



Automotive Industries  
Association of Canada

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Divisions Bulletin –  
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## Spotlight – Ballot Question 1

On November 3, 2020, voters in Massachusetts will cast a vote for the next President of the United States. They will also cast a vote on an issue that could impact the future sustainability of the North American automotive aftermarket industry.

**Voters will vote yes or no on Ballot Question 1.** A **majority yes vote** would make it law that vehicles equipped with telematics systems (a bi-directional, wireless communication system) be outfitted with a standardized open-data platform. The law would take effect beginning with model year 2022.

A yes vote would give vehicle owners access to their telematics system data through an app. Vehicle owners would have the power to decide which service provider(s) can access their data. **The industry's future depends on access to telematics system data as repair and maintenance information (RMI) is increasingly going wireless.** At the same time, automakers are limiting the functionality of the OBD interface.

*“Traditionally, automotive repairers have had direct access to vehicle diagnostics for maintenance and repairs. However, as vehicle technologies continue to evolve and data are transmitted wirelessly, OEMs are working to ensure they gain exclusive access and ownership of this information.” [Tire Business](#)*

A **majority no vote** on Ballot Question 1 **would be a major blow for the industry**, as automakers would maintain their control of telematics system data. The aftermarket would only be able to access RMI through the OBD interface; a problem as the OBD's functionality is being limited and RMI is going wireless. To access wireless data, the industry would have to purchase it from automakers on automaker terms.

The outcome of the vote will be felt beyond Massachusetts, as automakers will not create different products for different regions within the North American market. We saw this when California introduced regulations mandating OBD systems in vehicles, after which the rest of the states and Canada followed suit.

**Automaker-backed coalitions are aggressively opposing Question 1. They are against consumers having the power to share their vehicle data with independent auto shops and for automakers maintaining control of vehicle data.** They have challenged the eligibility of the ballot and recently released a T.V. campaign which has been described as *“[highly misleading and fearmongering](#).”* For example, one ad is narrated as follows, *“Domestic violence advocates say a sexual predator could use the data to stalk their victims. Pinpoint exactly where you are. Whether you are alone ...”*

Learn more about this story and view automaker T.V. ads:

- [Auto Industry TV Ads Claim Right to Repair Benefits 'Sexual Predators'](#)
- [Massachusetts aftermarket confident that Question 1 is ballot's answer to repair data restrictions](#)
- [Automaker-Funded Groups Are Using Fear Mongering To Take Away Your Right To Repair Your Car](#)

## Industry in the News

[The Government of Ontario recently invested more than \\$10 million in various organizations to train and re-train over 2,000 workers for the auto and advanced manufacturing sectors.](#)

Recipients include:

- The **Ford Motor Company of Canada** which will receive **\$954,324** to create up to 244 co-op learning opportunities for university and college students in the fields of advanced manufacturing, vehicle connectivity and business operations.
- The **Automotive Parts Manufacturers Association** which received **\$2,242,337** to create up to 669 hands-on learning opportunities in the auto sector.
- **Fiat Chrysler Automobiles** which will receive \$480,000 for the FCA Canada Student Employment Experience that will provide 160 students with hands-on learning experiences in research, production and office roles.

This investment recognizes that the automotive industry's workforce must be equipped with new skills if it is to be successful in the future mobility market. What is missing from the investment is funding for the aftermarket, whose workforce, like that of its upstream counterpart, also requires new skills.

This story is indicative of one of the premier challenges that our industry faces - **the aftermarket as an afterthought**. Automakers' resources and the historical role of auto manufacturing as a bulwark of Ontario's economy, place automakers needs and interests' front and centre to both the Government of Ontario and the federal government.

AIA is working to challenge this by perspective by communicating to government a very simple message: ***"What happens upstream, makes it way downstream."*** Put another way, ***"You can't have change in one, without change in the other."***

## Update

AIA Canada represents the Canadian aftermarket industry among a coalition of global aftermarket representatives. The coalition includes representatives from the European Union, South Africa, the United States and Australia. The coalition met virtually on August 27. Representatives provided an update on where their industry stands when it comes to access to vehicle data.

A global coalition of the aftermarket industry is necessary in the face of a strong global automaker presence. Think of this – **automakers have spent between \$15-18 million in their united fight against Question 1 on the Massachusetts ballot.**

