

June 29, 2019

The Honorable Roger Wicker, Chairman  
The Honorable Maria Cantwell, Ranking Member  
The Honorable Richard Blumenthal  
U.S. Senate  
Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Wicker, Ranking Member Cantwell and Senator Blumenthal:

Thank you for your leadership in introducing the HOT CARS Act of 2019 (S. 1601) on May 22, 2019. As family members who have lost our children or had a near miss in a hot car incident, we appreciate your concern and compassion.

We are writing to request that S. 1602 be amended and enacted into law so that the safety standard requires not only an alert system, but also a detection system. As you are aware, there have been significant advances in the development of technology to detect the presence of even a tiny newborn left behind in a vehicle. Last September, several of us traveled to Washington, DC to attend a demonstration held outside of the Senate Dirksen Office Building showcasing state-of-the-art child detection systems. Additionally, we had an opportunity to meet with many of your staff who were also impressed with the current technology.

In light of the availability of innovative technology, we strongly urge you to advance an amended bill that will significantly enhance the protection of children and hopefully eliminate these tragic deaths. This can be accomplished by enacting legislative language included in H.R. 2, the Moving Forward Act., This bill is now under consideration by the U.S. House of Representatives and will likely be voted on soon.

The provision in H.R. 2 directs the U.S. Department of Transportation to issue a safety standard within two years that would require every new car be equipped with technology that both “detects” the presence of a child in a vehicle and “informs” the driver and others within the vicinity of the vehicle.

Unfortunately, a simple reminder alert to check the back seat, as required by S. 1601, falls short of providing the effective and comprehensive solution that is needed to prevent hot car tragedies. In fact, we are very concerned that this type of outdated and incomplete system will give parents a false sense of security. Since the Senate bill was first introduced in 2017, manufacturers have made tremendous progress in developing more sophisticated and accurate technology to identify the presence of a small child or baby. And, the cost is extremely economical and likely will be even more inexpensive when it is standard equipment in all new cars similar to other technologies required such as rearview cameras. Furthermore, a system that “detects” the

presence of a child will also address the problem of children who climb into unoccupied vehicles, representing over 25 percent of the identified hot car fatalities annually.

Unfortunately, educational efforts over the last 20 years have not been effective. While public awareness of the issue is at an all-time high, so is the number of children dying. The last two years (2018, 2019) were the worst years in history for children dying in hot cars with over 100 little lives lost. These children do not have to die. Families do not have to live with the unbearable pain that we feel every day.

We come to you with great urgency to support language in H.R. 2. Already this week another child died in a hot car in Virginia. Every day that we delay in advancing these life-saving detection technologies means children are at risk of needlessly dying. We desperately need a legislative solution that will solve the problem and want to work with you to achieve that goal before another summer passes.

We wanted to make sure you saw the article that ran in the New York Times on 6/26/2020 ([Momentum for an Effort to Save Children From Sweltering Cars](#)) that discusses the need for technology.

With respect and hope,

Andrew & Jamie Dill  
Parents of Oliver who died in a hot car  
Princeton, IN

Tania San Miguel-Bounds  
Mother of Miah who died in a hot car  
Olalla, WA

Juan & Marissa Rodriguez  
Parents of Luna & Phoenix who died in a hot car  
New City, NY

Lisa Berry  
Mother of Lexi who died in a hot car  
Huntsville, AL

Stephanie & Corey Mitchell  
Parents of Tate who died in a hot car  
St. Louis, MO

Jenny & Mike Stanley

Parents of Sydney who died in a hot car  
Alpharetta, GA

Eric & Michelle Stuyvesant  
Parents of Michael who was severely injured in a hot car incident  
Garland, TX

Sue Boe Shea  
Grandmother of Kate who died in a hot car  
Land O Lakes, FL

Stephanie & Israel Pinon  
Parents of Jahzel who died in a hot car  
Albuquerque, NM

Norman II & Catherine Collins  
Parents of Norman Bishop who died in a hot car  
Jackson, MS

Loren Beltran  
Mother of Joziah who died in a hot car  
Mexico Beach, FL  
Las Vegas, NV

Erin Johnson  
Mother of Bridget who died in a hot car  
Rockwell, NC

Brittany Borgess  
Mother of Samaria who died in a hot car  
Williamsport, PA

Marta Magellan  
Grandmother of Samuel who died in a hot car  
Miami, FL

Jodie Edwards  
Mother of Jenna who died in a hot car  
Liberty Township, OH

Kristin Whitaker  
Mother of Lawson who died in a hot car  
Palm Harbor, FL

Angela and Scott Jones  
Parents of Charlotte who died in a hot car

Gilbert, AZ

Keegan Jones  
Aunt of Charlotte who died in a hot car  
Gilbert, AZ

Megan Hall  
Mother of Lillian Kathryn who died in a hot car  
League City, TX

Dikeisha Whitlock-Pryer & Raymond Pryer Sr.  
Parents of RJ who died in a hot car  
Houston, TX

Vanessa & Michael Goolsby  
Parents of Micayla who died in a hot car  
Hialeah, FL

Mikey & Michelle Terry  
Parents of Mika who died in a hot car  
Grandview, TX

Dawn & Wes Peabody  
Parents of Maya who died in a hot car  
Phoenix, AZ

Zhong & Pearla Li  
Father of Kiara who died in a hot car  
Pomona, CA

Leanna Simmons  
Mother of Cooper who died in a hot car  
Sheffield, AL

Delyla Blackburn  
Mother of Addyson who died in a hot car  
Shreveport, LA

Todd and Melody Costello  
Parents of Tyler who died in a hot car  
Medina, OH

Andrew & Karey Ann Dawidowicz  
Parents of child who survived a hot car near miss  
Denton, MD

Erin Holley  
Mother of Finn who survived a hot car near miss  
Charleston, SC

Brenda Nesselroad Slaby  
Mother of Cecilia who died in a hot car  
Loveland, OH

Carol Axmann-Harrison & Miles Harrison  
Parents of Chase who died in a hot car  
Purcellville, VA

Deona Bien, RN & Jesse Bien  
Mother of Aslyn who died in a hot car  
Tucson, AZ  
Honolulu, Hawaii

Richie Gray  
Father of Sophia who died in a hot car  
Hartsville, SC

Stephanie Salvilla  
Mother of Gannon who died in a hot car  
Orlando, FL

Ashley Phillips  
Mother of infant who survived a hot car near miss  
Kaufman, TX

Dalyce Franz  
Mother of Seth who died in a hot car  
Las Vegas, NV

Gilbert Estevez & Sulaine Rosario  
Parents of Rosalie who died in a hot car  
Leonardtown, MD

Deannie & Leland Jacobson  
Parents of Luke who died in a hot car  
Sugar Land, TX

Lindsey Rogers-Seitz & Kyle Seitz  
Parents of Benjamin who died in a hot car  
Cary, NC  
Ridgefield, CT

Lizz Maxwell  
Witness to a hot car death  
Medina, OH

Dee Dee Estis  
Mother of Christian who died in a hot car  
Texas

Nicole Engler, RN & Pete Engler  
Parents of Remi who died in a hot car  
Roseburg, OR

Beth & Kyle Brown  
Parents of Amberlee who died in a hot car  
Chandler, AZ

Judie Galvin & Dr. John Moschello  
Family friends of Luna and Phoenix Rodriguez who died in a hot car  
Watertown, CT

Raelyn Balfour  
Parent of Bryce who died in a hot car  
Earlysville, VA

Dr. Dennis Sierra  
Father of Andres who died in a hot car  
Boca Raton, FL

Emily Bird  
Mother of Eli who died in a hot car  
Fort Lauderdale, FL

Conni Lowe  
Grandmother of Holland Judy  
Lexington, KY

Kristina Wilcoxson  
Mother whose 3-month-old son survived in a hot car  
Noble, OK

Joy Green  
Mother of Angel who died in a hot car  
Baton Rouge, LA

Reggie McKinnon  
Father of Payton

Fort Meyers, FL

Raychele Jackson

Mother of River who died in a hot car

Roanoke, VA

Alan & Carla Lyon

Parents of Sophia who died in a hot car

Dolgeville, NY

Douglas W & Diana Grote

Parents of Kristen who died in a hot car

Moore, SC

Christine Hladky

EMT who responded to a hot car death

Cape Carteret, NC

Brian Lynch

Firefighter/paramedic who responded to a hot car death

Maryland