

# Schumer, LI families, push for rearview cameras on cars

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Photo credit: Anthony Lanzilote | Susan Auriemma and Bill Nelson speak with U.S. Senator Charles Schumer during a news conference in Manhattan to push for a law mandating that all new cars have rear view cameras. (Oct. 20, 2013)

Sen. Charles Schumer and two Long Island families vowed Sunday to fight the federal Department of Transportation's delays in enforcing a 2008 law requiring all new cars to come with lifesaving rearview cameras installed.

"This law was signed by President Bush," Schumer (D-N.Y.) said with the two families of children struck by cars backing up standing at his side at a Manhattan news conference. "This should have been done in 2011. We're going to push hard and stop the DOT from throwing up roadblocks." The DOT recently announced it needs until 2015 to further investigate enforcement of the new automaker requirement. Every week, 50 children are injured, two fatally, by back-over crashes, according to supporters of the Cameron Gulbransen Kids and Cars Transportation Safety Act, which was passed and signed into law in 2008. They say 44 of those killed each year in back-over crashes are younger than 5.

For nine years, Adriann Raschdorf-Nelson and her husband, Bill Nelson, have been going to Washington to advocate for the law, and now say they will keep fighting for its enforcement.

The Dix Hills couple lost their 16-month-old son Alec when his grandfather accidentally backed over the toddler while pulling out of the family's driveway.

"This is an emotional day for us," the boy's father said. "Alec would be 10. For the last nine years we have been talking to people, going to Washington. And these delays have to stop before more kids get hurt."

Nelson said some of "the resistance to enforce the law has to come from the auto manufacturers. Rearview cameras should be a standard safety feature like air bags.

"Can anyone imagine not having an air bag in their car?" he asked.

"I also think that some people want to blame the parents and believe that this could not happen to them. But every parent has lost track of their child -- it only takes a second," he said.

Manhasset mother Susan Auriemma accidentally backed over her 3-year-old daughter Kate when the child ran onto the family's driveway in 2005.

"I heard a scream and it sounded like kids playing, but then I remembered what happened to Dr. Gulbransen and knew the same thing had just happened to me. If I would have kept going not knowing that these things could happen, my daughter would have not recovered."

In 2002, Dr. Greg Gulbransen, a Syosset pediatrician, backed over his 2-year-old son Cameron, killing him. The safety law is named after his son.

"These are painful stories," Schumer said. "It turns out that one of the most dangerous places for a child is the family driveway. Auto manufacturers can shine a light on this blind spot so that no one has to go through this horrible ordeal."

<http://www.newsday.com/long-island/schumer-li-families-push-for-rearview-cameras-on-cars-1.6289565?firstfree=yes>