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### **Sen. Stevens Co-Sponsors Legislation to Improve Child Safety Features in Automobiles**

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Senator Ted Stevens (R-Alaska) today joined Senator Hillary Rodham Clinton (D-N.Y.) and Senator John Sununu (R-N.H.) in introducing legislation to improve child safety features in new vehicles. The measure, the Kids and Cars Safety Act of 2007, would address issues surrounding vehicles and child safety including backover crashes, injuries resulting from power windows, and deaths when a vehicle inadvertently shifts into motion.

“Backover warning systems, auto-reverse power windows, and brake-shift interlocks are simple solutions to improving child safety in and around cars and trucks,” said Senator Stevens. “These small steps will have a big impact in protecting our children from preventable vehicle hazards, which often lead to tragic injuries and deaths.”

The Kids and Cars Safety Act would:

- direct the U.S. Secretary of Transportation to issue regulations to decrease the incidence of vehicle-related child injuries and deaths;
- require the Secretary of Transportation to provide information about non-traffic, non-crash vehicle hazards to children by creating a new child safety consumer information program;
- require power windows and panels, such as a sunroof, to automatically reverse when an obstruction is encountered. This would help prevent children from being injured by power windows;
- require a rearward visibility standard that would allow drivers to detect persons or objects behind their vehicle; and
- ensure that vehicles with automatic transmissions have a service brake that must be depressed before the vehicle can be shifted out of “park.” This will keep vehicles from inadvertently shifting into motion.

In the U.S., motor vehicle accidents are now the leading cause of death for children ages 3 to 14. Non-traffic motor vehicle-related events, including children being backed over by vehicles, being strangled by power windows, and setting cars in motion when left unattended in a vehicle, are also a significant cause of death for the nation's youths. In 2005, at least 226 children died in non-traffic vehicle accidents.

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