



Comments of the
Automotive Aftermarket Suppliers Association
to
California Air Resources Board
RE: Heavy-Duty Inspection and Maintenance Regulation
November 29, 2021

The Automotive Aftermarket Suppliers Association (AASA) submits these comments to the California Air Resources Board (CARB) on its proposed “Heavy-Duty Inspection and Maintenance Regulation.” AASA commends the Board for its commitment to ensuring that heavy-duty vehicles and their emissions and exhaust controls continue to operate as designed over the life of the vehicle. AASA, with a membership focused on the light-duty vehicle aftermarket, shares this commitment to vehicle maintenance.

AASA is a division of the Motor & Equipment Manufacturers Association (MEMA), which represents aftermarket suppliers that manufacture motor vehicle parts, components, and technologies, including telematics systems, for use in the vehicle aftermarket industries. Aftermarket suppliers ensure that quality parts and service choices are available to the drivers of the 281 million vehicles on our nation’s roads. Suppliers are the foundation of a vibrant aftermarket industry, which employs more than 4 million Americans across manufacturers, motor vehicle repair facilities, and distribution and service providers. Furthermore, the independent aftermarket currently services over 70 percent of motor vehicle repairs in the United States.

As the Board recognizes in the proposed regulation, historically, vehicle emissions data has been accessed via the onboard diagnostic port. However, as vehicle technology advances, vehicle manufacturers and fleets are increasingly relying on wireless telematics systems to share critical vehicle data via remote onboard diagnostic data referenced in the proposal. Industry forecasting finds that this trend of wireless transmission will continue to grow.

With these industry advances at in mind, AASA has joined other stakeholders to advocate for policies that will ensure that vehicle manufacturers can not block a vehicle owner’s access to the data generated by their vehicle(s). Further, AASA supports policies that require access to vehicle information by independent repair facilities, ensuring convenience, affordability, and a competitive market for replacement parts and repair services. AASA supports balanced approaches to this increasingly complex issue.

Technology can lead to restrictions on data access via the OBDII port. In fact, in its May 2021 “Nixing theFix” Report, the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) noted that advanced technology, including telematics systems installed by a vehicle manufacturer, has led to repair restrictions and limits on who can access vehicle data.¹ The light-duty aftermarket industry is concerned that future technologies are creating new and novel means to restrict critical access to repair and vehicle performance information, including emissions. Without government action, these restrictions on data access could limit the ability to review the emissions of a vehicle and preclude market competition, clean emissions, and safe and affordable repair.

AASA welcomes the opportunity to collaborate with CARB on issues relating to vehicle data and telematics. Should you have questions or concerns, please contact Catherine Boland, vice president, legislative affairs at cboland@mema.org or 301-509-2791.

¹ Federal Trade Commission. (2021, May). *Nixing the Fix: An FTC Report to Congress on Repair Restrictions*. https://www.ftc.gov/system/files/documents/reports/nixing-fix-ftc-report-congress-repair-restrictions/nixing_the_fix_report_final_5521_630pm-508_002.pdf