



**Statement by Norman L. Collins, Sr., PhD**  
**at Press Conference on the Surface Transportation Investment Act of 2021**  
**June 15, 2021**

May 29, 2011 is a date that is etched in the hearts of me and my family forever.

I received a phone call from a church friend who informed me that I needed to come to Clarksdale, Mississippi, right away because something had happened to my 3-month-old grandson, Norman Collins III who was affectionately known as “Bishop.” I later learned that Bishop was dead, the victim of heatstroke after being unknowingly left in his parents’ hot car in a church parking lot on a 93-degree Sunday afternoon, due to a miscommunication. The daily horror my family encounters at the thought of Bishop being buckled in his car seat, crying relentlessly, sweating profusely, seizing uncontrollably and extending his little arms for help with no one to attend to him – at times it is simply too much to bear for any human.

Yes, Bishop’s death was tragic and unintentional. It was the result of a simple misunderstanding between my son and a church friend who didn’t hear him when he asked him to bring Bishop into the church while he unloaded the vehicle.

Our family’s pain is only worsened knowing that children continue to die in hot cars despite the fact that there is technology to prevent it. Nearly 1,000 children have died in hot cars in the U.S. since 1990. The Hot Cars Act is a federal bill that would require readily available technology in all new vehicles to detect children trapped inside and alert the driver and others. The need to for this life-saving legislation is urgent.

Life would be so different today for our entire family if there would have been an alert that precious little Bishop had been left in the car.

For this reason, I call upon Congress to include the Hot Cars Act in the major transportation bill without delay to save innocent lives and avoid any more families having to endure the lifelong horror of grief that ours and so many other families have encountered. Please help us to turn our pain into power, our tragedy into triumph, and our agony into positive action.

We all have a God-given right, responsibility, and reason to protect our children. They cannot protect themselves.

Thank you.