The Society of Collision Repair Specialists serves as the national association representing the hardworking collision repair facilities across the United States, and they have asked that I share some sentiments on their behalf.

According to SCRS, there is nothing more paramount than protecting consumer safety and maintaining a fair and competitive landscape that ensures consumers can count on their insurance contracts to fairly indemnify them for loss in the event of an unfortunate accident. This is exacerbated by the increasing escalation of sophisticated vehicle technology, and consumer reliance on safety functions present in modern automobiles.

SCRS recognizes that the 1963 Consent Decree established agreement from claims and surety organizations to discontinue behavior that was deemed to be anticompetitive in nature; while the agreement may be limited to signatory companies, this document memorializes a federal recognition of behaviors and practices that the Department of Justice established as unacceptable in a fair and competitive marketplace.

While decades may have passed, the terms of the Consent Decree are as applicable to the modern marketplace as ever. It is referenced routinely in court cases and articles and serves as an integral guiding light within the industry to help define and shape the boundaries of acceptable behavior.

In 2009 SCRS joined the Auto Body Association of Connecticut, and other state affiliate associations from Massachusetts, Michigan, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, and Wisconsin in a meeting with senior attorneys within the Department of Justice. Our request 10 years ago was that the Department understand how market manipulation, price discrimination and practices that mirror many of those outlined in the 1963 Consent Decree had a severely negative impact on consumer safety and competition, and that they act to further enforce the virtues of the Decree in the modern marketplace.

It is the plea of thousands of small and large businesses across America that this Administration not let our history go by the wayside. Those same practices and patterns prohibited in 1963, and documented for the Department of Justice in 2009, continue to exist today in 2019; now perhaps more than ever.

We ask today that this Department of Justice remain vigilant in protecting consumers from unfair and unjust practices that diminish competition, stifle innovation and make safety a vulnerability. Maintain this 1963 Consent Decree to serve as a frequent point of reference and a guiding moment from our history, of what we should strive to achieve. Further, we ask your department to embrace the sentiments within the document, and enforce against the ongoing yet prohibited practices that cause harm to consumers and small business across America.