

Ms. Mary Barra
Chairman and Chief Executive Officer
General Motors Company

Dear Ms. Barra,

Already this year at least 32 children have died in hot cars. As parents and family members who have lost our children to these senseless tragedies, we can no longer stay silent as children continue to needlessly die in hot vehicles. One single mistake should never result in the death of a child, especially when existing technology is available at a reasonable price.

In April 2001, General Motors (GM) announced at a national press conference widely covered in the media, that pioneering technology designed to help prevent children from dying in hot vehicles would be available by 2004. A low-energy radar sensor was unveiled that can detect motion as subtle as the breathing of an infant sleeping in a rear-facing child safety seat. At the time, GM was praised by child safety groups and GM executives themselves boasted about their company's leadership in child safety protection.

As reported by Reuters, "Vehicle child-safety device to fight heatstroke" on April 26, 2001, "We are committed to putting this technology into production, GM Vice Chairman Harry Pearce said at a news conference Thursday. He said GM aims to offer the sensor in its minivans and full-sized utility vehicles in 2004, if not sooner."

Unfortunately, even though GM made a commitment to the public that this technology would be rolled out in 2004, that promise remains unfulfilled. Year after year child deaths have mounted and GM has ignored and failed to act while knowing there are solutions. In fact, since 2004, over 600 children have died in hot vehicles.

Instead, GM has pursued a limited and far less effective system to remind drivers to check for children in rear seats. Unlike the technology announced in 2001, GM is using a door sequencing system that does ***not detect the presence of a child*** in the back seat. It only provides a simple reminder to look in the rear seat when the driver exits the vehicle if the rear door was opened 10 minutes before or while the vehicle's engine is turned on.

The reminder system would not alert the driver at the final destination in a number of very common scenarios, which is deceptively dangerous. For example, if the driver stops for gas and the back door is not opened again while stopped, they will not receive the reminder alert when they arrive at their final destination.

GM's decision means that families are being denied a system that has the potential to save the life of a child. Instead, families are given a false sense of security and hope that their child is protected and that this nightmare will not happen to them. Our greatest concern is that the current GM door system will not solve the problem and children will continue to die.

If you truly want to prevent these child deaths, we urge you to follow through on GM's 2001 commitment to install a child reminder system that "detects" the presence of a child in the rear seat rather than merely discloses that the rear door has been opened. Furthermore, a system that "detects" the presence of a child will also address the problem of children who independently climb into unoccupied vehicles, representing nearly 30 percent of the identified hot car fatalities annually.

We urge you to renew and revive GM's child detection technology since the promise contained in the company's April 26, 2001 laudatory press release failed to happen. Had technology that can detect the presence of a child been installed in GM vehicles, some child victims of hot cars could be alive today.

We implore GM to offer an effective and comprehensive solution to prevent the tragedy of children dying in your vehicles of heatstroke like the requirement in H.R. 3593 (The Hot Cars Act of 2019), the bi-partisan bill introduced in the U.S. House of Representatives. Detection technology is available and affordable. You can reassert GM's leadership on preventing hot car deaths by honoring GM's 2001 commitment with lifesaving detection technology.

With respect, gratitude and hope,

Juan and Marissa Rodriguez

Rockland County, NY
Parents of Luna and Phoenix Rodriguez
Died in a hot car on July 26, 2019

Nicole and Pete Engler

Roseburg, Oregon
Parents of Remington Engler
Died in a hot car on June 21, 2018

David N. and Penny Rose

North Salt Lake City, UT
Grandparents of Remington Engler
Died in a hot car on June 21, 2018

Jenny Stanley

Alpharetta, GA
Mother of Sydney Stanley
Died in a hot car on August 22, 2010

Kate Bounds

St. Charles, MO
Mother of Samuel
Had a near-miss in a hot car in August, 2015

Dikeisha Whitlock-Pryer

Houston, TX
Mother of Raymond "RJ" Pryer, Jr. who
Died in a hot daycare van on July 19, 2018

Eric and Michelle Stuyvesant

Garland, TX
Parents of Michael Stuyvesant
Had a near-miss in a hot car on June 10, 2015

Ashley Phillips

Kaufman, TX
Mother of Charleigh Phillips
Had a near-miss in a hot car

Michele Terry

Grandview, TX
Mother of Mika Terry
Died in a hot car June 23, 2005

DeLores Estis

Houston, TX
Mother of Christian LaCombe
Died in a hot car on August 13, 2008

Carla and Alan Lyon

Dolgeville, NY
Parents of Sophia Lyon
Died in a hot car on June 4, 2014

Jeffrey Parks

Blacksburg, VA
Father of Juan Parks
Died in a hot car on September 7, 2007

Leland and Deannie Jacobson

Sugar Land, TX
Parents of Luke Jacobson
Died in a hot car on May 3, 2012

Karen Osorio Martinez and Henrique Aveiro

Mason, OH
Parents of Sofia Victoria Aveiro
Died in a hot car August 23, 2017

Tania San Miguel-Bounds

Seattle, WA
Mother of Miah Isabel Cherednychenko (Diaz)
Died in a hot car on August 24, 1999

Leanna Simmons

Muscle Shoals, AL
Mother of Cooper Harris
Died in a hot car on June 18, 2014

Jodie Edwards

Liberty Township, OH
Mother of Jenna Edwards
Died in a hot car August 20, 2008

Justin and Jessica Marson

Manteca, CA
Parents of SaraCorinne Marson
Had a near-miss in a hot car on August 16, 2008

Dr. Norman L. Collins, Sr.

Raleigh, NC
Grandfather of Norman L. "Bishop" Collins III
Died in a hot car on May 29, 2011

Ashley & Porfie Segura

Artesia, NM
Parents of Nathaniel and Noah Segura
Had a near-miss in a hot car in 2016

Lindsey and Kyle Seitz
Colorado Springs, CO
Parents of Benjamin Seitz
Died in a hot car on July 7, 2014

Delyla and Clay Blackburn
Shreveport, LA
Parents of Addyson Jane Blackburn
Died in a hot car May 15, 2018

Danielle Bible
Deer Park, TX
Mother of Joshua Bible
Had a near-miss in a hot car in the autumn of 2016

Vibha Marks
Denton, TX
Mother of Victoria Marks
Died in a hot car on May 17, 2013

Dr. Dennis Sierra
Boca Raton, FL
Father of Andres Sierra
Died in a hot car on July 15, 2004

Erin Holley
Charleston, SC
Mother of Finn Holley
Had a near miss in a hot car in June, 2017

Stephanie A. Piñón
Albuquerque, NM
Mother of Jahzel M. Piñón
Died in a hot car on July 14, 2010

Deona Ryan-Bien
Oro Valley, AZ
Mother of Aslyn Paige Ryan
Died in a hot car February 5, 2004

Richie Gray
Hartsville, SC
Father of Sophia Jane Goyeneche-Gray
Died in a hot car on May 8, 2014

Vanessa and Michael Goolsby
Hialeah, FL
Parents of Micayla Goolsby
Died in a hot car on May 23, 2016

Stephanie Mitchell
Mother of Tate Mitchell
St. Louis, MO
Died in a hot car on September 11, 2017

Raelyn Balfour
Charlottesville, VA
Mother of Bryce Balfour
Died in a hot car on March 30, 2007

Kristina Wilcoxson
Noble, OK
Mother of James Swindle
Had a near-miss in a hot car in June, 2019

Emily Bird
Fort Lauderdale, FL
Mother of Eli Bird
Died in a hot car July 13, 2018

Douglas Grote
Moore, SC
Father of Kristin Alexandra Grote
Died in a hot car on August 3, 2004

Stephanie Salvilla
Orlando, FL
Mother of Gannon Werking
Died in a hot car on July 23, 2009

Allison Werner
Shiner, TX
Mother of Caleb Werner
Had a near-miss in a hot car on July 2, 2015

Joy Green
Baton Rouge, LA
Mother of Angel Green
Died in a hot daycare van on June 5, 2015

Jerry Janowski
South Bend, IN
Father of Caleb Janowski
Died in a hot car on September 10, 2005

Marta Magellan
Miami, FL
Grandmother of Sammy Jo Schnell
Died in a hot car February 6, 2017

Brittanie Wells

Granby, MO
Mother of Raiden Wells
Died in a hot car on July 23, 2016

Erin Johnson

Salisbury, NC
Mother of Bridget Johnson
Died in a hot car on October 6, 2016

Carol and Miles Harrison

Purcellville, VA
Parents of Chase Harrison
Died in a hot car on July 8, 2008

Amie Duemer

Lubbock, TX
Mother of Josef Duemer
Died in a hot car on August 3, 2005

Yan Du and Sheng Li

New Orleans, LA
Parents of Claire Li
Died in a hot car on August 31, 2017

William and Michelle Puckett

Winchester, KY
Parents of Brian Puckett
Died in a hot car on July 13, 1999

Dawn and Westin Peabody

Phoenix, AZ
Parents of Maya Peabody
Died in a hot car on October 18, 2008

Robert Reynolds

Phoenix, AZ
Grandfather of Maya Peabody
Died in a hot car on October 18, 2008

Connie Lowe

Lexington, KY
Grandmother of Holland Gaines Judy
Died in a hot car June 20, 2010

Loren Beltran

Mexico Beach, FL
Mother of Joziah Diaz-Beltran
Died in a hot car on July 8, 2005