

Department of Transportation new rules will make cars more expensive

By Jeff Winkler - The Daily Caller 4:13 PM 12/07/2010



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Thought that [new car](#) was expensive now? Wait till the Department of Transportation implements its latest plan to protect Americans from themselves.

Last week, the department announced regulations that would require all new vehicles to install video cameras on their back bumpers. The idea is to make backing up safer, and it's not optional. "To meet the requirements of the proposed rule," reads a DOT release, "10 percent of new vehicles must comply by Sept. 2012, 40 percent by Sept. 2013 and 100 percent by Sept. 2014."

Three years ago, Congress passed the Cameron Gulbransen Kids [Transportation](#) Safety Act, named after a Connecticut toddler whose father backed over him in the driveway. Video cameras are one consequence of the law. According to a spokesman for Ford, the cameras will cost consumers up to \$400 apiece. The total cost of equipping the country's vehicles could reach \$2.7 billion.

Horrible and newsworthy exceptions notwithstanding, relatively few Americans are killed by vehicles moving in reverse. According to the National Highway Transportation Safety Administration, there are about 292 deaths per year as a result of back-over accidents, 228 of which involve non-[commercial vehicles](#).

By comparison, in 2007 nearly three times as many infants died of accidental suffocation in bed. Accidental drowning deaths amounted to more than 3,400. Well over 1,000 Americans died from falling down stairs. In a dangerous world, getting backed over by a car barely rates.

Yet, as Peter Van Doren of the libertarian Cato Institute points out, the Department of Transportation didn't have much choice but to act. "The low-hanging fruit of [auto safety](#) were picked off years ago, so now we're into diminishing, high-hanging fruit where the cost per life saved is \$12 to \$20 million dollars rather than \$5 or \$6 million," he says. "If you're a politician do you win votes by telling people that the problems they bring to you are their fault?"

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