



NEWS

Information and updates
from WMABA and beyond.



HAMMER & DOLLY TECH WRITER TESTIFIES IN RI



On June 5, *Hammer & Dolly* technical writer Larry Montanez (P&L Consultants, pictured far right above) appeared before the Rhode Island Senate Committee on the Judiciary as an expert witness on behalf of the Auto Body Association of Rhode Island (ABARI) to offer professional comments and opinions on a variety of industry-specific bills. One piece of legislation in particular, Senate Bill 2833, aims to prohibit insurance companies from requiring the use of used or remanufactured airbags and/or suspension parts in the repair of a vehicle.

Opposing the bill, LKQ Government Affairs Manager Andreas Heiss stated that shops that perform airbag removal are subject to "very strict federal safety standards," adding that technicians who perform this procedure are "trained to remove these airbags in a certain way" to ensure consumer safety.

"There's no rational basis for the restriction of a non-deployed airbag; it's a safe, effective alternative," he argued. "Any restriction on their use would just further extend the monopoly for car companies and harm the Rhode Island consumers by giving them [only one] option - to put in a brand-new airbag."

Unconvinced by this testimony, Senator

Stephen R. Archambault (D- District 22) later asked Montanez (who he called "the only expert I've heard tonight come before us") if such standards actually existed.

"There's no federal standard on removing an airbag out of a vehicle; I'd like to see one if one exists," replied Montanez, who added that although there is a federal standard on what EDRs [event data recorders] have to record, there is no existing standard on taking an airbag in or out.

"The *only* standard on taking it in or out is what the manufacturer says is the torque rating on the bolts, and if you can re-use the bolts or not," he reiterated.

Senate Deputy Minority Leader Dawson Hodgson (R-District 35) praised Montanez's technical knowledge and insight into the issues addressed at the hearing.

"The technical expertise that ABARI brings to the table every year at these hearings, and the professionalism that you are representing your industry with, is impressive," he said.

Complete video of the hearing (including Montanez's extensive testimony) is available for free streaming at <http://ricaptv.discovervideo.com/embedviews/vod?c=all&w=640&h=480&s=1#H&D>



MORE DETAILS REVEALED

The Society of Collision Repair Specialists (SCRS) is working hard to deliver a stellar slate of Repairer Driven Education (RDE) courses at this year's SEMA Show (November 4-7 at the Las Vegas Convention Center in Las Vegas, NV). A closer look at this year's extensive RDE schedule (available at www.sema-show.com/scrs) reveals participation from two of WMABA's most popular guest speakers: Mike Anderson (www.CollisionAdvice.com) and Tim Ronak (AkzoNobel Automotive and Aerospace Coatings).

On November 4, Anderson will present "Using Industry Statistics to Your Advantage," a two-hour course that will look at industry trends, OEM trends and statistics from the latest sources from across the country. The seminar will also explore legislation, laws and pending court cases that could impact collision repair businesses. On November 6, Ronak will preside over "Surviving the Push for Refinish Reductions - Spot within Panel Survival Kit," a 120-minute presentation that will offer a 2014 update on the industry-acclaimed "Spot within Panel Survival Kit" designed to utilize the databases to deflect requests to "alter" or "reduce" refinish times. The session is slated to explore the history of the labor operation (and where it came from), the differences between a "Blend Panel," "Spot within Panel" or "Refinish within Panel Boundaries," the specific criteria that qualifies a repair as a "Spot within Panel" and more. Ronak will also present a second November 6 seminar, "Getting Paid for Investing in Facility, Equipment and Training," which will explore the mechanisms at a shop's disposal to offset rising business costs in equipment, facility and training.

Registration information and a complete listing of RDE events is available at www.semashow.com/scrs. More SEMA news will be featured in next month's *Hammer & Dolly*. **H&D**