

116TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. 4122

To require the Secretary of Transportation to issue a final rule revising motor vehicle seat back safety standards.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

JULY 1, 2020

Mr. BLUMENTHAL (for Mr. MARKEY (for himself and Mr. BLUMENTHAL)) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation

A BILL

To require the Secretary of Transportation to issue a final rule revising motor vehicle seat back safety standards.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Modernizing Seat Back
5 Safety Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. MOTOR VEHICLE SEAT BACK SAFETY STANDARDS.**

7 (a) FINDINGS; PURPOSES.—

8 (1) FINDINGS.—Congress finds that—

9 (A) crashes involving seat structural fail-
10 ures in passenger motor vehicles pose a signifi-

1 cant public health and safety threat, particu-
2 larly to children occupying rear seats;

3 (B) thousands of preventable fatalities and
4 life-threatening injuries have occurred as a re-
5 sult of motor vehicle seat failures;

6 (C) the National Highway Traffic Safety
7 Administration has neglected to improve the
8 motor vehicle seat integrity standard for more
9 than 50 years, to the detriment of passenger
10 motor vehicle safety; and

11 (D) this Act is introduced in honor and
12 memory of the victims of motor vehicle seat
13 failures in crashes, including those whose pre-
14 cious lives were cut far too short as a result of
15 seat failures and those whose catastrophic inju-
16 ries dramatically changed their lives, including
17 Taylor Grace Warner, Jayden-Faith Fraser,
18 Emily Reavis, Owen Reavis, Teddy Schwab,
19 Jaklin Romine, Russell Selkirk, Travis
20 Oldhouser, Thomas Comella, Geneva Massie,
21 Crystal Collins, Mary Portis, Dzemila Heco,
22 Aaliyah George, Heikki Helava, and Clyde M.
23 Sneed.

24 (2) PURPOSES.—The purposes of this Act
25 are—

1 (A) to reduce the number of preventable
2 deaths and injuries caused by motor vehicle
3 seat failures; and

4 (B) to improve passenger motor vehicle
5 safety.

6 (b) FINAL RULE.—Not later than 2 years after the
7 date of enactment of this Act, subject to subsection (c),
8 the Secretary of Transportation shall issue a final rule up-
9 dating section 571.207 of title 49, Code of Federal Regu-
10 lations, to reduce the potential for injury to all motor vehi-
11 cle occupants due to seat back failure during all types of
12 vehicle impact.

13 (c) COMPLIANCE DATE.—In issuing the final rule
14 pursuant to subsection (b), the Secretary of Transpor-
15 tation shall establish a date for required compliance with
16 the final rule of not later than 2 motor vehicle model years
17 after the model year during which the effective date of
18 the final rule occurs.

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