

# Mr. Swift Goes to Washington

ARA President and Iowa's native son, Mike Swift stormed the nation's capital in April with a brigade of fellow auto recyclers to discuss the merits of providing all parts data to the automotive recycling industry.

Members of both the House and Senate were asked to meet with members of the Automotive Recyclers Association or ARA, an international trade association for the automotive used parts recycling industry.

Mike and Tracy Swift and Sue Schauls represented Iowa in the endeavor to educate the congressional delegation on the merits of allowing access to data that is already used in the industry by repairers, the insurance industry, and new car dealerships.

ARA had previously introduced a bill that asked for all VIN data for vehicle parts matching as the best option to be proactive in protecting consumers from unknowingly receiving parts that had been on recall for safety reasons and to increase the usage of used parts for the known environmental and economic benefits. The current system of sending hardcopy letters to the last registered owner of the vehicles was not only inefficient and expensive to automakers but lacked integration to the parts inventory system used by automotive recyclers thus did not accomplish the intended transfer of information necessary. **The bill became law but with the concession, that only the recall data will be provided to auto recyclers.** The law is in the rule writing process now.

The availability of the recall data in batch data form to inventory management systems will allow auto recyclers' systems to flag recalled parts in real time so that as soon as a defect is identified the parts will be marked as non-saleable. Additionally, if the original equipment manufacturer (OEM) or a third party vendor is offering a buy back on recalled parts they will be easily pulled for sale much like integrated core sales programs work now.

The law was championed in the House of Representatives by Representative Adam Kinzinger, from Illinois, and his motivated staff. ARA honored Representative Kinzinger and his staff for understanding that the data is unnecessarily kept from consumers and auto recyclers even though it was readily available in electronic form. The process is not over and the mechanics of making the data integrated with inventory management system is a political process wrought with concession and compromise. Thankfully, Mr. Swift, ARA CEO Michael Wilson, and the *extremely talented* ARA Director of Policy, Delanne Bernier, along with a dedicated support system made up of ARA staff, the genius team at Car-Part, and highly engaged recyclers like Shannon Nordstrom, just to name a few of the many many individuals that accomplished this arduous task, are still at the helm watching the rule writing process.

This is big folks. What has already been accomplished is a game changer in the industry. Possibly THE game changer we desperately need. In the true vein of the title innuendo, all made possible by people who cared to make a difference assisted by people who know *how* to make it happen. Ponder that for a moment please, because those two things do not come together by accident. That *IS* the political process. As the saying goes, **"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has."** - Margaret Mead