

U.S. Delays Rule on Rearview Car Cameras

By NICK BUNKLEY Published: February 28, 2012

DETROIT — Safety regulators will not complete the details of a rule mandating [rearview cameras on all passenger vehicles](#) until the end of the year, Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood told Congressional leaders on Tuesday.



Mark Wilson/Getty Images, Ray LaHood, the federal transportation secretary.

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Mr. LaHood said safety regulators had “made significant progress in developing the final rule” but will delay issuing the mandate until later this year. A 2008 law originally called on regulators to set new rear visibility standards for vehicles by Feb. 28, 2011, but Mr. LaHood already had extended the deadline several times. In January, he told Congress that he expected the department to issue the requirement by Feb. 29.

“Further study and data analysis — including of a wider range of vehicles and drivers — is important to ensure the most protective and efficient rule possible,” Mr. LaHood said in a statement issued late Tuesday. “The department remains committed to improving rearview visibility for the nation’s fleet and we expect to complete our work and issue a final rule by Dec. 31, 2012.”

The requirement is intended to protect children and other pedestrians from being hit by vehicles when the drivers are backing up and fail to see them. About 228 deaths occur annually in such cases, the government says.

It estimates that using a camera to eliminate the rear blind spot could cut that number roughly in half.

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration has said that including cameras would add up to \$200 to the cost of a vehicle, or a total of \$2.7 billion for the auto industry, at least some of which would be passed on to consumers.

The agency’s original proposal called for the requirement to be phased in, with all vehicles having the feature by September 2014. A rearview camera already comes standard on 45 percent of cars and trucks in the current model year.

Among the details that regulators want to resolve are how quickly a camera image must appear on the screen when the driver shifts the vehicle into reverse gear and the size of the area that must be shown.

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