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**ROBERT L. COWLES**

**Wisconsin State Senator  
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**Senate Committee on Judiciary and Public Safety  
May 9, 2017  
Senate Bill 90 Testimony**

Thank you Chairman Wanggaard and Committee Members for allowing me to speak today on Senate Bill 90 (SB90). This proposal responds to the challenges many of our local auto body repair shops in Wisconsin regularly face.

The idea for this bill originated from the owners of auto body repair shops in Green Bay. Under current law, no person can remove, alter, obliterate, or intentionally make it impossible to read a vehicle or a vehicle part identification number. This law often impedes the ability for auto body shop staff to complete repairs in a timely and cost-efficient manner.

SB 90 will allow for auto repair shops to lawfully remove and replace only the data label stickers on the vehicles they are repairing. This bill only pertains to data label stickers that are found on the door or door frame. SB 90 makes no changes to any of the current laws of salvaged vehicles or titling salvaged vehicles in Wisconsin.

Repairing damaged vehicles is already a difficult and frustrating job, and the current law on vehicle data labels only makes their job harder. Auto body repair shops encounter many situations where SB 90 would benefit them, including a couple of examples which I will discuss. The first example auto repair specialists face, is the need to repaint a door after it was keyed or otherwise damaged. To blend the paint more seamlessly during the repair work, removing the data label stickers inside the door and replacing them with new data labels is easier than the current practice of taping the labels. In addition, removing and replacing the data labels will result in a cleaner finished repair job.

The second example auto repair specialist's face, results from the need of a door replacement from a car-deer collision. Currently, auto body repair shops cannot replace the data labels which appear on the doors of a vehicle, making repairs more difficult. Constantly having to be mindful of a data label is not only inconvenient for auto body repair shops, but it may slow repairs and raise cost for the customer.

SB 90 is will help remove some of the hurdles auto body repair shops face to conduct their business. Removing these burdens and allowing for flexibility for our local auto body repair owners will hopefully help get our vehicles on the roads in a timelier and more cost-efficient manner.

Thank you once again for allowing me to testify today.



# DAVID STEFFEN

STATE REPRESENTATIVE • 4<sup>TH</sup> ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

**Prepared Testimony by Rep. David Steffen before the  
Senate Committee on Judiciary and Public Safety  
Senate Bill 90: Re: removal and replacement of a vehicle or vehicle part  
identification number.  
May 9, 2017**

Chairman Wanggaard and Committee Members,

Thank you for scheduling a public hearing for Senate Bill 90, which creates a common-sense exemption to allow for Vehicle Identification Number (VIN) decals to be removed and replaced if necessary during an auto body repair to a vehicle. Current law establishes stiff penalties for anyone who removes or alters a VIN, including up to a \$10,000 fine and/or six years in prison. While these penalties are absolutely necessary in helping to combat car theft, they do create an incredible burden to auto-body repair shops who may need to remove/alter the VIN decal in order to complete their repairs.

SB 90 creates a narrow and common-sense exemption to current law, allowing for auto-body repair shops to complete their repairs without fear of breaking the law in the process. The same strict penalties should and will remain in place for any removal/alteration of VINs outside of this narrow exemption, to ensure continued deterrence of vehicle theft.

This legislation has been crafted with input from the auto-body mechanics who deal with repairs of this nature on a regular basis and is supported by the Wisconsin Auto Technicians Association.

Thank you for considering my written testimony on SB 90. I strongly encourage you to support this necessary legislation to ensure our auto-body workers can continue to serve the needs of their customers.