

# Rear-view cameras law needs to be acted on

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Five years after my son Cameron died in a car crash, Congress [passed a law](#), named after my boy, to ensure that such a tragedy never happened again. But five more years have passed, and the safety fix that Congress ordered completed by 2011 has been needlessly delayed. I'm suing the Obama administration to compel it to do what Congress directed. One evening in 2002, as I backed my SUV into my driveway, I checked my rearview and side mirrors but there was something they could not show me: Cameron had followed me outside and standing, in his pajamas, directly behind my vehicle.

I ran over my son.

I thought my tragedy was a freak accident. But I soon learned that each week dozens of toddlers in the United States are struck by drivers backing up.

Rearview and side mirrors show a lot, but there is a large area directly behind every vehicle that can't be seen by drivers.

Auto manufacturers have engineered a fix: the rear-view camera. But most cars don't have them.

After learning of the deaths of children such as Cameron, my representative in Congress, Peter King (R-N.Y.), worked with Rep. Jan Schakowsky (D-Ill.) to propose legislation requiring new vehicles to ensure rear visibility through cameras or other methods. Earlier lifesaving innovations that society now takes for granted, such as seat belts and air bags, were once an optional luxury before the federal government required them in every vehicle.

The bill passed the [House easily and the Senate unanimously](#); President George W. Bush signed it into law in February 2008.

I thought the safety improvements would start then, but, like most laws, the legislation did not set specific requirements. It ordered the Transportation Department to issue, within three years, the regulation that would set the exact standards and give them legal force. The law allowed DOT to seek an extension if that deadline "cannot be met." Five agonizing years later, amid claims of unjustified costs, the rule has not been issued. Each year [more than 200 individuals are killed](#) and 18,000 injured, according to Transportation Department estimates. In November 2011, [the agency sent its final draft](#) of the rule to the White House regulations office. The review process is supposed to take no more than 120 days.

This past June, the [administration sent the rule back](#) for more study — even though the Transportation Department has already conducted research it has characterized as "extensive." The department has [written to Congress](#) that it is working to complete the rule by 2015.

Usually Congress is criticized for gridlock. But on this issue, Congress stepped up and issued a clear mandate to prevent these tragedies. The Obama administration — and, probably, anonymous lobbyists — is obstructing Congress's will and public safety.

So I'm asking a federal court to order the Transportation Department to issue the rear visibility regulation. The case's coalition of petitioners, represented by Public Citizen, includes another parent who struck her own child while backing up her car, along with Advocates for Highway and Auto Safety, KidsAndCars.org, and Consumers Union. Congress legislated the 2011 deadline so the rules would be issued in a timely fashion to avoid heartbreaking, preventable deaths. This rule will come too late for Cameron, but it will save thousands of other children's lives.

[http://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/rear-view-cameras-law-needs-to-be-acted-on/2013/09/24/dd210e8e-252d-11e3-b75d-5b7f66349852\\_story.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/rear-view-cameras-law-needs-to-be-acted-on/2013/09/24/dd210e8e-252d-11e3-b75d-5b7f66349852_story.html)