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September 8, 2016

**To:** Assembly Consumer Affairs Committee

**From:** Eric Blomgren, New Jersey Gasoline, Convenience Store, Automotive Association

**SUPPORT: A-3896**

Chair, Vice-Chair, and Honorable members of the committee, my name is Eric Blomgren, Associate Director of Government Affairs for the New Jersey Gasoline, Convenience Store, Automotive Association (NJGCA). We represent hundreds of the state's independent auto repair shops as well a number of individual tire dealers, and we support this legislation. We also work closely with the national group representing tire retailers, the Tire Industry Association (TIA).

This legislation will help ensure that consumers are protected from any unscrupulous retailers who may try to cut corners at the expense of the consumer, and ultimately at the expense of road safety, which negatively affects us all.

Those dishonest individuals who would deliberately sell a tire with the defects described in this bill are not only hurting their customer, they are hurting all of the honest business owners by giving themselves a competitive advantage. Where an honest dealer would either undertake the expense to repair a tire with the faults detailed in this bill (or scrap the tire and purchase a new one), a dishonest retailer would pocket the money and then undercut his competition on other products and services. Their actions also damage the reputation of honest repairers and dealers by sullyng the entire industry.

No doubt, it is possible that some honest, yet genuinely mistaken retailers may have on offer for sale a tire with a small issue, such as a defaced tire identification number (these numbers can be inputted online by anyone to see if the tire has been the subject of a recall). We are therefore glad to see that the legislation will not go into effect immediately, thereby giving retailers a chance to go over their stock and ensure that all of their products will meet the exact letter of the law.

This problem is especially acute since the State of New Jersey officially eliminated mandatory safety inspections on passenger motor vehicles six years ago. Tires were one of the items on the vehicle regularly inspected for safety. Without these inspections, the burden of maintaining tire safety is on the motorist, who unfortunately are likely to be unaware of the conditions of their tires.

I ask that you support this legislation.

Thank you.