



ADVOCATES
FOR HIGHWAY
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KIDS AND CARS * Advocates for Highway and Auto Safety * Consumers Union * Public Citizen * Center for Auto Safety * Trauma Foundation * Consumer Federation of America * National Consumers League

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Parents, Consumer and Safety Groups Give a Standing Ovation to the Senate for passing the Cameron Gulbransen Kids Transportation Safety Act Today

Washington, DC — Parents, consumer and safety groups praise the Senate's unanimous passage today of H.R. 1216, an important child auto safety measure.

The bill, the Cameron Gulbransen Kids Transportation Safety Act of 2007, was named after 2-year-old Cameron, who was killed when he was inadvertently backed over by an SUV because the blindzone behind the vehicle made it impossible to see him. Dr. Greg Gulbransen, a Long Island pediatrician expressed gratitude that the long-awaited bill has now been approved by the Senate after having been approved in the House in December. "Today's action represents the accumulation of hard work, dedication and commitment by everyone affected by these preventable tragedies. When implemented, the provisions of the bill will make vehicles much safer for all American families," said Dr. Gulbransen.

"With today's Senate passage, the Congress has spoken clearly – the safety of our children is a top priority. We now urge President Bush to sign the bill into law," said Janette Fennell, president of KIDS AND CARS. "This measure will help prevent the type of tragedies similar to the one that took Cameron's life and the thousands of serious injuries that happen to children every year. Valentine's Day of 2008 will never be forgotten by the parents who have suffered the unimaginable and have worked so hard to make the world a safer place for children in and around motor vehicles," she added.

The bill addresses three of the most serious causes of preventable injuries and fatalities to young children in and around motor vehicles: getting caught in an automatically closing power window; being struck by a backing vehicle because of an unacceptable blindzone; and placing a vehicle in gear that results in an uncontrolled roll away without having to depress the brake.

"We know what the problems are, we have inexpensive and effective technological solutions available and now we will have a law that includes deadlines for federal government action," commented Jackie Gillan, vice president of Advocates for Highway and Auto Safety.

"This Senate action today is a valentine to all consumers who support auto safety. We are deeply grateful that both the House and Senate have completed action on this important measure. We hope the President will quickly sign it into law," said Ellen Bloom of Consumers Union.

The legislation directs the U.S. Department of Transportation to issue new safety standards within specific time periods that will lead to the installation of safety technologies as standard equipment in all vehicles to prevent deaths and injuries in and around motor vehicles. These safety technologies are already available as standard equipment, upgrades or optional equipment in many makes and models of vehicles. The bill also requires the department to establish a database of noncrash incidents and develop a program to provide the public with safety information regarding nontraffic dangers to young children.

Since 2000, over 1,350 children have died in non-traffic incidents, with at least 227 fatalities already in 2007 according to KIDS AND CARS. Back-over incidents have increased dramatically claiming the lives of 474 children from 2002-2006 compared to 128 from 1997-2001. Backovers now account for half of all non-traffic fatalities involving children. The federal government does not collect data about non-traffic incidents, so the actual fatality numbers are likely much higher.

A 2002 study by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reports that over 9,100 children are treated in hospital emergency rooms (176 per week) due to non-traffic incidents in a one-year time period. Some of the deadliest months for children killed in noncrash incidents occurred in 2007. In July, 2007 alone, 34 children died in nontraffic incidents, followed by 31 fatalities in August and 26 fatalities in April.

Joan Claybrook, president, Public Citizen and former Administrator of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration responded to today's bill passage by commending the bill's sponsors in both the Senate and House. Passage of this legislation was the result of strong bi-partisan action in both the House and Senate. We are grateful for the leadership of Senators Hillary Rodham Clinton (D-NY) and John Sununu (R-NH) and Representatives Janice Schakowsky (D-IL)

and Peter King (R-NY)." The Senate bill had 37 Democratic and Republican co-sponsors and the House bill had 43.

The following relatives of children who were injured or died in preventable nontraffic auto incidents along with many others have joined the safety and consumer groups in support of the Cameron Gulbransen Kids Transportation Safety Act of 2007:

Dr. & Mrs. Greg Gulbransen, in memory of son, Cameron, age 2, who was backed over and killed on October 19, 2002 (Oyster Bay, NY)

Bill & Adriann Nelson, in memory of son, Alec, 16 months, who was backed over and killed on April 24, 2004. (Dix Hills, NY)

Packy & Brenda Campbell, in memory of son, Ian Joseph, 22 months, who died when a vehicle was inadvertently knocked into gear on April 14, 2004 (Farmington, NH)

Mrs. Susan Auriemma, in honor of daughter, Kate age 3 1/2, who was backed over and injured on May 27, 2005 (Manhasset, NY)

Britt Gates, in memory of daughter, Zoie Beth Gates, age 2 1/2, who was killed by a power window on November 3, 2001 (Anthony, KS)

Ms. Melissa Feimer, in memory of her niece, Vada Schoon, age 3, who was backed over and killed on June 7, 2006 (Cliffside Park, NJ)

Steve & Shannon Campbell, in memory of son, Drew Campbell, 26 months, who was backed over and killed on April 20, 2003 (Cincinnati, OH)

Michael & Sharron DiMario, in memory of son, Gino J. DiMario, age 7, who was backed over and killed on February 19, 2005. (Cincinnati, OH)

Orin & Arden Rosenfeld, in memory of daughter, Veronica Rosenfeld, age 2, who was backed over and killed on March 27, 2005 (Boca Raton, FL)

Mark & Keiko Warschauer, in memory of son, Michael Warschauer, 10 months, who died after being inadvertently left in a hot car on August 8, 2003 (Irvine, CA)

Smith & Julie Peck, in memory of son, Jackson Peck, age 4, who was backed over and killed on December 23, 2004

Ms. Amie Duemer, in memory of son, Josef Duemer, 1yr, who died after being inadvertently left in a hot car on August 3, 2005 (Lubbock, TX)

Tim & Angela Gridley, in memory of daughter, Aliviah Faith Gridley, 26 months, who was backed over and killed on December 30, 2005 (Cedartown, GA)

Travis & Sally Knoll, in memory of son, Davin Knoll, age 4, who was strangled in a power window on June 2, 2004 (Sheboygan, WI)

Phil & Cheryl Bransom, in memory of son, Douglas Bransom, age 7, who was struck and killed by an SUV on May 30, 2006 (West Linn, OR)

Todd & Melody Costello, in memory of son, Tyler Costello, 8 months, who died after being inadvertently let in a hot vehicle on July 29, 2002 (Medina, OH)

Kevin & Bethany Falkner, in memory of son, Steven Matthew Falkner, age 3, who was killed by a power window on January 7, 1998 (West Plains, MO)

Ms. Lisa Rice, in memory of son, Craig Rice, age 5, who was backed over and killed on July 13, 2003, (Sacramento. CA)

Aaron Chatten, in memory of daughter, Madison Faith Chatten, 15 months, who was backed over and killed on May 3, 2005 (Glasgow, MT)

Bob & AnnMarie Pszybylski, in honor of son, Robert Pszybylski, age 2, who was critically injured when struck by a vehicle on April 7, 2006 (St. James, NY)

Rodney & Meredyth Bryant, in memory of daughter, Annabelle Riley Bryant, age 2 1/2, who was killed after being backed over on May 4, 2005 (Glen Allen, VA)

Matthew & Lisa Cavallaro, in memory of daughter, Agatha, age 2 who was backed over on Father's Day, June 20, 2004 (Muttontown, NY)

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