



California/Nevada/Arizona Automotive Wholesalers' Association
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May 28, 2008

The Honorable Maxine Waters
U.S. House of Representatives
2344 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

RE: Please Co-Sponsor H.R. 5638

Dear Representative Waters:

On behalf of the California/Nevada/Arizona Automotive Wholesalers' Association (CAWA), I strongly urge you to co-sponsor H.R. 5638, a critical bill recently introduced by your colleague, Representative Zoe Lofgren (D-CA). This important legislation will preserve competition in the automotive aftermarket collision parts industry, providing protection for millions of consumers.

H.R. 5638 would amend Title 35, U.S. Code (Patents) to provide design patent exemption for alternative repair parts used for the purpose of repairing a vehicle to its original appearance.

For your constituents already feeling the squeeze from soaring gas prices during daily commutes, this proposed legislation will help to keep the costs of repairs down by guaranteeing the availability of affordable, quality alternative replacement parts for vehicles following collisions. H.R. 5638 is a win for consumers in California and for our state's aftermarket industry, which in 2007 employed 219,034 hard-working Americans and represented annual sales in California of approximately \$31.1 billion.

The availability of quality replacement parts in the aftermarket industry provides a tremendous benefit to American consumers—these parts are typically 26 to 50 percent less expensive than those issued by manufacturers, saving consumers up to \$1.5 billion a year. Elimination of this competition through the enforcement of design patents on specific replacement collision parts will increase the price of items your constituents need after even the most minor of fender-benders and threatens to raise the price of insurance premiums for all consumers.

Please help preserve a 60 year tradition of free markets and fair prices in the replacement collision parts industry by co-sponsoring H.R. 5638. In the interim, I would be delighted to talk with you about how H.R. 5638 can safeguard consumers' rights and competition—in essence, the American way.

Sincerely,

Rodney Pierini, President and CEO
California/Nevada/Arizona Automotive Wholesalers' Association

cc: Representative Lofgren

“CAWA, We're In Business To Keep You In Business”