

US rules to prevent car back-over deaths delayed

By JOAN LOWY, Associated Press – 2/28/2012

WASHINGTON (AP) — U.S. rules aimed at preventing drivers from backing over children and others by requiring automakers to include rearview cameras on many new vehicles will be delayed until the end of this year, transportation officials said Tuesday.

In a letter to lawmakers, Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood said the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration needs more time for "study and data analysis."

The agency proposed more than a year ago that automakers include rear-mounted video cameras with in-vehicle display on all cars and light trucks by the 2014 model year.

Nearly 300 people are killed and 18,000 injured each year because of back-over accidents, according to NHTSA data. Many occur in driveways and parking lots. Nearly half the deaths involve children under age 5. The elderly also are frequent victims.

Lobbyists for the Alliance of Automobile Manufacturers, an industry trade association, met with White House officials in December about the proposed rules. They urged the administration to permit manufacturers the option of including expanded mirrors on vehicles rather than cameras, saying the estimated cost to the industry of requiring cameras at \$2.7 billion annually.

Gloria Bergquist, vice president of the alliance, noted that the cameras already are standard equipment in many vehicle models or offered as options for which car buyers pay extra.

Under a 2008 law, the government was required to issue final rules to address back-over accidents by Feb. 28, 2011. LaHood had extended that deadline twice already.

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