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Safe Power Window Campaign - Fact Sheet

Background:

- A 2007 study by the National Center for Statistics and Analysis at the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) estimated that each year 2,000 people are treated in hospital emergency rooms for injuries related to power windows, and half of those are children.ⁱ
- In 2009, NHTSA studied whether or not to require automatic reversing systems (ARS) technology, which stops a window if an obstruction is detected-much like the proven technology in garage doors and elevators, to prevent children from being injured or killed. Based on their research, NHTSA has decided ARS is not necessary.
- As of October 2010, all automakers are required by law to manufacture vehicles with “pull-up/push down” switches, but the law does not require windows to reverse directions automatically when obstructed.

Situation:

- Power windows can exert an upward force of 30-80 pounds, which is more than is necessary in most cases to raise the window. It takes just 22 pounds of force to suffocate or injure an infant and two pounds of force to activate the switch.
- Power windows in automobiles have killed or injured thousands of children. Since 1990 over 50 children have been killed by power windows, with untold numbers of brain injuries and amputations of fingers, etc.; most of them to children age three or younger.
- Current legislation mandating “pull-up to close” switches does not address third-party incidents, which often occur when a driver is operating the switch and cannot see the rear seat passengers.
- As distracted driving becomes an escalating issue, power window related injuries may increase due to a distracted drivers longer response times.
- NHTSA’s 2009 Notice of Proposed Rule Making (NPRM) declares ARS is not necessary based on extremely flawed data, which KidsAndCars.org can now prove to be grossly underestimated.

National polls conducted by Harris Interactive in October 2009 found that:

- More than 18 million U.S. adults have injured someone they know by closing a car window.
- Over 30 million U.S. adults have been personally injured or know someone who has been personally injured by someone else closing a car window.
- Over 11 million U.S. adults have been personally injured by someone else closing a car window but did not seek medical care thus they were not included in any government data collection efforts.

ARS facts:

- ARS technology would cost approximately \$6 per car window. With the economies of scale, the cost will be reduced even further.
- Eight out of 10 new vehicles sold in Europe include ARS technology, as well as most American cars sold overseas, but the technology is only on 10 percent (not sure if that number is still correct) of GM Ford and Chrysler American versions.ⁱⁱ

Solutions:

- Convince NHTSA to change their position on ARS technology.

ⁱ National Center for Statistics and Analysis, 2007

ⁱⁱ KIDS AND CARS, September 2004