



CoPIRG Executive Director Danny Katz speaks to the media about the importance of Right to Repair for consumers. Photo credit: CBS News

RIGHT TO REPAIR

What is a repair score and why is Colorado calling for one?

Nobody walks into an electronics store looking to buy something that breaks and can't be repaired or fixed. But how do we know which products are designed to last?

We need a score that supports our Right to Repair. The Colorado state legislature recently passed a joint resolution calling for a national Right to Repair score system for our tech.

The resolution was sent to the Federal Trade Commission (FTC), which opened a public comment period until Feb. 2 asking for feedback on how they can help states improve and foster repair. Along with the resolution, PIRG submitted more than 56,000 public comments on Right to Repair from all 50 states.

What's a Right to Repair score?

Repair scores for tech such as laptops, phones and appliances provide consumers with a one

through 10 score that measures the availability of spare parts, ease of disassembly and longevity of support.

This allows consumers to compare repairability across participating companies before they purchase expensive devices. It also supports market transparency.

How would it work? Look no further than the "Monroney sticker" for cars.

Named after the U.S. senator who sponsored the bill requiring them, the Monroney sticker allows consumers to compare important things like fuel economy/miles per gallon, engine and transmission specifications and crash test ratings.

On average, American households spend about \$1,480 per year purchasing new electronic

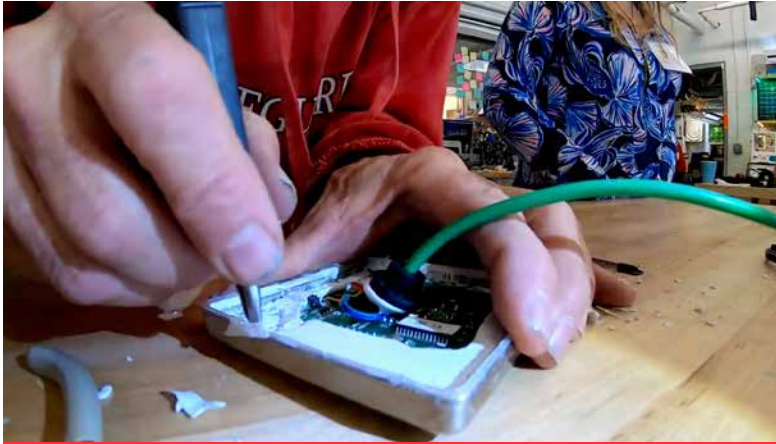
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CoPIRG and The Public Interest Network are celebrating 50 years of action for a change.

RIGHT TO REPAIR SCORES CONT.

CBS News



Tech repair scores would make it easier for consumers to compare availability of spare parts, ease of disassembly and longevity of support.

products and, on average, have 24 pieces of electronics in their homes.

Extending the life of our products is good for our wallets—repair could save Coloradans \$882 million per year.

It's also good for the planet since every new item consumes resources and may produce pollution in the production process. For example, a single iPhone 6 takes 295 pounds of raw mineral—75 pounds of ore and 220 pounds water—to produce.

It also can reduce the amount of electronic waste we produce, which is important because the Environmental Protection Agency reports that electronic waste (e-waste) is now the fastest growing part of our domestic municipal waste stream.

That's not good. E-waste is hard and expensive to recycle (less than 30% is recycled) and contains valuable materials that are wasted if they head straight to the landfills (some of which are also toxic and can get into our environment).

Increasing repairability is key to tackling these problems so we're not constantly producing and then throwing away so much stuff.

Why doesn't Colorado just develop the score themselves?

Working with companies to develop the criteria for a repair score would be difficult for Colorado to administer both because of the technical challenges and cost. If 50 different states developed 50 different scores, it could undermine comparability for consumers and place an undue burden on companies.

Companies could create their own repair scores but given the wide range of factors they could use to determine repairability, the scores would lack the ability for consumers to meaningfully compare while they shop.

There needs to be a consistent repair score criteria that allows apples-to-apples comparisons, just like other successful labeling programs such as the "Monroney sticker." This score will also allow companies to market the repairability of their products.

The FTC is the best agency to develop repair score criteria because it's national, it has the technical capacity and resources to work with companies to develop a fair rubric, and repair scores fall under the agency's congressional mandate.

Colorado's joint resolution sends a powerful message to the FTC to work with companies to develop a repairability criteria that's fair for both consumers and manufacturers to ensure transparency in the market.

NEWS BRIEFS

PESTICIDES

This brain-damaging pesticide was banned in 2021. Now, it's coming back.

A previously banned dangerous pesticide is now set to make a comeback due to a recent court decision, and it could put children's health at risk.

Chlorpyrifos, a pesticide that had once been labeled a dangerous neurotoxin and banned in 2021 thanks to the help of more than 27,000 PIRG members and supporters like you taking action and voicing their concerns to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), is now potentially set to make a comeback.

The science has been clear on the effects of chlorpyrifos, with years of research showing the pesticide has consistently been linked to brain damage, especially in children.

A court recently overturned the ban despite mountains of scientific research proving chlorpyrifos is dangerous for human consumption. Now it risks reemerging on farms that

OUR MISSION

When consumers are cheated or the voices of ordinary citizens are drowned out by special interest lobbyists, PIRG speaks up and takes action. We uncover threats to public health and well-being and fight to end them, using the time-tested tools of investigative research, media exposes, grassroots organizing, advocacy and litigation. PIRG's mission is to deliver persistent, results oriented public interest activism that protects consumers, encourages a fair, sustainable economy and fosters responsive democratic government.

NEWS BRIEFS

grow the food our families eat.

We need to act fast and once again urge the EPA to stick to the science and protect kids' health. The sooner the EPA reinstates its ban on chlorpyrifos, the less likely it is that this hazardous chemical will be used on the food we eat next year.

CLEAN AIR

New Colorado policy encourages the transition to electric lawn care equipment

Gas-powered lawn equipment emissions have been linked to health problems, and Colorado is taking steps to make a change.

CoPIRG's recent report found that gas-powered lawn equipment generates air and noise pollution, the former of which has been linked to numerous health issues like asthma attacks, reproductive ailments, mental health challenges, cancer and even premature deaths. In a first step towards eliminating this harmful pollution, Colorado's Air Quality Control Commission (AQCC) voted unanimously to restrict the use of gas-powered lawn equipment on public property, starting in the summer ozone season of 2025.

The first statewide policy of its kind, it means gas-powered lawn mowers and other equipment like leaf blowers and trimmers will be prohibited to use on state government property from June to August, as well as on other public property like local parks in the Denver metro and north Front Range regions.

You can find out how to take part in the emissions reduction movement and take advantage of a statewide 30% discount on electric lawn and garden equipment, along with other financial incentives at copirg.org/emower.

CONSUMER PROTECTION

Meta should protect kids' safety in Quest virtual reality

Has a kid in your life been begging you for a virtual reality headset? They can be pretty fun, but before you go out and buy one, there are a few things you need to know.

Meta recently lowered the recommended mini-



Ted Cottrials

mum age for its VR headsets, allowing children ages 10 to 12 to have accounts. Our research partners at U.S. PIRG Education Fund tested Meta's newest headset, the Quest 3, and warns that it may be unsafe for kids.

Even with increased parental controls, the Quest virtual reality headset could potentially expose young users to inappropriate content, health risks and threats to their privacy.

"Meta says it's committed to creating safe and positive experiences on Quest. Our testing found real problems remain," said R.J. Cross, director of U.S. PIRG Education Fund's Don't Sell My Data campaign. "Meta's current efforts are not enough to guarantee a healthy experience for children."

CoPIRG and our national network are urging Meta not to market its VR headsets to children and teens under 18 unless and until they're proven safe. Visit our website to add your name to our petition to Meta today.

Clean Air Advocate Kirsten Schatz (second from left) demonstrates the benefits of electric lawn equipment.

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CITIZEN AGENDA • SUMMER 2024

50
YEARS

CoPIRG and our national network are celebrating 50 years of action for a change. The Public Interest Network operates and supports organizations committed to a shared vision of a better world and a strategic approach to social change.

BEYOND PLASTIC

Bag bans are reducing billions of single-use plastic bags

Our latest research affirms what many are now experiencing in their daily lives: Well-designed single-use plastic bag bans are highly effective in reducing plastic bag use, associated litter and pollution.

“Plastic Bag Bans Work,” a new report released by our research partners at U.S. PIRG Education Fund, estimates that, on average, plastic bag bans similar to those studied can eliminate almost 300 single-use plastic bags per person, per year. Studied bans have also reduced plastic bag litter by one-third or more and encouraged the use of more sustainable options.

“The bottom line is that plastic bag bans work,” said PIRG President Faye Park. “People realize quickly it’s easy to live without plastic bags and get used to bringing a bag from home or



AP Photo/The Republican-American, Jim Shannon

Our latest research shows that plastic bag bans can eliminate almost 300 single-use plastic bags per person, per year.

skipping a bag when they can. That means less waste and less litter.”

We’ve made great progress banning single-use plastic bags in Colorado. Now we need more retailers to eliminate single-use plastics, which is why we are calling on retailers like Coca-Cola, Amazon and Costco to eliminate single-use plastic from their operations.

VOICES FOR RIGHT TO REPAIR

“I wanted to comment regarding Apple MacBook Pro computers. These are not cheap machines, and are well built for a long lifetime. However, there is not an easy way to replace the main battery. These computers can last up to 10 years for basic office and internet use. The batteries really only provide a good charge for about two years. These batteries are literally glued into the chassis making them very difficult and dangerous to remove given the amount of stress and prying necessary. When I checked with Apple, they have a service to replace the battery if you bring the device into the store. But I don’t live within 275 miles of an Apple store.”

—Chris Van Genderen, CO

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