

**Testimony**  
**Tuesday, February 17<sup>th</sup>**  
**CT Legislative Hearing**  
**Hartford, CT**

896

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**Title: Member – CCRS (Connecticut Collision Repair Specialists)**  
**President and Owner of Turnpike Motors, Inc. Auto Body**

Bill #896 Summary:

Requires ALL repair orders to disclose "the right to choose..." requirement that currently only applies to DRP's.

Requires ALL collision shops to have a licensed appraiser in order to negotiate insurance claims and appraise vehicle damage

Requires shops to disclose invoice copies on insurance repair orders to insurance companies

Requires 3 business days notice to insurers for supplement requests on non-DRP claims

Good afternoon Chairman Fontanna and Chairman Crisco and members of the committee:  
My name is Doug Fernandez and I am a citizen of West Hartford CT, I am the owner of Turnpike Motors Auto body in Newington, I am also a member of the CT Collision Repair Specialist Association.

I am here to share with you my thoughts on Bill #896. There are portions of this bill I agree with and Portions that should be modified to achieve their actual intentions.

I agree that all repair shops should be required to have the consumer sign a right to choose document. As I understand the current legislation, it is only required by Shops that have a Direct Repair Relationship or Direct billing relationship with an insurer. It is the consumers right to know this and they should acknowledge it regardless of where they are repairing their vehicle.

I agree with the disclosure clause that would allow the insurance industry to request a copy of an invoice for verification purposes from the repair shop. This is a very common practice that is a standard of the industry today. It creates verifiable trust among repairers and insurance companies.

I agree that holding an appraisers license should be a requirement to negotiate insurance claims. The only thing that needs to be addressed is how this will effect dealership service departments. Many of the dealers do not have licensed appraisers on staff, yet their service departments negotiate and settle insurance claims daily. This law may leave them exposed to additional expenses that they are not in the position to handle given the current condition of that industry.

Lastly, I disagree with the 3 business day notice for supplement approval request. This time frame should be amended to 2 business days, in order for this to be a truly customer facing bill. In my experience the customers are not willing to wait that long. In conclusion I would not be in favor of this bill as it is written today. However, if changed it will add some standards between insures and repair shops that will allow us to better serve our mutual customer.

# MINIMUM RECOMMENDED REQUIREMENTS FOR A "CLASS A" COLLISION CENTER

The Collision Industry Conference Definitions Committee identified the following requirements for a collision repair center to be recognized as a "Class A" collision center in the industry:

- 1) Have an established business location that is in compliance with local zoning laws and acceptable retail standards.
- 2) Have all local, state, and federal licenses and permits and operate in accordance with regulations. Examples:
  - a. Sales Tax ID Number
  - b. Federal Tax ID Number
  - c. Fire, Electrical Code, and Waste Water Codes
  - d. Workers' Compensation Insurance
  - e. Meet or exceed all federal/state/local safety and environmental standards
  - f. EPA Number
- 3) Have proof of garage keeper's liability and workers' compensation insurance or equivalent.
- 4) Have the ability to produce computer generated estimates with digital imaging and electronic estimate transfer.
- 5) Management personnel will have evidence of current and ongoing training in relevant management subjects and have transcripts or certificate.
- 6) Belong to and participate in auto collision trade industry association(s) and subscribe to the Collision Industry Conference (CIC) "Best Practices." "Best Practices" can be viewed on the CIC website at [www.ciclink.com](http://www.ciclink.com).
- 7) Have evidence of current and ongoing employee technical training and certification programs with a certified refinish technician on staff.
- 8) Have a gas metal arc (GMA/MIG) welder and technicians qualified or certified in proper welding techniques.\*\*
- 9) Have the ability to hoist a vehicle for inspection.
- 10) Subscribe to a provider of structural specifications with periodic updates covering the vehicle structure for the make, model and year of the vehicle(s) being repaired and wheel alignment specifications for the make, model and year of the vehicle(s) being repaired.
- 11) Have a measuring device capable of measuring in three dimensions (symmetrical or asymmetrical unibody and full frame structures) for the type of vehicle repaired and provide structural documentation such as a computer printout, or have a fixture system. All operators must have evidence of current training available for viewing for the type of measuring device being used.
- 12) Have a four-point anchoring system capable of holding a vehicle in a stationary position during frame and/or unibody pulls which is suitable for the specific type of vehicle being repaired.
- 13) Have electrical or hydraulic equipment capable of making simultaneous multiple body or structural pulls. All operators must have evidence of current technical training on the type of equipment being used.\*\*
- 14) Have pressurized spray booth equipped with a fresh air-supplied respirator system that meets current federal, state and local requirements.
- 15) Have the ability to complete and verify four-wheel alignment through computer printout either from an in-house alignment system with at least one technician that is certified or qualified or utilize a qualified sublet provider.\*\*
- 16) Offer a written limited lifetime warranty against defects in workmanship.
- 17) Have the ability to remove and reinstall frame, suspension, engine and drive train components.
- 18) Have a forced drying and curing paint application system that will produce an original equipment manufacturer-type finish.
- 19) Demonstrate a concern for the environment by using high transfer efficiency spray equipment, gun cleaners and other emission reducing equipment.
- 20) Properly dispose spray booth filters and hazardous waste.
- 21) Provide proper safety equipment and work environment for all employees.
- 22) Have employees that are qualified to diagnose the condition of airbags and other occupant restraint systems and capable of completing OE-specified repairs using in-house equipment with certified technicians or use a qualified sublet provider with certified technicians.
- 23) Have the ability to evacuate, reclaim and recharge vehicles air conditioning system using EPA compliant in-house equipment and certified technicians or use a qualified sublet provider.\*\*
- 24) Have a documented on-going system for measuring, tracking and reporting customer satisfaction.

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\*\*See appendix at [www.ciclink.com](http://www.ciclink.com) for a list of possible certification or qualification programs

