



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 9, 2006

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**Child Safety Advocates Join Victims On Capitol Hill To Push For
Passage of Tougher Laws To Keep Children Safe In And Around Cars**

Child safety advocates and victims from across America teamed up together in Washington, D.C. today to plead for new regulations that would keep children from dying in non-traffic incidents such as being backed-over or strangled by power windows.

“More and more children are losing their lives needlessly in and around cars every week,” said Janette Fennell, President of KIDS AND CARS. “We must pass this important child safety legislation immediately to prevent future tragedies—our children simply cannot wait.”

Since 1999, at least 1,000 children have died in non-traffic incidents, with 220 in 2005 alone. Back-over incidents now account for nearly half (49 percent) of all non-traffic fatalities involving children. The government does not collect data about non-traffic incidents, so the real fatality numbers are likely much higher.

And, a 2002 study by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reports that over 9,100 children are treated in hospital emergency rooms due to non-traffic incidents in a one-year time period.

“Last year, over 200 children died as a result of non-traffic automobile accidents. With at least 1,000 killed since 1999, including Ian Campbell of Farmington, preventing these tragic incidents is an important public safety matter,” said Senator John Sununu (R-NH). “With some modest, cost-effective measures – such as back-over warning systems, power window strangulation prevention mechanisms, and brakeshift interlocks – we can take important steps to protect our children.”

“These tragedies are heart-wrenching, not only due to the unimaginable suffering these families endure, but also because they are preventable. The technology exists that can save children’s lives at relatively low cost and new innovations are being developed all the time. With modest, cost-effective steps, we can prevent scores of terrible automobile accidents from occurring across our nation. That’s why I have introduced legislation to make sure child safety technology is implemented in new vehicles. With my bill, we can have safer cars and safer kids across America,” said Senator Hillary Rodham Clinton (D-NY).

The Cameron Gulbransen KIDS AND CARS Safety Act of 2005 (S. 1948), sponsored by Senators Sununu and Clinton addresses non-traffic safety problems. The bill directs the U.S. Secretary of Transportation to issue regulations to decrease the incidence of child injury and death:

- Ensure power windows automatically reverse direction when they detect an obstruction to prevent children from being trapped, injured or killed;
- Provide drivers with a means of detecting the presence of a person or object behind their vehicle;
- Provide for the vehicle service brake to be engaged to prevent vehicles from unintentionally rolling away; and

- Establish a child safety information program to disseminate information to parents about these hazards and ways to mitigate them; as well begin collecting data about nontraffic incidents.

Eight families of children who were killed in recent non-traffic incidents came to share their stories in the hope that other parents be spared future losses. The victims who traveled to Washington in support of S. 1948 are: Amy and Larry Blood (Kaycie); Edinboro, PA.; Rodney and Meredyth Bryant (Annabelle), Henrico County, VA; Aaron Chatten (Madison), Glasgow, MT; Britt Gates (Zoie), Anthony, KS; Dr. Greg Gulbransen (Cameron), NY; Bill and Adriann Nelson (Alec), Dix Hills, NY; Arden Rosenfeld (Veronica), Boca Raton, FL; and Lisa Wright (Cade), Port Neches, TX.

Fennell adds, "Every family in American should be extremely thankful that these grieving parents have somehow found the strength and courage to make their way to Washington, DC today to help save the live of a child in your life. As they fight so hard to make a difference, it will never bring back their child.....they are really the heroes here today."

KIDS AND CARS is a national nonprofit organization dedicated to reducing injury and death to children in or around motor vehicles.

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