

CHEVROLET
OF SOUTH ANCHORAGE
A LITHIA STORE

February 9th, 2024

Representative Jesse Sumner Chair
House Labor and Commerce Committee
State Capitol, Room 421
Juneau, AK 99801

RE: HB 233 – Relating to rates and time allowances for required motor vehicle work

Dear Chair Sumner and members of the Committee:

I am writing today in support of HB 233 – relating to rates and time allowances for required motor vehicle warranty repair work.

My name is David Raff, Executive Manager of Chevrolet of South Anchorage. Our store has 68 employees that sell, service and maintain automobiles for our neighbors and fellow Alaskans. I have been with Lithia Motors for 15 years and have proudly served Alaskans at our South Anchorage location for 7 years. With over 35 years in the automobile business and thousands upon thousands of customers assisted; I am happy that Alaska has become my home and with it the ability to help further the careers of my employees as well as help people with one of the most necessary requirements of Alaskan life, transportation.

This bill is extraordinarily important for a multitude of reasons, but primarily it comes on the wings of big corporate automobile manufacturers' massive push to cut the costs of servicing customers vehicles by whittling down the allowed time paid to perform a job. This push to cut costs has many major detrimental effects-

1. Creates an environment that precipitates a "race to the bottom" for performing a job in as fast and hurried means possible to appease manufacturer repair standards. This harms the ability for a customer to get the best repair possible by emphasizing speed instead of quality. As manufacturers analyze clocked time by technicians in this environment, they continually revise these repair times down as technicians hurriedly complete their jobs, further exacerbating the issue. Customers deserve the ability to get their vehicle fixed right the first time and HB 233 helps technicians make sure the job is done right the first time and that the customer gets back on the road safely.

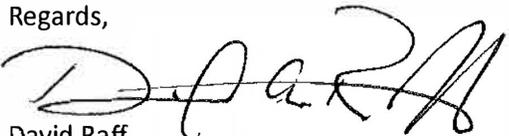
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2. Technicians completing the repairs pay a price too. Not only does a technician working as fast as possible increase the likelihood for error, it also increases the likelihood of workplace injury and wear/tear on a technician's body. As an example, it is common for a diesel engine repair on a GM truck to involve lifting the cab off of the frame of a vehicle to get better access to the engine compartment, yet manufacturers continually push to eliminate this practice to cut repair time and instead suggest that a technician sprawl across the top of an engine on the engine bay itself and reach down to get access for repair. These suggestions are ridiculous and in no way is something a technician could do for hours each day without having negative physical impact. HB 233 provides for fair repair times based on competitive repair evaluation times and gives technicians a much-needed breath to ensure a complete repair, but also a repair that is done in a safe manner.
3. Technician pay and dealership revenue are a more important thing to the local economy than big corporate manufacturer profits. Clearly when looking at the quarterly earnings reports of big manufacturers such as GM, they are not hurting for profit, yet a squeeze on local earnings and growth is a real thing. HB 233 helps protect our local employees and local businesses from corporate greed and the continual grind between a withering consumer and strengthening corporate power.

Alaska must continue its position of being a state that is welcome to business and the hard-working employees that want to raise their families here. The only way to do this is by passing significant legislation such as HB 233 that makes it an easier decision for a skilled technician to call Alaska home. We not only must only protect the vital resource of our born in Alaska population and do everything we can to keep them in our great state, but also entice other hard-working Americans from the lower 48 to call Alaska home to help ensure economic growth and stability.

HB 233 is essential for our automobile technicians but also to the Alaskans that require good work to keep them on the road in our demanding climate. Thank you for your consideration of HB 233, and I request your support in passing this legislation that is clearly so important for our beautiful state, our families, and our neighbors.

Regards,



David Raff

Executive Manager

Chevrolet of South Anchorage