[14]

As international cybersecurity expert Tarah Wheeler testified at a hearing in Washington State, "If taking your iPhone apart represents a serious threat to the safety and security of communications in this country, we should be talking right now in an underground situation room."[15]

Bottom line: Cybersecurity experts agree that these laws present no cybersecurity risk.

Myth: Manufacturers will void consumers' warranties if they don't use 'authorized' services.

Fact: **"Warranty void if removed" stickers are illegal.**

Since the Magnuson-Moss Warranty Act passed in 1975, US manufacturers are prohibited by federal law from voiding a warranty because the consumer repaired the device themself or used an independent repair provider.[16] The FTC invites reports of illegal "warranty void" stickers.[17]

Bottom line: Manufacturers may not void warranties for third-party or DIY repairs.

---

[13] Richard Forno, "Challenging Cybersecurity as the Reason to Oppose the Consumer Right to Repair" (2021), Stanford Law School: The Center for Internet and Society, http://cyberlaw.stanford.edu/blog/2021/01/challenging-cybersecurity-reason-oppose-consumer-right-repair

[14] US FTC, "Nixing the Fix" (2021), p. 31

[15] "Testimony: Tarah Wheeler, New America" (2020), SecuRepairs.org, https://securepairs.org/testimony-tarah-wheeler-new-america/

[16] Craig Lloyd, "Warranty-Voiding Stickers Are Illegal. These Companies Still Use Them" (2019), iFixit, https://www.ifixit.com/News/15464/warranty-voiding-stickers-are-illegal-but-these-companies-are-still-using-them

[17] Emily Wu, "The FTC Weighs in on Repair Restrictions" (2021), Federal Trade Commission, https://www.consumer.ftc.gov/blog/2021/05/ftc-weighs-repair-restrictions

Myth: Consumers already have plenty of repair options.

Fact: **Manufacturer repair fails to meet many people's needs.**

When the only available repair service is manufacturer-authorized repair, consumers often experience long wait times, high prices without competition or alternatives, delays in shipping and repair, and limits to the types of repair available.

The FTC reported having received similar complaints about long wait times and repair delays from Apple product owners, from Marine Officers concerned about military equipment, and from farmers trying to repair planting and harvesting equipment.[18] They found that the COVID-19 pandemic "has exacerbated the effects of repair restrictions on consumers," particularly regarding wait times.[19]

Manufacturers sometimes point to their systems for enabling independent shops to become authorized (or partially authorized). However, often these programs sell parts to those shops at exorbitant prices and offer much worse tools and documentation than they provide to their authorized service providers. Electronics repair shop owners have publicly described Apple's Independent Repair Provider program as "a joke."[20]

Bottom line: Right to Repair laws will help make repair faster and cheaper for consumers. By ensuring that manufacturers provide parts, tools, and documentation to independent shops and owners on the same terms as to authorized repair shops, Right to Repair laws ensure fair competition in the repair industry.

Myth: Right to Repair legislation won't help local economies

Fact: **Repair jobs are local jobs.**

Right to Repair legislation would provide much-needed support to small, local, and independent repair services. An Illinois Economic Activity survey found that repairing electronics creates 13 times as many jobs as recycling it.[21] For every 1000 tons of electronics, repair creates 200 jobs[22].

Bottom line: Because most repair jobs can't be outsourced, supporting independent repair means supporting local businesses.

---

[18] US FTC, "Nixing the Fix" (2021), p. 39
[19] US FTC, "Nixing the Fix" (2021), p. 4
[20] Audrey Conklin, "Independent Repair Shops Disappointed with Apple's Repair Programs" (2020), FOXBusiness, https://www.foxbusiness.com/technology/apple-right-to-repair
[21] People Before Profit, "Right to Repair Policy" (2022), https://www.pbp.ie/policies/right-to-repair/
[22] Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Activity, "Electronics Recycling: Economic Opportunity and Environmental Impact" (2009), https://www.slideshare.net/Bill_Martin/ewaste-fact-sheet

Myth: US reductions in the total volume of e-waste mean it's no longer a problem.

Fact: **E-waste is the fastest-growing waste stream, and Right to Repair legislation is one of our best tools to reduce it.**

Electronic waste is toxic to human health when landfilled, incinerated, or improperly recycled. It can release heavy metals and persistent organic pollutants, which have both immediate and bioaccumulating effects.[23] Manufacturers like to point to a study that found that in 2020, total e-waste volume had declined 10% since 2015.[24] But the authors of that study reject the suggestion that manufacturer takeback programs explain the decline.[25] Instead, the researchers explain that consumer electronics have changed significantly in the last two decades—some devices that were once large and heavy (like cathode ray tube televisions) are now smaller and lighter. State e-waste regulations, and their definitions of what counts as e-waste, haven't managed to keep up, which distorts the real picture of e-waste in the United States.

Global measures of e-waste find it to be still growing dramatically, up 21% from 2015–2020.[26] And even at smaller volumes, e-waste makes up a significant portion of toxic trash: In the US, "e-waste already accounts for 70% of the heavy metals" found in the waste stream.[27]

Plus, focusing only on e-waste hides the enormous environmental costs of electronics manufacturing. For example, 81% of the energy a laptop uses in its lifetime is consumed during manufacturing, not during use by consumers, and mining for the materials in electronics is incredibly destructive.[28] Getting a single ounce of gold out of the earth can create up to 91 tons of waste. Keeping electronics in use instead of in the waste stream reduces environmental costs.

Bottom line: Repair is good for the environment, because it keeps products in useful life for longer instead of requiring that consumers buy new.

---

[23] Ming Man, Ravi Naidu, and Ming H. Wong, "Persistent Toxic Substances Released from Uncontrolled E-Waste Recycling and Actions for the Future" (2013), Science of the Total Environment 463-4, https://d1wqtxts1xzle7.cloudfront.net/46104460/Persistent_toxic_substances_released_fro20160531-28043-1eq1erl-with-cover-page-v2.pdf

[24] Shahana Althaf, Callie W. Babbitt, and Roger Chen, "The Evolution of Consumer Electronic Waste in the United States" (2020), Journal of Industrial Ecology 25, https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/epdf/10.1111/jiec.13074

[25] Callie Babbitt and Shahana Althaf, "Consumer Electronics Have Changed a Lot in 20 Years – Systems for Managing E-Waste Aren't Keeping Up," The Conversation, https://theconversation.com/consumer-electronics-have-changed-a-lot-in-20-years-systems-for-managing-e-waste-arent-keeping-up-147972

[26] Vanessa Forti, "Global Electronic Waste up 21% in Five Years, and Recycling Isn't Keeping Up," The Conversation, https://theconversation.com/global-electronic-waste-up-21-in-five-years-and-recycling-isnt-keeping-up-141997

[27] Ming Man, Ravi Naidu, and Ming H. Wong, "Persistent Toxic Substances"

[28] Vaclav Smil, "Your Phone Costs Energy—Even Before You Turn It On" (2016), IEEE Spectrum, https://spectrum.ieee.org/your-phone-costs-energyeven-before-you-turn-it-on

Alaska Beacon

COMMENTARY

Three examples that show Alaskans need the right to repair

JUSTIN CASTLE FEBRUARY 24, 2026 11:46 AM

An electronics repair shop in Eagle River on Feb 19, 2026. (Image courtesy of Justin Castle)

Alaskans are a pretty resourceful bunch — when things break, we fix them. But sometimes, the deck gets stacked against us. As a business owner in Eagle River, Alaska, I see this firsthand. My business, Eagle River Electronics, fixes a wide range of products, making sure equipment keeps going and stays out of the trash. We do our best to service the needs of our community, but manufacturers have made it harder to fix a range of products, and the community suffers because of it.

Passing right to repair legislation in Juneau, like SB 111 and HB 162, and federal legislation on software locks would ensure that independent businesses like mine, as well as individuals, can access the tools and resources necessary to keep things working.

In January 2026 alone, I have at least three examples of how right to repair could have saved Alaskans from undue hardships.

First, a man who makes his living plowing snow came to our shop in a panic because the control board for his truck-mounted plow went out. The company who manufactures this told him to mail it in and expect it to be repaired and sent back in 3 months, when winter is practically over. The manufacturer doesn't provide access to schematics or documentation, which would enable a shop like mine to diagnose and repair the issue. The man had no recourse to get his plow fixed this winter. Last check, he was looking for new work and worrying about keeping a roof over his child's head.

Second, another man came into my shop. He does CNC (computer numerical control) machine work for designing countertops for new construction and remodels. A large part of his business was built around a specific machine that was made over 30 years ago. The business that manufactured it has since closed its doors. When he contacted us, we were successfully able to diagnose the CNC machine's issue: a faulty power supply. But unfortunately, the standards have changed. We could not determine what kind of power it should deliver – 12 volt? 15 volt? We could manually re-wire a new, modern day power supply to fit the needs of the machine, but without documentation it would be risky or potentially dangerous. Moving forward, Right to Repair rules would ensure that the technical documentation would be available to allow for repairs even after a manufacturer goes out of business – but for now, we are stuck with a minor issue causing a huge headache for a local business.

Finally, a mother came to us because her new "smart" baby monitor was sharing unknown information over the internet when she was not using it. She got the device to keep an eye on her child, but there is no need for the camera to be sending data when it's not being used. The baby monitor had a camera and could see where the baby was changed. This woman was very concerned with how that footage could be used. The software behind this device is not public, and digital locks, protected by federal law, mean that even though she owns the device, we could not help her modify it to protect her child. Our advice: Disconnect and discontinue use.

I could go on – these are three examples in just the last month. There are hundreds of additional cases where our lack of a right to repair pose a financial and/or safety risk to Alaskans.

Right to repair is about more than just independent repair businesses like mine. It's about fathers having the right to get critical equipment repaired in a timely manner when it's needed to keep a roof over their families' heads. It's about the business owner who has been delivering quality results for over three decades to be able to continue to deliver the same tried-and-true quality craftsmanship that his community has grown to love. It is about mothers having a right to be informed of what their child is being exposed to and being able to protect their children.

I would like to see Alaska recapture the can-do American attitude that built this country and stand up for the rights of owners and repair shops to fix the products we buy. As a business

owner with a vested interest in the well-being and growth of his community, I am proud to stand for the right to repair at every opportunity.

https://www.newsminer.com/opinion/community_perspectives/the-right-to-repair/article_abf2dd7d-4727-4ce5-8775-222d4bd8501f.html

The right to repair

Joe Torma
Mar 15, 2026

Fairbanks North Star Borough families, students, veterans, and nonprofits already rely on Green Star of Interior Alaska's Reuse IT, Repair IT and Reboot IT programs to keep computers out of the landfill and into the hands of people who need them.

Reuse IT programs have sold over 2,000 computer systems since opening in May 2023 and have diverted 40,000 pounds of electronics from our local waste stream through refurbishing, repair, and resale. This includes over 200 systems in 2025 alone provided to low-income Alaskans and nonprofits through our Reboot IT Technology Grants.

These programs work because dedicated technicians repair, upgrade, and rebuild donated machines. But they hit the same wall every independent repair shop and individual fixer faces: manufacturers keep spare parts, tools, software updates, and schematics locked behind "authorized" channels at inflated prices. That makes repairs slower, more expensive, and sometimes impossible — limiting how many computers Green Star can rescue and how many families they can help.

If Alaska's Right to Repair bills (SB 111 and HB 162) become law, everything changes for the better in the FNSB:

• More computers saved. Fair access to parts and schematics would let Green Star's Reuse IT team repair and refurbish far more machines, extending their usable life and keeping thousands more pounds of e-waste alive each year.

• Bigger, stronger Reboot IT grants. With cheaper repairs, Green Star could stretch every donation dollar further — delivering more free or low-cost computers to students doing remote learning, veterans applying for jobs, nonprofits running on tight budgets, and low-income families bridging the digital divide in our communities.

• Local economic boost. Independent repair shops and skilled technicians in Fairbanks would thrive, creating jobs and keeping repair dollars in our community instead of shipping them to out-of-state manufacturers.

• Real cost savings for families. A repaired or refurbished computer costs a fraction of a new one. Right to Repair would make that option available to more residents.

• Stronger circular economy. Green Star's programs already turn waste into opportunity. Right to Repair would remove the biggest obstacle, letting us keep even more electronics circulating right here in the FNSB.

Right to Repair isn't about forcing anyone to fix their own devices — it's about giving Alaskans the choice and the tools to do so fairly. For Green Star's Reuse IT, Repair IT and Reboot IT programs, it would mean more refurbished computers in classrooms, more grants reaching families, and nonprofits, and less e-waste coming into the state since what is already here could be reused.

The legislature has a chance right now with SB 111 and HB 162 to make that future real. As a Fairbanks resident who sees the impact of these programs every day, I urge our lawmakers to pass Right to Repair — for our environment, our economy, and every family in the FNSB who deserves affordable, reliable technology.

Give people the right to repair by passing the Digital Product Repair Act (SB 111 and HB 162).

Joe Torma is a Fairbanks resident and the general manager of Green Star of Interior Alaska.

Table 1: Right to Repair Laws in Selected States				
State	**Bill**	**Effective**	**Scope**	**Exemptions**
California	SB-244	7/1/2024	Electronic or appliance products	Alarm systems Video game consoles Heavy equipment utilizing independent dealers (as defined in Cal Bus & Prof Code Div. 8, Ch. 28)
	SB-1384	1/1/2025	Powered wheelchairs	N/A
Colorado	HB22-1031	1/1/2023	Powered wheelchairs	N/A
	HB23-1011	1/1/2024	Agricultural equipment	Self propelled vehicles Powersports vehicles Aircraft Irrigation equipment
	HB24-1121	1/1/2026	Digital electronic equipment Bans "parts pairing"	Motor vehicles Medical devices Industrial/utility/construction/mining/forestry Electrical vehicle charging Power distribution Portable generators/fuel cells Marine vessels Aviation All terrain/recreational/racing vehicles Safety communications Modems/routers/ISP devices Video game consoles Alarm systems
	HB25-1330	1/1/2026	N/A	Quantum computing equipment
Connecticut	Substitute for S.B. No. 3	7/1/2026	Electronic or appliance product	All-terrain sports vehicle Construction Electric vehicle charging infrastructure Fuel cells Construction/farming/forestry/landscaping/ mining/road building/industrial/utility equipment Generator set Internal combustion engine Marine vehicle Outdoor power equipment Portable generator Power tools Racing/recreational vehicles
Maine	Maine Question 4	1/5/2025	Motor vehicles	N/A
Maryland	HB0031	10/1/2025	Powered wheelchairs	N/A

Table 1: Right to Repair Laws in Selected States				
State	**Bill**	**Effective**	**Scope**	**Exemptions**
Massachusetts	Mass Ballot Question 1 (2012)	1/1/2013	Motor vehicles (diagnostic and repair information)	N/A
	Mass Ballot Question 1 (2020)	1/1/2022	Motor vehicles (telematics data)	N/A
Minnesota	SF 2744	7/1/2024	Digital electronic equipment	Motor vehicles Medical devices Offroad/farm/forestry/industrial/utility/ construction/road building/mining/landscaping equipment Portable generators Marine/all terrain/recreational/racing vehicles Internal combustion engines Generators/fuel cells Power tools Video game consoles Energy storage systems Critical infrastructure
Nevada	AB407	5/30/2025	Powered wheelchairs	N/A
New York	A01285	12/28/2023	Digital electronic equipment	Home appliances with embedded digital products Alarm systems Motor vehicles Video game consoles Medical devices Off road farm/forestry/industrial/construction/mining /landscaping equipment Outdoor power equipment Marine/all terrain/recreational/racing vehicles Internal combustion engines Power tools Commercial/industrial electrical equipment Electronic bicycles

Table 1: Right to Repair Laws in Selected States				
State	**Bill**	**Effective**	**Scope**	**Exemptions**
Oregon	SB 1596	1/1/2025	Consumer electronics, cellphones Bans "parts pairing"	Motor vehicles Medical devices Video game consoles HVAC systems Solar power systems Energy storage systems Internal combustion engines/electric batteries/fuel cells Off road farm/utility/forestry/industry/construction/ mining/landscaping Marine/all terrain/recreational/racing vehicles Electric toothbrushes
Texas	HB 2963	9/1/2026	Digital electronic equipment	Equipment for use in critical infrastructure Motor vehicles Powersports vehicles Outboard motors Medical devices Farm equipment Industrial electrical equipment Aerospace/airplane/train equipment Power distribution equipment Home appliances with embedded digital electronic equipment Safety communications systems Alarm systems Video game consoles
Washington	SB 5680	7/27/2025	Powered wheelchairs	N/A
	HB 1483	7/27/2025	Digital electronic products Bans "parts pairing"	Medical devices Motor vehicles Power generation & storage equipment Solar power systems Electrical distribution systems Safety/alarm systems Utility/farm/construction/road building/mining/forestry/landscaping equipment Electronic vehicle charging equipment Low earth broadband equipment Video game consoles Off road/marine/all terrain/racing/recreational vehicles Internal combustion engines Outdoor power equipment Generators/electric batteries/fuel cells Power tools

NOTES: "Scope" includes only broad product types. Please see each state's law for more detailed information (e.g. definitions, manufacture dates, price limits).
"Exemptions" lists product category exclusions roughly in order as mentioned in law, and does not include non-physical exemptions (e.g. trade secrets, software, liability).