

STATEMENT OF MILES HARRISON

June 23, 2020

Press Teleconference on Motor Vehicle Safety Title of the Moving Forward Act (H.R. 2)

First off, I would like to thank Congresswoman Schakowsky whom I have come to know over the past few years for her uncompromising leadership, support and sympathy for not just me but for all of us - all of the people who have been touched by these tragedies.

On July 8th, I unknowingly forgot to drop off my son Chase at daycare and drove to my office while he sat in a hot car all day. At 5pm a coworker came into my office and asked me “do you have a doll in your car?” For a brief moment, I did not understand the question, a brief moment - then a sick feeling started to engulf me, and I ran out to my car and could see my son Chase still in his car seat. I threw open the door and saw Chase and ripped him out of the car seat yelling – “No No – Oh God No, not Chase, Please God NO.” Chase was gone. I was taken to the hospital because I was having a breakdown and could not function and then transferred to a private facility. I wanted to die. I was placed under a suicide watch and was not allowed to attend my son’s funeral. After a few weeks, I did leave the hospital and was immediately arrested and charged with involuntary manslaughter. I had a very public 3-day trial and was found not guilty. But the legal finding did not matter – I had killed my son – I did it. I do not have the words to describe the depth of the despair I felt and still feel. I cry for Chase every day.

I look at my wife in amazement. She never wavered. She stayed with me and we are still together. Carol led me to Janette Fennell with KidsAndCars.org where I learned what I did to my family has happened to hundreds of other families.

But, this did not have to happen. If only there was a detection system that was able to tell me son was alone in my car. How can this be, that in our great country it is not already required in all cars? Over 950 children have died unnecessarily since 1990 in hot cars. My Chase and hundreds of other families would not have had their lives destroyed. This has got to stop.

There are inexpensive systems available. I am here asking, no begging your support through the leadership of Congresswoman Schakowsky to pass the Hot Cars Act which requires a detection system in all cars.

We need to pass this bill – it saves our children, it saves our families.