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CONGRESSIONAL REINTRODUCTION OF 'PARTS ACT' GIVES CONSUMERS CHOICE IN COLLISION REPAIRS

(Alexandria, VA. March 2, 2015): A Bi-partisan, bi-cameral congressional reintroduction of the “Promoting Automotive Repair, Trade and Sales Act”, known as the “Parts Act”, was reintroduced in the U.S. House of Representatives and the U.S. Senate on February 25, 2015, by U.S. Representatives Darrell Issa (R-CA) and Zoe Lofgren (D-CA), and U.S. Senators Orrin Hatch (R-UT) and Sheldon Whitehouse (D-RI). Rep. Hank Johnson (D-GA) is an original cosponsor. The new bill numbers are H.R. 1050 and S. 560. Both bills are assigned to the respective Judiciary Committees.

The Parts Act would amend Title 35 of the U.S. Code to provide an exception from patent infringement for certain component parts of automobiles, which includes collision parts.

“This legislation will help motoring consumers have quality, affordable and safe choices in their repairs when purchasing collision parts such as fenders and hoods,” stated Ray Pohlman, president, The Coalition for Auto Repair Equality (CARE).

The Parts Act would reduce the number of years car companies (original equipment) can monopolize design patents from 14 years down to 2.5 years.

Consumers benefit when there is competition in parts replacements, whether its cosmetic collision parts or ‘under-the-hood’ parts.

Alternative replacement parts (aftermarket) could potentially save consumers \$1.5 Billion annually. The average price of aftermarket parts is 34 percent less than the original equipment parts, allowing low and fixed income motorists to have the best quality parts at affordable prices.

“According to the Quality Parts Coalition, which CARE is a member, the car companies have secured nearly one thousand U.S. Design patents on individual cosmetic collision repair parts such as hoods, fenders and mirrors, just in the last decade,” stated Sandy Bass-Cors, CARE executive director.

Pohlman said that” it’s encouraging to see bi-partisanship in both the U.S. House of Representatives and the U.S. Senate working to benefit motoring consumers in their vehicle choices.”

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CARE is a national organization that represents companies in the automotive aftermarket, among them: NAPA, AutoZone, Advance Auto Parts, Bridgestone-Firestone Retail Operations and O’Reilly Auto Parts. Five million people nationwide work in the aftermarket in nearly 5,000 locations.