



CONNECTICUT

**TESTIMONY OF
NATIONAL FEDERATION OF INDEPENDENT BUSINESS (NFIB)
BY
ANDY MARKOWSKI, CONNECTICUT STATE DIRECTOR
SUPPORTING
SB-160, AN ACT CONCERNING THE AVAILABILITY OF AUTOMOBILE DIAGNOSTIC
CODES
BEFORE THE
GENERAL LAW COMMITTEE
FEBRUARY 22, 2011**

A non-profit, non-partisan organization founded in 1943, NFIB is Connecticut's and the nation's leading small-business association. In Connecticut, NFIB represents thousands of members and their employees and membership is scattered across the state and ranges from sophisticated high technology enterprises to single-person "Mom & Pop" shops that operate in traditional ways. NFIB's mission is "To promote and protect the right of its members to own, operate, and grow their businesses." On behalf of those small- and independent- job-providers in Connecticut, I offer the following comments:

NFIB/Connecticut supports SB-160, as this legislation would help to protect the rights of consumers in motor vehicle repair transactions. This legislative proposal would, in addition to protecting consumers, also level the economic playing field for hundreds of independent small businesses that repair motor vehicles in Connecticut by allowing for the purchase of automobile diagnostic codes.

NFIB includes among its members in Connecticut small business owners engaged in the business of repairing motor vehicles. SB-160 would ensure that those small business owners located in nearly every city and town across Connecticut have access to the information and diagnostics necessary to complete the task efficiently and effectively and to compete fairly for business in the open market while protecting trade secrets of automobile manufacturers.

NFIB consistently and vigorously protects and defends the free and open market from impediments imposed by legislative and bureaucratic action. Our member small businesses believe strongly in the economic benefits for all Americans of fair and open competition, although the Connecticut regulatory environment may make the profitable operation of a small business difficult at times in our high cost state. Consumers are of course the ultimate beneficiaries of fair and open competition in the form of the freedom to choose a better product at a lower cost and at a convenient location.

To ensure free market competition in auto repairs that benefits the consumer and our economy, the computers that control the operation of virtually every aspect of every motor vehicle must be accessible. Today's motor vehicles are sophisticated, technologically advanced machines. Without computer accessibility, the accurate diagnosis and safe and reliable repair of vehicles is impossible and the real considerations in free consumer choice – cost and convenience – become non-factors as consumers are forced to use the higher cost dealerships for vehicle repairs.

SB-160 would address one area of unfair vertical integration in the economy and give hundreds of small and independent businesses across Connecticut a more level playing field on which to fairly compete for business. An opportunity to compete is all the small business owners in Connecticut can or will ask for.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment, and NFIB/Connecticut urges passage of this bill.

National Federation of Independent Business — CONNECTICUT