



## BREAK DOWN BARRIERS TO TIMELY WHEELCHAIR REPAIRS FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH SMA

*Support Wheelchair Right to Repair laws that empower consumers and reduce harmful delays*

### DID YOU KNOW?

- Due to rapid muscle weakness caused by spinal muscular atrophy (SMA), most individuals with SMA rely on a power wheelchair for their health, independence, and participation in daily life. (Source: [Cure SMA](#))
- Wheelchair users with SMA and other disabilities are often required by manufacturers, insurance policies, or warranty agreements to use designated or manufacturer-authorized repair providers, limiting their ability to seek faster or more local repair options. (Source: [PIRG](#))
- Due to consolidation within the wheelchair repair industry and other factors, including scheduling backlogs and parts shortages, many wheelchair users wait four weeks or longer for repairs—leaving individuals without safe, functional mobility. (Source: [PIRG](#))
- Several states, including [California](#), [Colorado](#), [Maryland](#), [Nevada](#), [Oregon](#), and [Washington](#), have enacted bipartisan Wheelchair Right to Repair laws to make it easier for wheelchair users to repair their own wheelchairs or turn to trusted, locally-owned repair providers. (Source: [Cure SMA](#))

### CURE SMA POSITION

To reduce barriers and shorten repair timelines for complex power wheelchairs, Cure SMA urges states to:

- Enact Wheelchair Right to Repair legislation that requires manufacturers to make parts, tools, embedded software, and documentation available to consumers and independent repair providers on fair and reasonable terms.
- Protect consumers from warranty penalties solely for choosing a qualified independent repair provider.
- Promote policies that reduce repair delays and prioritize the health, safety, and independence of individuals who rely on complex power wheelchairs.
- Cure SMA believes individuals with SMA deserve timely repairs, freedom of choice in service providers, and uninterrupted access to the equipment that makes independent living possible.

### WHY STATES SHOULD ACT

Children and adults with spinal muscular atrophy (SMA) rely on complex power wheelchairs for mobility, health, and independence. As one adult with SMA said, “Wheelchairs are our legs. Wheelchairs are a lifeline. Wheelchairs are independence.” These devices are customized to meet individual medical and functional needs such as molded seating systems to provide essential postural support and tilt, recline, and elevation functions to improve breathing and prevent pressure injuries and other health complications. When a wheelchair breaks down, the consequences are immediate and significant. Individuals may be unable to attend school or work, access medical care, or safely leave their homes. Yet repair systems are often lengthy and restrictive due to manufacturer limitations and limited authorized repair networks. States can reduce these delays and restore control to individuals with SMA and other disabilities by enacting legislation to expand consumer access to timely wheelchair repairs.



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[Cure SMA](#) is a national organization that advocates for individuals with spinal muscular atrophy, a progressive neurodegenerative disease that robs people of physical strength, taking away their ability to walk, swallow, and breathe.