

To: House Federalism and Interstate Relations Committee

From: Mary Ann Landsmann

Painesville Twp.

(440) 357-4442

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My name is Mary Ann Landsmann retired corporate manager and company trainer for a major nationally known Auotparts chain. I relocated from Adams Co. Ohio to North East Ohio to open several new stores in that region.

Being ASE certified in 7 fields of automotives, as well as GM, Ford, and Chrysler certified, I felt confident and well prepared to represent my company well.

But nothing in my training or certifications prepared me for the Lake County Ohio nightmare of the Aim Test now called E-Check. As an employee part of my job was to "push" various fluids and certain parts for our customers to pass E-Check. "Gimmicks" really. Our Painesville store was one of the most profitable stores in the region. E-Check is big business. Great for business.

I personally view E-Check as a scam. Sadly, E-Check opens the door for people especially black and Hispanic minorities and the working poor regardless of race, to be victimized. Yes, victimized. Did you know that car manufactures will set the on board computers to come on at a predestined time in the future during final assembly? Most folks panic when the engine light comes on and think their car is about to blow up and pull off the road. This opens the door for scammers to tow perfectly good cars to unscrupleless mechanics who make up phony estimates of unneeded repairs.

Did you know that when the check engine light comes on, it has nothing to do with the car's engine? It's all about the emission sensors and computer system. Did you know in most cases the mechanic can clear the predestined engine light codes and send their customer on their way? Did you know that not only does the predestined light throw a check engine code but also for a dirty air filter?

During my career at the parts store I have had countless people come in our store with ridiculous repair bills from scammer garages, out of desperation to buy the magic fluid to turn off the engine light so they could pass E-Check. I would just walk outside and change the air filter and tell them to put a few drive cycles on the car and the light should go out on its own.

At our Painesville store alone we had 72 commercial account garages if you will, but only 2 out of 72 that we would send our customers to for service. Just 2. So you can imagine how hard it will be to get these garages to stand united with our cause to end this billion-dollar scam. Let's face it. It's big business.

I want to also mention the hardship and humiliation young woman and single mothers face at the hands of some garages. I witnessed firsthand a garage in Painesville that would prey on low income women and offer to erase engine codes and help them pass E-Check in exchange for sex then threaten them if they told anyone. That garage is no longer in business today because

I stood with those women who bravely came forward and gave testimony at what they faced at these low life scumbags.

Now I stand today to speak out against this scam called E-Check. My husband and I could be making a fortune off E-Check. But, we built our garage and reputations on honesty and I can assure you we have peace of mind at night when our heads hit the pillows because we chose to do right by our customers.

To clear the engine codes on some vehicles you must complete many drive cycles to erase the codes that turns off the engine light.

This may sound simple but let me tell you it is not. It's also dangerous in some cases. Let me explain. First a scanner must be hooked into the electronic control module then the car must be driven at a specific speed, shut down, then wait 15-30 minutes, now let the car idle 15-30 minutes then driven 10 miles at 35 MPH, then 55 MPH for 25 minutes, pulled off the road still in idle for 15 minutes and so on. To achieve this I drive cycle, we have to do this on RT 2 or I-90. Because the speed or time driven cannot be interrupted, we achieve this by using the berm of either said highway while hundreds of cars pass us going 5 to 90 MPH and trucks and semis practically blow us off the road. It's very scary and dangerous to pull back onto the highway.

My husband and I once completed a customer's drive cycles taking up 15 hours of our time and 2 tanks of gas to get a perfectly running cars check engine light to turn off. You may be wondering why, if the check engine light is a harmless annoyance, why don't you just let it stay on and ignore it? Because you can't do that in the areas with E-check because they refuse to test a car, even perfectly running cars, at the E-check centers.

Please stand with state Rep. Ron Young and support him as he represents this bill to stop the unfairness and scam artists of E-check. Thank you for your time and consideration.