



## **Election 2025 outreach**

### **Potential questions and answers**

#### **What is the auto care industry?**

The auto care industry offers Canadians any product or service a vehicle may need after it rolls off the dealership's lot.

Its nearly 25,000 independent auto care shops located across Canada ensure every Canadian has reasonable access to auto care.

The industry:

- Is vital to Canada's economy; it employs over 500,000 Canadians and contributes close to \$44 billion to the economy.
- Is an essential service which includes manufacturing of replacement parts, distribution networks and service and repair shops, and is responsible for keeping the country's fleet of almost 26.6 million vehicles on the road.
- Is made up of small businesses. In 2019, there were 48,940 aftermarket businesses; 99 per cent had fewer than 100 workers.

#### **What is the auto care industry's concern with regards to the right to repair?**

Repairing modern vehicles requires access to the vehicle's diagnostic data. Without access to this data, independent auto repair shops cannot service a vehicle.

Automakers control diagnostic data. New vehicles wirelessly transmit diagnostic data directly to automakers, allowing them to control all access to it, including which auto repair shops can obtain it and under what terms.

The current voluntary agreement between automakers and the aftermarket was not built for a wireless world and does not include the new technology found in modern vehicles. Furthermore, because notable auto manufacturers are not required to join the agreement, its effectiveness has been undermined.



Increasingly, Canadians have no choice for auto repair. Because automakers will not share diagnostic data, this leaves owners with only one option: to service their vehicles at the dealership.

## **What are you asking of the federal government?**

For a truly competitive Canadian automotive aftermarket to continue to exist, Original Equipment Manufacturers (OEM) must be mandated to provide the aftermarket with direct, remote, and real-time access to diagnostic data, for diagnosis, maintenance and repair services.

### **Why do it:**

- Give drivers a choice in where they have their vehicles serviced.
- Reduce repair costs for Canadians.
- Provide convenient access for drivers to have their vehicles serviced, including in rural areas.
- Support well-paying, skilled jobs in the aftermarket including in small communities.
- Provide a more competitive auto care market.
- Extend the life of vehicles, keeping them on the road longer.

## **Are there any other jurisdictions currently doing this?**

Right to repair legislation has gained momentum in other jurisdictions around the world. For example:

- The recently passed Bill 29 in Quebec makes clear the obligation to require manufacturers to make available the “means of diagnosis or repair” to car owners or their agents (and prohibits manufacturers from withholding information and tools falling within that category).
- In 2023, the US Congress re-introduced federal, bi-partisan auto right to repair legislation (the REPAIR Act). With more than 40 co-sponsors, this comprehensive legislation would ensure that vehicle owners can choose where they get their vehicles serviced and repaired, without obstruction from vehicle manufacturers. While the REPAIR Act did not progress to the House floor ahead of the November election, it is expected that this legislation will be reintroduced shortly.
- In 2022, Australia passed a law that requires vehicle manufacturers to make diagnostic data and information fully accessible to independent workshops.



- In 2021, the first ever right to repair laws in the European Union came into effect that require manufacturers to make parts and repair information for products available to third parties.
- In 2020, Massachusetts voters overwhelmingly (75 per cent) supported a ballot initiative for state legislation that would provide car owners with access to their mechanical data and would permit owners to share that data with the repair shop of their choice.

## **Is the independent auto care sector asking for more than vehicle service and repair data?**

No. We are not asking for access to personal driver data. We are simply requesting access to vehicle service and repair data to provide vehicle owners with repair options and choice.

## **If automakers share vehicle repair information, does it not open the door to cyber security threats?**

Cyber security should not become a reason to justify limiting serviceability.

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration in the US recently released updated cyber security practices for motor vehicles, recommending that the automotive industry provide strong vehicle cyber security protections that do not unduly restrict access by alternative third-party repair services authorized by the vehicle owner.

Automakers want to control access to repair information through a closed system, while the auto care industry wants repair information to be accessible through an interoperable, standardized, open system.

Among IT experts, there is an opinion that the multi-layered architecture of interoperable open systems might offer better protection against cyber security attacks than closed systems.

Cyber security risks can be managed throughout the vehicle's lifecycle through collaboration between automakers and the aftermarket and industry and regulatory expertise.

## **Does the auto care sector suffer with labour shortages?**

Canada's independent auto repair shops face two significant labour shortages:

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- A shortage of automotive tradespeople; and
- A skills shortage among our workforce.

**We urge the government to:**

- Fund industry-led initiatives that break stigma associated with a career in the automotive trades.
- Fund industry-led upskilling initiatives to address labour and skills shortages within the workforce.
- Work with the industry to attract more young Canadians and under-represented groups to the automotive trades.
- Work with the industry to implement solutions to meet our sector's labour needs. This includes ensuring that automotive tradespeople are properly trained to service electric vehicles (EV) as Canada transitions to a growing EV fleet.

## **Does the aftermarket have a role in helping prevent auto theft in Canada?**

Representing Canada's auto care sector, AIA Canada and its members play an important role in building awareness and educating consumers on Canadians' vulnerabilities when it comes to the issue of auto theft.

Through brick-and-mortar retail spaces, our members provide an opportunity to connect with current vehicle owners on measures that can be taken to enhance safety, including the sale and promotion of anti-theft products.

AIA Canada members have been monitoring consumer trends closely and have acted to expand its product line of anti-theft devices, as well as improve digital content to better educate consumers on the products available to help prevent auto thefts.

AIA Canada and its members will continue to work with the Government of Canada and all political parties to provide Canadians with the tools to educate, prevent, mitigate and track stolen vehicles.

## **Automakers have made the claim that right to repair will work against their efforts to keep vehicles secure. Can you speak to this?**

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Claims from vehicle manufacturers that allowing the right to repair will work against their efforts to keep vehicle systems secure does not address the root causes perpetuating the rise in automotive thefts.

The right to repair is about ensuring independent repair and service technicians have access to necessary data strictly for the diagnosis, service or repair of a product. If providing independent technicians with necessary vehicle data would compromise security, this suggests the vehicle was not designed with security in mind from the outset.

By pinning the blame on external factors, manufacturers are diverting attention from their own shortcomings in securing products against theft and other forms of unauthorized access. While offering a temporary reprieve for the industries in question, this strategy does a disservice to consumers, policymakers, and the broader ecosystem of innovation and security.

There must be a collaborative approach that involves stakeholders from across the spectrum, including industry representatives, security experts, policy makers, and the aftermarket to ensure that solutions are put forward with the public's interest in mind.

## **How would potential US tariffs impact Canada's automotive aftermarket?**

Collectively, Canada's automotive aftermarket supply and service chain contributes over \$43.9 billion to the economy, keeping Canada's fleet of almost 26 million vehicles on the road, and in safe condition.

The supply and service chain includes parts manufacturers, wholesalers and distributors, retailers and auto service shops.

Canada's aftermarket relies upon a diverse, competitively-priced parts market. The more options that are available to the aftermarket, the more competitive they can keep repair and maintenance pricing for drivers.

Additional tariffs on auto parts and supplies used by the aftermarket to repair vehicles will limit the aftermarket's ability to provide cost-effective service to Canadians.

At a time when many drivers are balancing housing, food, heating and gas payments, ensuring a competitive aftermarket has never been more important.



Punitive tariffs do not respect the integrated supply chain that exists between Canada and the United States' auto industry. Imposition of this would have serious ramifications for the supply and service chains that Canadians rely on for affordable vehicle repairs and maintenance.

AIA Canada is monitoring the situation very closely and we will not hesitate to stand up for Canada's automotive aftermarket.

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