



The Honorable Maria Cantwell, Chair
The Honorable Ted Cruz, Ranking Member
Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

September 10, 2024

Dear Chair Cantwell and Ranking Member Cruz,

On behalf of eleven organizations and individuals representing families, young Americans, car crash survivors, safety advocates, and other stakeholders committed to making the American transportation system safer for all, we write to convey our support for the bipartisan *She Develops Regulations In Vehicle Equality Safety Act*, or *She DRIVES Act*, S. 4299. This vital legislation is cosponsored by Committee Members Senators Deb Fischer (R-NE), Tammy Duckworth (D-IL), Marsha Blackburn (R-TN), Raphael Warnock (D-GA), Shelley Moore Capito (R-WV), as well as President Pro Tempore and Appropriations Committee Chair Patty Murray (D-WA), and Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs Committee Chair Sherrod Brown (D-OH).

The *She DRIVES Act* would advance technological innovations in crash testing and make cars safer for women. Today, women are 17% more likely to be killed and 73% more likely to be severely injured than men in the same crash. The *She DRIVES Act* has the potential to address these serious concerns. We strongly urge the Committee to consider this legislation and pass it.

Every day, because of motor vehicle safety standard inequities, women are in danger in cars. Currently, the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) crash tests vehicles with outdated and inaccurate female crash test dummies. These safety standards represent women with the Hybrid III 5th – an outdated, scaled down male dummy – that is not tested in the driver's seat in most crash tests. This disparity has fatal consequences.

In the same crash, women are significantly more likely to be injured and killed than men. In 2022, 11,737 women were killed in crashes on U.S. roads. These fatalities represent a 24 percent increase in the number of women killed since the recent historic low in 2014, and mean that, on average, over 32 women are dying every day. In the last decade (2013 – 2022), car crashes have killed over 107,000 American women.

The human cost of this lethal inequity is incalculable. The economic cost of these crashes is not; in 2022, female crash fatalities cost \$21.9 billion. The Department of Transportation must do better.

This issue is not new to the DOT. In both Fiscal Years 2023 and 2024 Appropriations Report Languages, Congress called on the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) to solve this disparity by releasing a roadmap for incorporating an accurate female crash test dummy into the New Car Assessment Program (NCAP), and testing it equally as the male. In both years, NHTSA failed to do so. In March 2023, the Government Accountability Office (GAO) recommended that NHTSA propose a specific timeline to do the same. NHTSA has yet to produce this plan.

They have made it clear – the DOT and the NHTSA will not test cars with an updated and accurate female dummy on their own. Far too many lives are being lost to continue this inaction. We urge you to advance the *She DRIVES Act*, require that cars are tested with technologically advanced female dummies equally as male, and finally make cars safe for women.



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If you have questions, please do not hesitate to reach out to Maria Weston Kuhn
(maria@driveusforward.org).

Sincerely,

Drive US Forward

Joan Claybrook
Former Administrator
National Highway Traffic Safety Administration

Families for Safe Streets

FIA Foundation

Midwest Center for Traffic Safety

Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD)

National Association of Women Highway Safety Leaders

National Organization for Youth Safety (NOYS)

National Safety Council

Students Against Destructive Decisions (SADD)

Vision Zero Youth Council

cc: Members of the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation
Members of the U.S. Senate
Members of the U.S. House