**Right to Repair: Part II**

Context:

* During the 2023 session, the TN Disability Coalition worked with sponsors Representative Michael Hale and Senator Bo Watson to pass Right to Repair: Part 1
  + This bill prohibited requiring prior authorization from insurers for the repair of power and manual wheelchairs
* The purpose of part 1 was to begin to speed up the process of getting wheelchairs repaired by eliminating a time-consuming and burdensome step
  + The requirement for prior authorization assumed that most people in wheelchairs, at some point, might not find them “medically necessary”
  + This does not reflect the experience of the vast majority of wheelchair users

The problem:

* The process for getting a wheelchair repaired is unnecessarily long and burdensome, and this negatively impacts people who use them in countless ways
* The process is so long and burdensome, in part, because wheelchair manufacturers and providers will void a wheelchair’s warranty if repairs are completed by unauthorized repairpersons.
  + There are too few authorized repairpersons to meet the repair needs of wheelchair users.
  + This mandate allows providers to stock inventory “just-in-time,” meaning that they only procure parts or other resources when there is a specific need.
  + Other repairpersons are perfectly capable of completing *most* repairs of wheelchairs, so long as they have access to the parts, tools and resources necessary to do so.

The solution(s):

* Eliminate prior authorization as an unnecessary and time-consuming step toward getting a wheelchair repaired – **done (Part 1 Legislation passed in 2023)**
* Require wheelchair providers and manufacturers to make available parts, tools, software, manuals and other resources to independent repairpersons- **(Goal with Part 2 Legislation 2024)**

Obstacles:

* Some will present concerns about the quality of repairs by unauthorized repairpersons, and accountability for the quality, safety and effectiveness of these repairs
* Manufacturers and providers will be concerned about their liability for potentially faulty repairs by unauthorized repairpersons
* Manufacturers and providers, and likely some legislators, will have concerns about the dissemination of proprietary information owned by the business. This means that they won’t want to have to give up company secrets, knowledge and resources that they use in the process of operation and revenue generation.
* The 3 largest wheelchair manufacturers and providers in the US are located in Tennessee, and legislators are hesitant about telling local business what to do.