

24 September 2024

Chairperson  
Petitions Committee  
Parliament Buildings  
Wellington  
[parliamentary.petitions@parliament.govt.nz](mailto:parliamentary.petitions@parliament.govt.nz)

## **SUBMISSION on Consumer NZ Petition to require product repairability labels**

### **1. Introduction**

Thank you for the opportunity to make a written submission on Consumer NZ's petition calling for product repairability labels on large and small domestic appliances and electronic devices (Petition).

This submission is from Consumer NZ, an independent, non-profit organisation dedicated to championing and empowering consumers in Aotearoa. Consumer NZ has a reputation for being fair, impartial and providing comprehensive consumer information and advice.

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### **2. Right to Repair campaign**

Consumer NZ launched a "right to repair" [campaign](#) in 2021. As part of our campaign, we started a petition on our website calling for repairability labels on products so people are informed about how easy they are to repair before purchasing them. Our petition received 21,243 signatures.

In August 2024, we lodged an official petition calling on the House of Representatives to pass legislation requiring a product repairability label

on large and small domestic appliances and electronic devices and note that 21,243 people have signed a similar online petition.

### **3. Background to our campaign**

Under the Consumer Guarantees Act (CGA), manufacturers are not required to ensure spare parts and repair services are available after a product is sold if they tell consumers they aren't available at the time of purchase. In practice, manufacturers bury this information in instruction manuals, meaning the information is not readily available for consumers to consider before a purchase decision is made.

The status quo means that when a product, like a laptop or microwave, has a fault and can't be repaired or it is uneconomical to do so, it usually ends up in landfill. In fact, it's estimated New Zealanders throw nearly 100,000 tonnes of e-waste into landfill every year. That works out to be about 20kg per person.

As the e-waste in landfill grows, the damage to the environment and human health increases. We are concerned that unrepairable products are costing consumers and the planet.

We also regularly hear from New Zealanders who are tired of being forced to replace products due to minor faults, paying excessive fees for repairs, or being limited by the repairers they can choose to repair their products. People are frustrated that the system is working against them and the planet, to generate profits.

We know New Zealanders want to see a shift towards a circular economy where products are built to last and repair is not just an option, but the norm.

### **4. New laws required**

In the EU manufacturers must disclose information to their customers about how long they expect their products to last and how repairable those products are. Over time, the EU system will force manufacturers to lift their game. If they don't, they risk being ditched by customers seeking longer-lasting products.

New Zealand risks becoming even more of a dumping ground for low quality products if it doesn't follow suit. Therefore, we are campaigning for repairability labelling in New Zealand to address these issues. We also support the Consumer Guarantees Act (Right to Repair) Amendment Bill (Amendment Bill).

The Amendment Bill provides an opportunity for meaningful change that could make purchasing decisions more informed, spark the renaissance of an independent repairer industry, and enable products to live longer in a thriving second-hand market.

Our calls for repairability labelling and the passing of the Amendment Bill are complementary. Together, they represent a comprehensive approach that bookends the purchase and user journey, and fights back against the detrimental impacts of planned obsolescence.

As you will see from our petition, and the petitions of other organisations such as Repair Café Aotearoa New Zealand, there is clear public support for these initiatives.

We urge the Committee to do the right thing by consumers and the planet, and introduce the laws required to address these serious issues.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide a written submission. We are happy to speak to our submission.

*ENDS*