

MA 'Right To Repair' Compromise Signed Into Law

Shannon Young, Associated Press

BOSTON (AP) — Independent repair shops and vehicle owners who want to make their own repairs would get access to software needed to diagnose car trouble under a bill signed Tuesday by Mass. Gov. Deval Patrick to settle a dispute over whether automakers should be required to provide such information.

The Democratic governor signed the legislation privately at the Statehouse. But voters also will have an opportunity to weigh in through a November ballot question that would give automakers less time to comply with the mandate.

Passed by lawmakers on the final day of the legislative session, the bill represents a compromise between supporters and opponents who looked to avoid an expensive ballot question campaign over the "Right to Repair" proposal.

Art Kinsman, a spokesman for the Right to Repair Coalition, said the new law "sends a message around the country that repair information for cars should never be a secret."

Meanwhile, Dan Gage of the Alliance of Automobile Manufacturers said the new law will allow carmakers to "collectively innovate and preserve the safety and security of vehicles."

The new law includes key concessions to automakers that were not part of the November ballot question. The industry would be given until 2018 to satisfy a mandate that all new cars sold in the state include an onboard diagnostic and repair information system that can easily be accessed with any typical laptop computer. The ballot question called for a similar requirement in new cars as of 2015.

Now that the proposal has been become law, advocates from both sides have pledged to join forces in a campaign to educate Massachusetts voters to check "no" on the November "Right to Repair" ballot question.

But Kinsman acknowledged that due to the high level of support his coalition has gathered for the ballot question, it may be hard to persuade voters to oppose the proposal.

He said he was not too concerned, however, if the ballot question passes, because the Legislature could still move to reinstate the compromise law when it reconvenes in January.

Supporters of the compromise law say it will give car manufacturers more flexibility to choose the device that would provide access to repair information. Automakers had balked at being bound to a single device identified in the ballot measure, saying it could force the industry to use outmoded technology.

MA 'Right To Repair' Compromise Signed Into Law

Published on Industrial Maintenance & Plant Operation (<http://www.impomag.com>)

Source URL (retrieved on 08/22/2014 - 3:17pm):

<http://www.impomag.com/news/2012/08/ma-right-repair-compromise-signed-law>