

Good morning. My name is Janette Fennell, and I am the Founder and President of KidsAndCars.org.

I would like to sincerely thank everyone who is participating on this call today. It will take all of us working together to ensure that the HOT CARS Act of 2016 becomes a reality.

Dr. Diamond's elegant explanation of how these terrible tragedies take place is extremely important to completely understand and recognize that there are scientific answers as to how and why children are unknowingly left alone in vehicles. Children will continue to die in hot cars unless something is done to help our overtaxed brains. Education alone will not solve this problem. These unthinkable tragedies can only be prevented with technology. We certainly wish that we could train our memories to 'never forget;' but this is a very 'human' condition we all live with.

The auto makers have already acknowledged and confirmed just how 'human' we really are. Our vehicles are filled with reminder systems. You get a buzz if you forget to buckle up; if your car door is not closed properly you receive a warning. Newer vehicles let us know if our tire pressure needs to be tweaked. You are reminded if you inadvertently leave your keys in the ignition; and all vehicles come with a reminder to turn off your headlights and on some makes and models they actually turn your headlights off for you... because no one wants a dead car battery. So if all of these reminder systems are possible; how can we allow children to continue to die in hot vehicles each and EVERY year?

When we learn about the possibility of tainted peanut butter, store shelves are emptied immediately. Faulty kids' toys and bad hamburger is recalled without delay. Yet, we shamefully remain complacent about the children who continue to die for something utterly preventable. For the sake of the children and their families, we must pass this bill into law. Car companies must step up to protect their most vulnerable passengers.

Over 780 children have died in hot cars since 1990. We know that solutions currently exist to prevent these deaths, making this loss of lives even more tragic.

This year, one manufacturer, General Motors, finally stepped up and included a reminder system as standard equipment on the 2017 GMC Acadia to let you know if something is left behind in the backseat. In the entire United States there is just this one vehicle being sold with a reminder system. I know we can do better; much better.

The choice is very easy. It's simple. What's more important? A dead car battery or a dead baby?