

2026 Board of Director Officers

June 27, 2026

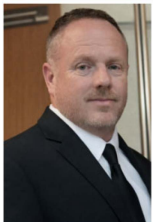
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National Poll: More Than 70% of Voters Back Military Right to Repair, Modify

June 27, 2026

The public is **overwhelmingly in support of providing the U.S. military with the right to repair its equipment and vehicles**, according to a new survey commissioned by **SEMA**.

According to the survey, **78.9%** of respondents support the military's ability to repair its own equipment. When asked about the **Warrior Right to Repair Act**, bipartisan legislation under consideration by Congress for inclusion in the **National Defense Authorization Act** that would provide the military with the right to repair, **73.5%** of voters said they would support the legislation.

The survey also includes the first-ever assessment of the public's opinions of battlefield modifications of military equipment, an associated issue raised recently by military leaders during congressional testimony. When presented with a question on the necessity of adapting equipment to meet evolving battlefield conditions, **72.4%** of voters agree that military personnel should have the authority to modify their equipment, not just repair.

The survey was commissioned by SEMA from May 14–17, with a +/- 2.9% margin of error. The survey sample was 1,090, with the exception of the question on modification, for which the sample size was 1,168. This survey was conducted online by **occam™** by AlphaROC.

"The data reveals an overwhelming, unambiguous public mandate: Americans strongly believe the U.S. military should have the right to repair its own equipment," wrote **SEMA Political Director Lauren Wilbor**. "Voters express deep concern over both taxpayer costs and defense contractor lobbying, along with impacts on military readiness."

Read SEMA's full polling memo [here](#).

SURVEY HIGHLIGHTS

- Strong bipartisan support for military right to repair, with **84.1%** of Republicans, **78.2%** of Democrats and **76.2%** of Independents in support of allowing the military to repair its own equipment.
- Military right to repair remains a "silent issue," with **76.5%** of voters unaware of contract rules that restrict military units from repairing their own equipment.
- Voters demand common sense on the battlefield, with **66.5%** stating their belief that if a military vehicle breaks down in a combat zone, service members should be allowed to repair it in the field.
- Conversely, just **10%** of respondents believe military units should be required to wait for manufacturer-authorized technicians.
- Voters, when educated on the outcome of previous attempts to provide the military with the right to repair, overwhelmingly (**71.8%**) expressed concern with how defense contracting decisions are made.

This article was originally published on June 12, 2026.

Image courtesy of Shutterstock | Ryzan W. Perez

Powertrain Expo 2026 – Automatic Transmission Rebuilders Association

June 27, 2026

<https://members.atra.com/events/powertrain-expo>

ABOUT ATRA'S POWERTRAIN EXPO

Welcome to the largest gathering of transmission repair specialists in the world—the ATRA Powertrain Expo! Hosted by GEARS Magazine, Powertrain Expo is the premier international event for transmission and powertrain professionals, bringing together industry leaders, experts, and exhibitors from around the globe. Every year, professionals from all corners of the world come to compare products, discover new technologies, and gain invaluable insights into the ever-evolving transmission and drivetrain industry.

Since its inception in 1993, Powertrain Expo has maintained one clear mission: helping transmission shops attract and retain customers while empowering technicians to fix cars more efficiently and accurately. It sounds simple, but with the rapidly changing landscape of the automotive and transmission industry, staying ahead of the curve is more challenging than ever. That's why ATRA's Powertrain Expo remains a must-attend event for transmission professionals—providing the knowledge and tools needed to keep up with technological advancements and market demands.

For More Information:

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Why Attend Powertrain Expo?

As the largest transmission industry event in the world, Powertrain Expo offers a unique opportunity to:

- **Gain Expert Knowledge:** Learn from top professionals and industry leaders through technical seminars, hands-on workshops, and live demonstrations.
- **Discover Cutting-Edge Technology:** Explore the latest transmission products, services, and innovations showcased by exhibitors from every part of the industry.
- **Build Your Professional Network:** Connect with shop owners, technicians, manufacturers, and innovators who are passionate about improving their craft and driving industry success.
- **Strengthen Your Business:** Take home practical strategies and solutions to enhance shop performance, attract more customers, and stay competitive.

Whether you're a shop owner, transmission specialist, automotive technician, or parts supplier, Powertrain Expo is your gateway to staying at the forefront of the industry. That's why so many professionals make it a priority to attend year after year—gaining insights, connections, and skills that fuel long-term success.

Join us at Powertrain Expo and be part of the movement that's shaping the future of the transmission and drivetrain industry!

The Thin Line

June 27, 2026

Inside ULV Transmission Fluids, Molecular Trickery, and Why Modern Transmissions Live on the Edge

From Thick Skin to Bare Nerves

Once upon a time, automatic transmissions survived on respectable oil thickness, generous apply pressure, and torque converters that locked only when politely asked. Low Viscosity (LV) fluids still carried enough body to do most of the work themselves. Additives were helpers not heroes. Ultra Low Viscosity (ULV) fluids changed that bargain. With viscosities as low as 3.5–4.5 cSt at operating temperature, oil film thickness largely vanished. What replaced it was chemistry precision additives asked to perform jobs viscosity once handled quietly and reliably.

Same Ingredients, Different Stakes

LV and ULV fluids contain similar additive families—friction modifiers, anti-wear compounds, VI improvers, detergents, and oxidation inhibitors. The difference lies in dependency. LV fluids use additives to assist lubrication. ULV fluids depend on them to function.

Why ULV Fluids Shear So Easily

ULV fluids start thin and rely on short chain VI improvers. These polymers provide minimal thickening and minimal reserve. When exposed to planetary gear meshes, (especially at the rpm some of these 10 speed planets are spinning) PWM solenoid turbulence, and torque converter clutch oscillation, they don't fade they break. Viscosity doesn't decline gracefully. It collapses.

Friction Modifiers Take Center Stage

With viscosity gone, friction modifiers become structural. Fatty esters, amine phosphate systems, boron compounds, and most critically nitrogen polar modifiers take over clutch behavior. These additives regulate slip, prevent shudder and shape the friction curve software expects to see.

Nitrogen Polar Modifiers: Chemistry With a Job to Do

Nitrogen polar molecules attach directly to clutch steels and friction material through electrostatic attraction. Their polar heads bond to surfaces; their hydrocarbon tails create controlled shear layers only molecules thick. This boundary film defines static breakaway and dynamic slip in ULV transmissions where oil film thickness is nearly absent.

Why These Modifiers Struggle to Last

These molecules are not fragile, they are overworked. High shear disrupts molecular alignment. Interface temperatures oxidize functional groups. Contamination or fluid mixing displaces them from surfaces. Once coverage becomes uneven, friction behavior destabilizes rapidly and adaptation headroom disappears.

When Thin Meets Fast: Planetaries at Warp Speed

Modern transmissions pack more ratios into similar space using smaller, compound planetary gearsets. Smaller gears must spin faster. Combined with frequent converter slip and aggressive ratio splits, planetary assemblies now operate at significantly higher RPMs. High speed increases shear, centrifuges oil away from contact zones and generates heat exactly where ULV fluid is weakest.

High RPM planetaries shred VI polymers, force boundary lubrication, and spike interface temperatures even when sump temperature appears normal. The result is sudden shudder, harsh shifts, or clutch instability that seems to appear overnight.

The Tradeoff OEMs Accepted

ULV fluids enable fuel economy compliance and rapid shifting, but they leave no safety margin. Chemistry replaces durability. Precision replaces forgiveness. When the chemistry degrades, there is nothing left to compensate.

Conclusion

ULV transmissions are not inherently unreliable they are unforgiving. Thin oil didn't fail on its own. It was asked to survive at speeds and loads thick oil was never designed to see. When everything works, ULV systems are brilliantly smooth. Keep up on service intervals, and do not mix these fluids. Always stick with manufacturer specified fluid. When chemistry slips, they fall off the edge.

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This private group is limited to members only and can be accessed by using the link below:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/666871553488814>

Should you encounter any issues, please contact Chris Horbach at chorbach@tcraonline.com

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