

From: [Bob Harms](#)
To: [FamiliesCommunities Committee](#)
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: Bill 203
Date: Friday, October 28, 2016 5:16:14 PM

Government of Alberta

My name is Bob Harms. I am the president of Harms Automotive Group based out of Edmonton. My company operates 7 new car franchises in and around Edmonton and we are in process of constructing 2 new dealerships in Edmonton over the next couple of years. I have been employed in the automotive industry for over 35 years. In the past 35 years I have dedicated a great portion of my time trying to change the way dealerships are perceived by the consumer. In order to do so, we have tried and continue to try to make every experience any customer has with our stores to be streamlined, simple and as straightforward as possible. I have invested millions of dollars in this great province of ours to build businesses that employ a large number of people who come to work everyday to look after Albertan's automotive needs. So, I beg of of you, please stop and think about what myself and hundreds of other dealers have at stake everyday when we interact with our customers. If you think for one second that if we conducted business in such a way that our billing process in our service departments created confusion i.e. charging customers more than what they expect to pay or what they agreed to pay, don't you think our business would suffer tremendously? Don't you think people would be all over social media chastising our business? Doesn't the very fact that in an independent report conducted by MNP confirming that the Alberta Motor Dealers Association members complete over 5 million repair orders annually and that the Alberta Motor Vehicle Industry Council confirmed that in a 3 month period of 2016, less than 200 consumers had lodged a complaint with AMVIC over concerns with repairs???

I would ask this government and Mr. Jon Carson if there is any industry in our country that has that small percentage of complaints. I would like you to look at the following example of a survey we email to EVERY customer that comes through our service departments as it speaks for itself on where we place our priorities with consumers:

CSI e-Survey - Service Survey			
Customer Name		Email:	
Home Phone		Survey Post Date	10/27/2016
City	SHERWOOD PARK	State	AB
Score	100%	Service Type	Warranty
Service Advisor	[REDACTED]	RO Close Date	10/26/2016
RO Number	586106	RO Total	\$222.95
Vehicle	2013 DODGE GRAND CARAVAN	Vehicle Miles	72,559
Survey Responses			

Please rate your overall service experience at Londonderry Dodge	Rate = 5 : Very Satisfied
Were the charges a.) Less Than, b.) The Same, c.) More than the final estimate you approved?	Rate = 2 : b.
Was your vehicle ready when promised?	Rate = 2 : Yes
Is this the second visit for the same repair?	Rate = 1 : No
Were you kept informed of the progress of the repairs to your vehicle?	Rate = 2 : Yes
Would you return for Service?	Rate = 2 : Yes
Are there any additional comments you would like to share with us?	

The majority of work in today's service departments are maintenance items which are menu priced. This is as simple as going to McDonald's or Tim Horton's and ordering off their menu. Could you imagine the government proposing legislation that would require these restaurants to give you a quote for your meal that you would have to sign before proceeding with your transaction? That is what Bill 203 is going to impose on the consumers at our dealerships.

The second part of Bill 203 that I really oppose is the posting of signs in our place of business telling consumers that we are "regulated by the Fair Trading Act" and that they "can deal in confidence" because our business is "regulated". I will again compare this to a restaurant. How would you feel if you stepped into a restaurant and the first thing you saw was a big poster telling you "not to worry, this restaurant has to comply with the province's Food Regulation under the Alberta Public Health Act. And if you have any issues, here is who you can contact". It implies (in my opinion and every other Albertan I have talked to) that as a consumer you should be very careful and wary in doing business here just as it would make your wary about the food at a restaurant displaying a similar sign.

We, as an industry, are already tightly regulated by AMVIC. There are such a fraction of issues that consumers raise in comparison to the number of transactions conducted by dealers that make up the Motor Dealer Association of Alberta. That's not to say we are satisfied with this as we strive to continually improve our process in order to even further reduce these issues. Please do not allow this bill to further complicate our business especially when the motivation for this bill came from one person's point of view several years ago in a biased production designed to sensationalize the issues.

Sincerely,

Bob Harms
 President
 Harms Automotive Group