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RE: Bureau of Automotive Repair Outreach Efforts Regarding Preventative Maintenance Services

Dear Bureau Advisory Group Member,

The Bureau of Automotive Repair (Bureau) has spent the last year reviewing the marketing and disclosure practices for providing fluid and flush services in the automotive repair industry. After careful review of the practices and communications of automotive repair stations as well as conducting meetings and workshops with the manufacturers of vehicles and automotive fluids and chemical agents, the Bureau has decided not to pursue a new public awareness campaign at this time. Instead, the Bureau will ensure the materials we currently provide to consumers and the automotive industry contain useful information on fluid and flush services.

Background on Fluid and Flush Services

Automotive technology has improved significantly, and late model vehicles are lasting longer and require fewer repairs and maintenance. Due to these improvements, vehicle owners are saving on repair costs. However, owners that take their vehicle in for an oil change are commonly approached by repair facility personnel about performing other preventative maintenance services. The Bureau holds that manufacturer maintenance schedules should be a starting point for industry repair and service standards for fluid and flush services.

Any act or omission related to an automotive repair dealer conducting its business to maintain, repair, or service a motor vehicle falls under the provisions of Article 3 of the Automotive Repair Act (Act). This includes any preventative maintenance services, such as a fluid and flush services, that the automotive repair dealer may provide.

The fact of the matter is that vehicle manufacturers are experts on preventative maintenance and although they provide schedules for these services, most consumers are not certain if the services being recommended by their repair facility are required by the manufacturer at that point in time or if they will be of any benefit to them. Consumers rely on the repair facility for full disclosure when preventative maintenance services, such as automatic transmission, power steering unit, radiator, or brake system fluid exchanges or flushes, are being recommended.

