

STRONGEST BUYER OF CATALYTIC CONVERTERS



Don Belisle, Sr.
Owner of Recore Trading
Company, L.L.C.

Broken Record

By Don Belisle, Sr.

The precious metals market that controls catalytic converter pricing remains extremely volatile. This volatility creates much fear with the players whose

actions have the most influence on pricing. Both precious metal consumers (auto manufacturers) and the precious metal mining industry literally have no idea what the near- and long-term markets and industry will do.

As I have said hundreds of times, fear and uncertainty have more influence over market pricing than anything else. In the 35 years that I have been in the converter business I have never seen this level of uncertainty exist for so long. And a big part of the problem is that there is absolutely no end in sight! At the recent IPMI (International Precious Metals Institute) winter meeting, the overall sentiment was very somber. Every person I spoke with, and every speaker cried the same story – “The markets stink, the future is very uncertain and business stinks.” I do not agree with most of this. Sure the markets are off and yes there is uncertainty. However, there is still some demand for PGM’s, so we do have a product that we can sell.

At Recore we monitor market prices extremely closely. We lock in on the highs and ride out the lows. Volatility does create an opportunity for us to be ahead of our competitors. If we are

capturing the absolute best market prices, then it only makes sense that our prices are better than theirs. This theory is certainly working as we are seeing more salvage yards selling to us. The theme we often hear is “I can’t believe you are still paying this much for converters!” Granted, it is certainly not what it was 2 or 3 years ago, but we do have a product that we can sell.

The market affects everyone in the business. We try to work with our suppliers and offer the ability to lock in pricing for them when they know they have a load coming to us. This certainly takes the uncertainty out of the equation and the yard knows what he will get for his converters. This is solid gold in these times because, remember- there is no profit like a known profit! If we can take the price risk out of converters for our suppliers, then we both win.

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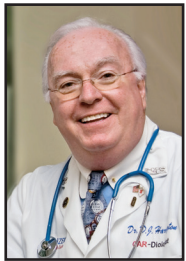
continued on page 2

Broken Record *continued from page 1*

The New Labor Market

With the salvage industry people I speak with, most have adjusted somewhat to the labor world that we now live in even if we don't necessarily like it. Some have become very creative in the ways they attract and keep employees. We have heard everything from paying employees piece meal, to profit sharing, to rewards and bonuses, and flexible work schedules. The only thing we know for sure is that things are definitely very different from what they have ever been. I give

a ton of credit to the owners who got creative and did what they had to do to keep going. We all realize that things will probably not ever go back to the way things were, so we must change with the times, or be left by the wayside. The old saying that "I've been doing things this way for 25 years and I'm not changing now," is certain to bring failure! Those of us who survive these times will certainly have less competition and more market share when things get better.



Why Join URG, PRP & ARA Anyway?

By **D.J. Harrington**

For over 36 years, I have written articles for the recycling industry. Soon, it will be time for me to stop, not because of my age, but due to my health. Three months ago, I was diagnosed with Guillain-Barre Syndrome. For GBS, there is no cure, but it is not contagious either. Nonetheless, it has been a pleasure to work within this industry. Throughout the years, I have been blessed to know so many great recyclers, to stay in their homes and eat dinner at their family tables. The reason I felt it was time to write this article is that all recyclers should belong to their state association. There are several advantages to belonging to them as well.

I'm not talking about being just a member in a state association but participating on committees and going to networking events. I mean really being a part of them. If you own a business that is associated with the recycling

industry, exhibit at their trade shows. I am the one who has told recyclers to do business with exhibitors and sponsors who are at their shows. At URG, even sponsoring a golf hole for \$150 with all the proceeds going to the URG Scholarship Foundation generates a tax write-off because the URG Scholarship Foundation is a 501 (3c). Here's another benefit of being a member.

When you belong to these associations, URG, PRP and ARA, and you exhibit at their events, you receive a list of the membership. Getting a list of all the recyclers that were at the event is a huge benefit, which allows you to reach out to them later. Now let's talk about some other advantages if you are a recycler who belongs to your state association. To attract and retain members, associations like the ones I mentioned use their 'power in numbers' buying strength to offer cost-saving programs to their membership. In lots of cases, membership dues can be covered several times over by participation in a high-return program, like reduced pricing on office supplies, access to group health or worker's compensation programs.

Why Join URG, PRP & ARA Anyway? *continued from page 2*

National Associations like URG and ARA have great scholarship foundation benefits every year. These associations give away substantial scholarships to college and vocational schools. However, you or your child cannot apply unless you are a member in good standing for at least 12 months.

I think one of the key reasons every recycler should belong to these associations is to be able to join a group where you can pool your knowledge and talent with others who are like-minded recyclers. Take full advantage of the association's educational resources where you can share best practices with peers and access member only information. A good example of this is the URG joining up with Team PRP and doing the "We Are One" Training Conference. Or, how about ARA University for their members and ARA's Annual Convention and Trade Show? That's worth doing too.

Some of the best training has been at the state level, and I have witnessed it firsthand both in Florida at FADRA and Michigan's ARM. Both groups have FIRST CLASS training at their state meetings.

I wish every recycler in this fast-paced dynamic time realizes that it is more important than ever to stay on top of industry changes with new skills. The way to do that is to have membership in your association because it's an indispensable way to ensure you stay ahead in your profession. From education and recruiting to advocacy and cost savings, the benefits of membership in these associations are extensive and ever-growing. I believe in URG, Team PRP and ARA. I hope you do too. Start at your state association and work-up. You'll be glad you did.

Thanks for all your prayers and kind thoughts on my behalf. See you on the next URG Podcast. It's the most listened to podcast in the automotive recycling industry.

Maine Legislature Threatens to Gut Right to Repair Law Passed by the Voters

By Bill Bell

26 states, most of them Western, have a process whereby citizens can enact state laws by collecting sufficient signatures to place initiatives on a statewide ballot. Maine and Massachusetts are the only New England states with such a provision, established in 1908 in Maine. These ballot measures are usually initiated in order to bypass a legislature unwilling to deal with a subject, such as "term limits" or "marijuana legalization".

In 2012, the Massachusetts legislature and then the Commonwealth's voters passed Right to Repair laws requiring that automakers provide independent garages with the same access to diagnostic repair information as that available to dealers. The two versions were then merged, and the new law went into effect in 2013. However, this law did not cover

continued on page 4

Maine Legislature Threatens to Gut Right to Repair Law Passed by the Voters

continued from page 3

“telematics”, the emerging technology transmitting data electronically from the vehicle’s sensors. “Telematics” became available only to the manufacturers and their dealers. **Independent repair shops, unless able to pay exorbitant fees, were left at a disadvantage.**

In 2020, therefore, the Massachusetts-based Right to Repair group placed an “update” on the ballot. This updated version, covering telematics, became law with 75% of the voting citizens in favor.

In 2023 Right to Repair Maine collected and turned in 74,686 valid signatures (7,000 more than required) to place similar language, including the right of independent repair shops to telematic data, on the November 2023 ballot. 84% of voting Mainers voted YES on Question 4, the “Right to Repair” ballot measure, making it Maine law effective January 2024.

A month later, the Maine Legislature’s Business Committee took up a measure (LD 1911) previously advanced by the Alliance for Automotive Innovation (read automobile manufacturers) and their blue-chip Portland Maine lobbying firm. LD 1911 removed the telematics provision and enforcement mechanism from Maine’s new Right to Repair law, essentially “gutting” it. The Committee passed LD 1911 by a 12-1 vote, claiming their action would save the State of Maine from a possible lawsuit such as the auto manufacturers undertook against Right to Repair in Massachusetts.

The Right to Repair organizers responded with an April 2 press conference bringing

about 75 garage owners, aftermarket retailers, and the president of the Maine Auto Recyclers to the State House, along with Right to Repair’s lobbyist and newly engaged advocates brought on by LKQ. As result, the tide began to change. When LD 1911 hit the floor of the Maine House on April 9, it was passed by a much narrower margin (79-65) than in Committee.

Then, as midnight neared Friday April 12, the Maine Senate did what Senates are supposed to do— bring some wisdom to the process. The Senate Chair of the Business Committee, now better understanding the extreme nature of LD 1911, led Senators from both sides of the aisle in voting 33-0 to “Indefinitely Postpone” the bill.

The discussion is probably over for now, with Maine’s Legislature about to adjourn for the year. It’s likely that some modest technical changes in the Right to Repair law will be proposed next year, warranting continued vigilance.



Bill Bell has been the executive director of the Maine Auto Recyclers Association since 2008. Prior to that time, he served as legislative assistant to a Maine Member of Congress and subsequently to the leadership of the Maine State Senate.



Converter Chronicles



Finding the Serial Number

When looking for serial numbers:

- Carefully examine the converter from various angles, lighting is key.
- Look for any engraved or stamped markings on the catalytic converter or the heat shield.
- The serial number is often etched or stamped directly on the converter.
- All serial numbers have letters, numbers or a combination of both. Keep in mind that the serial number may vary in size and location depending on the manufacturer of the catalytic converter.



Here at Recore Trading we are available any time to answer any question with serial numbers and values of catalytic converters.

Please submit all questions on our website under contact form!



www.recoretrading.com



Preserving Fairness for Maine's Small Businesses: The Battle Over LD1911

By Becca Skowra

In Maine, the automotive repair and recycling industry is a vital component of their local economy, with independent garages playing a role in providing essential services to communities statewide. However, recent legislative actions have brought some in this industry under threat, particularly with the introduction of LD1911.

LD1911, proposed by the Maine Legislature's Innovation, Development, Economic Advancement, and Business Committee (IDEA), has raised significant concerns among those who value fairness and consumer choice in the automotive repair sector. This bill seeks to amend Maine's Right to Repair law, which was overwhelmingly supported by Maine voters in 2023.

At the heart of the Right to Repair law is the principle that car owners should have the freedom to choose where they have their vehicles repaired. This empowers independent garages to compete with dealerships on an equal footing, ensuring a level playing field in the automotive repair market. However, LD1911 threatened to erode these protections by limiting the access of independent repair shops to telematic data, essential for diagnosing and repairing modern vehicles.

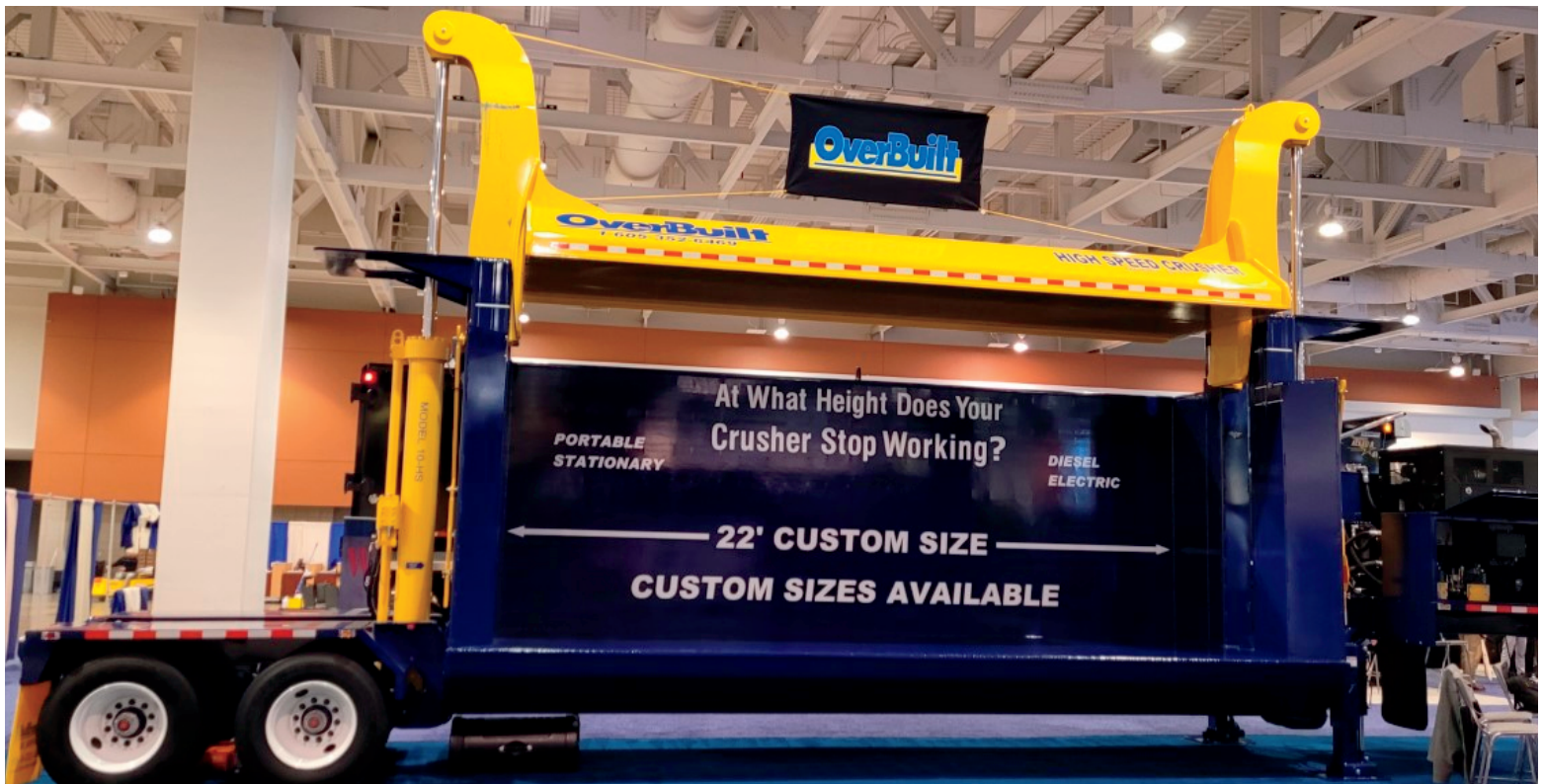
In a recent discussion with an individual familiar with this issue, it was apparent that there are some valid arguments on both sides of the debate. However, one thing is clear: the interests of Maine's small businesses and consumers must be prioritized over political

maneuvering. It's important to prioritize the needs and concerns of the community and businesses over any political agendas or influences. The independent garages want the state of Maine to prioritize ensuring fairness, protecting local businesses, and empowering consumers to make choices that benefit them.

I have the privilege of being able to witness firsthand the dedication and hard work of independent garages in serving their communities. These businesses deserve to operate in a fair and competitive environment, free from undue influence or interference.

As any business owner knows, government intervention should be minimal, especially when it comes to matters that directly impact small businesses and consumers. Instead of making policies that handcuff the consumer and basically direct wire money to DC and big corporations, we need policies that foster a level playing field and promote fair competition, rather than hindering the ability of independent businesses to thrive.

It was imperative that Maine's legislators carefully considered the implications of LD1911 and its potential impact on the state's small businesses and consumers. By preserving the integrity of the Right to Repair law, lawmakers can uphold the values of fairness, consumer choice, and economic opportunity for all Mainers. With the indefinite postponement, we are hopeful that Maine remains a place where small businesses can thrive and consumers can have a choice.



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Laughter is the Best Medicine



A good looking woman walks into a bar wearing a tube top.

She raises her hand to signal the bartender for a beer, revealing that she does not shave her armpits.

Meanwhile, a sloppy drunk on the other side of the bar signals the bartender,

“Buy that ballerina over there a drink on me”

The bartender replies, “What makes you think she’s a ballerina?”

“Because, “ answers the drunken man, “any chick that can lift her leg that high has GOT to be a ballerina.”

Memory Test of an Old Man

Three elderly men are at the doctor for a memory test.

The doctor says to the first man, “What is three times three?”

“274,” was his reply.

The doctor says to the second man, “It’s your turn. What is three times three?”

“Tuesday,” replies the second man.

The doctor says to the third man, “Okay, your turn. What’s three times three?”

“Nine, “ says the third man.

“That’s great!” says the doctor.

“How did you get that?”

“Simple, “ says the third man. “I subtracted 274 from Tuesday.”



T-G-I-F vs S-H-I-T

A business man go on an elevator. When he entered, there was a blond already inside who greeted him with a bright “T-G-I-F”

He smiled at her and replied, “S-H-I-T”

She looked puzzled and repeated, “T-G-I-F,” more slowly.

He again answered, “S-H-I-T.”

The blonde was trying to keep it friendly, so she smiled her biggest smile, and said as sweetly as possible, ‘T-G-I-F.’

The man smiled back to her and once again said “S-H-I-T.”

The exasperated blonde finally decided to explain. “T-G-I-F means Thank God It’s Friday. Get it, duuhhhh?”

The man answered, “S-H-I-T means Sorry, Honey, It’s Thursday - - duuhhh.”



PROUD MEMBERS OF:



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