

## **Vehicle Safety “Must Pass” Provisions in H.R. 3** *Excerpts Showing Support in Major Newspaper Editorials*

### **Ft. Worth Star-Telegram says “Stay In Gear” (Mon, July 18, 2005):**

The U.S. Senate has taken a key step toward making the driving public safer. The question now is whether the House will agree to push auto safety improvements into law at this opportune moment. . . .

Among other things, the legislation would require the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration [NHTSA], within the next three to four years, to set standards for reducing rollovers by using stability-enhancing technologies and for decreasing occupant ejections by making roofs and door locks stronger. . . .

But the House should not have to start from scratch when the Senate already has done half the work. **The safety provisions should not be allowed to run out of gas for lack of attention.** [emphasis added]

### **Washington Post “Reducing Rollovers” (Sat, June 18, 2005):**

Rollover crashes claim more than 10,000 lives annually; they account for just 3 percent of accidents but one-third of vehicle occupant deaths. Side-impact collisions kill another 9,000 people yearly. There are steps that manufacturers could take -- or that the government could require them to take -- to reduce fatalities and injuries from such crashes: adopting technology to make vehicles, particularly sport-utility vehicles, less prone to rollovers; reinforcing roofs so that they aren't crushed in rollovers; installing stronger door locks and shatterproof glass to prevent passengers in rollovers from being ejected; and installing side air bags. Indeed, in pricier vehicles, much of this equipment has become available and even standard. . . .

But for years, and in some cases decades, . . . NHTSA has dawdled on tightening these safety requirements. The Senate version of the highway transportation spending bill contains a package of provisions that would instruct the safety agency to get moving on these issues and set target dates for issuing new rules. The House should accept the Senate measure. . . .

**Under those circumstances, congressional prodding is not interference; it is in order.** [emphasis added]

### **Baltimore Sun “Senate Safety Catch” (April 22, 2005):**

The nation's highways are as dangerous as ever. An estimated 42,800 people died on the road last year, up slightly from the 42,643 in 2003, according to a preliminary accounting released yesterday. The numbers suggest some troubling trends: SUV rollover fatalities rose 6.9 percent, and large truck crashes and motorcycle accidents are killing more people, too. . . .

Specifically, NHTSA needs to address the alarming rise in SUV rollovers. Rollovers now account for about a third of all passenger fatalities. The problem could be greatly reduced if more vehicles were equipped with stability controls and better door locks to prevent occupant ejection. Stronger roofs and standardized side-impact protections would help, too. . . .

NHTSA's failure to act means Congress must intervene. Most of the technology involved (such as shatter-proof side windows) isn't new; it's already available on many luxury cars. **Everyone deserves such protections, but that probably won't happen in the next half-decade or longer unless the federal government holds the industry accountable.** [emphasis added]