



February 23, 2023

Senate Commerce and Consumer Protection Committee  
95 University Avenue West  
Saint Paul, Minnesota 55103

**RE: SF 1598 – Digital Fair Repair Bill**

Dear Chair Klein and Members of the Committee:

I write to urge you to amend the version of SF 1598 currently being considered by your committee to exempt all off-road vehicles from this legislation. Without this change, the bill will have severe unintended negative consequences in the agricultural equipment industry for customer safety and the environment.

C & B Operations has been in my family for over three decades. We are proud to have 217 team members in Minnesota working at our nine agriculture equipment dealerships here that service the rural southern portion of the state.

At C & B, customer satisfaction is paramount. And that includes providing farmers with the information and tools they need to repair their own equipment. That is why our website at C & B has a dedicated link (<https://deerequipment.com/do-it-yourself-repairs/>) where farmers can access service manuals, special tools and helpful publications to make this as easy as possible. **Let me be crystal clear: We strongly support farmers' rights to repair their own equipment.**

That said, this legislation goes beyond that and would allow for the tampering of the software running the equipment we sell. A combine is *not* the same as a cell phone - and allowing farm machinery to be internally modified could pose a substantial safety hazard to operators. Moreover, this bill could permit equipment emissions controls to be altered, creating significant environmental concerns for Minnesota farm country.

The bill also includes language around parts pricing that is dangerously vague. If the intent is to force C & B to sell parts at cost, SF 1598 would, to put it bluntly, force us to shut down our parts departments in Minnesota and the services and jobs they provide. Selling goods at a loss is not a sustainable business model.

In short, this legislation, as it relates to farm equipment, seems to me to be a solution in search of a problem. Our industry, including both dealers and manufacturers, is already doing all it can to provide self-repair tools to our customers. This legislation's only impact it would seem would be to jeopardize rural businesses and jobs and the safety and environmental efficiency of farm equipment in Minnesota. Therefore, I encourage you to exempt all off-road equipment from SF 1598.

Thank you for taking the time to consider this correspondence. Please do not hesitate to reach out to me personally ([burwellp@deerequipment.com](mailto:burwellp@deerequipment.com)) if I answer any questions or concerns you may have.

Sincerely,

R. Peter Burwell  
Chief Executive Officer

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