

Testimony of Amber Andreasen

Hello, my name is Amber Andreasen and I am the Director of the national nonprofit organization, KidsAndCars.org, that is dedicated to keeping children safe in and around vehicles and headquartered here in Kansas. Our organization supports The Hot Cars bill (HB 2516) to protect citizens from liability in the event that they rescue a child or animal from a locked vehicle.

Currently, 19 states have passed Good Samaritan laws and another 10 have proposed laws that protect animals and children. (see attachment)

The importance of this bill lies not only in protecting citizens from liability, but more importantly in ensuring that nobody is afraid to take action when a child's life is at stake.

Quite frankly, it is unconscionable for anyone to have to think twice when it comes to saving the life of a child. This bill will empower citizens to act when it matters the most.

It is our hope that this bill will also help to raise awareness about the dangers of leaving children alone in vehicles and therefore help prevent this dangerous practice.

The state of Kansas does NOT have a law making it illegal to leave a child unattended inside a vehicle, making HB 2516 even more important because we have made the practice of leaving children alone in vehicles acceptable in our state.

Children are put at risk by being left alone in vehicles in every city across the entire state of Kansas every single day!

KidsAndCars.org is the only organization that maintains a national database on incidents of children being left alone in vehicles. Tragically, over 800 children in the U.S. have died in hot cars since 1990, 10 of which happened in Kansas. We will

¹ Heat Stress From Enclosed Vehicles: Moderate Ambient Temperatures Cause Significant Temperature Rise in Enclosed Vehicles, McLaren, Null, Quinn, Pediatrics 2005; 116;109-112

² Heat Related Mortality, Arizona 1993-2002 and United States 1979-2002, Vol 54, NoMM 25;628

never know how many of these children could have been saved had someone intervened.

On that note, I have to share a story about a dear friend and colleague of mine, Stephanie Pinon. Stephanie lost her beautiful daughter, Jahzel, in a hot car in 2010. It was years later that she finally found the strength to read the police report about her child's death where she discovered something she wishes she would have never known. She learned that not one, but TWO people had walked by her van that day and saw her baby in the back seat, but did nothing. Two times that precious little girl's life could have been saved if only someone would have done something.

KidsAndCars.org knows of many instances where passersby saw a child inside a vehicle and did nothing, only to find out later that the child died from heatstroke inside the vehicle that day. These are oversights that should have never happened.

The public needs to not only be protected by the law, but also encouraged to get involved in situations where children are discovered alone in vehicles. The consequences of doing nothing can be and have been deadly.

Why not just wait for first responders to arrive?

The reason why it is so important for people to be able to act right away is that the inside of a vehicle acts like a greenhouse heating up very quickly. In fact, 80% of the increase in temperature happens within the first 10 minutes. For example, when the outside temperature is 80° F, the temperature inside a car receiving direct sunlight can reach 110° F after 10 minutes.¹ When a person's body temperature reaches 106° F, he or she can die or suffer permanent disability from heatstroke.²

Additionally, children are particularly susceptible to the heat because their bodies have a very immature respiratory system and heat up 3-5 times faster than an adult. These factors together create a recipe for disaster.

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When a child is trapped inside a hot car, minutes can be the difference between life and death or severe brain damage and lifelong disabilities. The few minutes it takes for first responders to arrive to the scene could be critical for the survival of that child. This is why it is so important for citizens to be able to act immediately when a child is discovered in distress inside a vehicle.

I've been doing my job for 12 years...

Every day I work with parents who have buried their child. I have held them while they cry and seen the worst kind of pain you could imagine in their eyes. There is nothing worse in this world and these tragedies do not have to happen.

Please support The Hot Cars bill to help ensure that no more Kansas children are killed from being trapped inside a vehicle.

This is one very important step in preventing these unthinkable tragedies.

On behalf of the entire team at KidsAndCars.org thank you for your service and thank you in advance for helping make Kansas a safer place for children.

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LOOK BEFORE YOU LOCK

Good Samaritan State Laws Specific to Rescuing Children in Cars

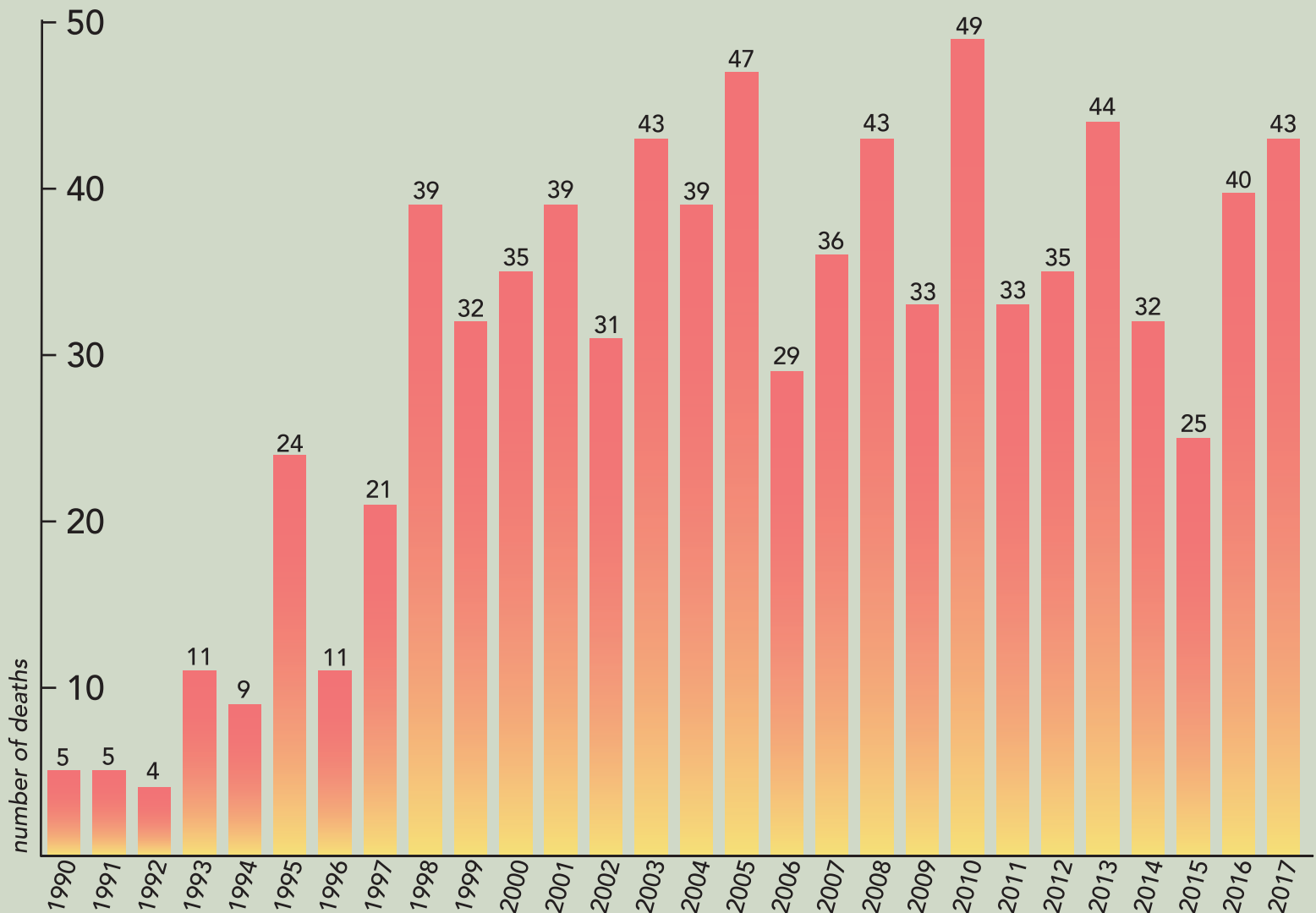
States with Laws	Bill No.	URL
Alabama	Act No 2017-241	http://bit.ly/2rsefv0
Arizona	HB 2494	http://bit.ly/2sAOxgy
Colorado	HB17-1179	http://bit.ly/2sphewG
Florida	HB 131	http://bit.ly/2rwjoGQ
Idaho	SB 1245aa	http://bit.ly/2oXwvSZ
Indiana	HB 1161	http://bit.ly/2rwju0Z
Kentucky	SB 16	http://bit.ly/2spfW4W
Missouri	HB 1649/SB 896	http://on.mo.gov/2eZCt0u
Ohio	SB 215	http://bit.ly/2skP7zz
Oklahoma	HB 1902	http://bit.ly/2s1ieXa
Oregon	HB 2732	http://bit.ly/2t2zuts
South Carolina	Act #133 of 2016	http://bit.ly/2soN7Fx
Texas	HB 478	http://bit.ly/2xMzDUk
Tennessee	HB 537	http://bit.ly/2s1Czvp
Vermont	H.571 (Act 147) (pg.30)	http://bit.ly/2w3u5mt
Virginia	HB 2082	http://bit.ly/2spjzI7
Wisconsin	AB 308	http://bit.ly/2ri1nwk
States with Proposed Laws		
Connecticut	HB 5365	http://bit.ly/2sth9sl
Georgia	SB 34	http://bit.ly/2sb9hJp
Illinois	SB 2294	http://bit.ly/2o2x3Gg
Kansas	HB 2647	http://bit.ly/2xUychI
Nebraska	LB 916 - animals only	http://bit.ly/2rsdhbh
New York	S 240	http://bit.ly/2s1uNSb
North Carolina	HB 896	http://bit.ly/2sp1IX0
Ohio	SB 215	http://bit.ly/2skP7zz
Pennsylvania	SB 782	http://bit.ly/2t8Cyog
Utah	HB 152	http://bit.ly/2DRx0n3

Think it can't happen to you... Think again!

*There are two states (California and Massachussets) that have laws that protect animals only.

CHILD VEHICULAR HEATSTROKE FATALITIES BY YEAR (1990-2017)

INVOLVING U.S. CHILDREN AGE 14 AND UNDER

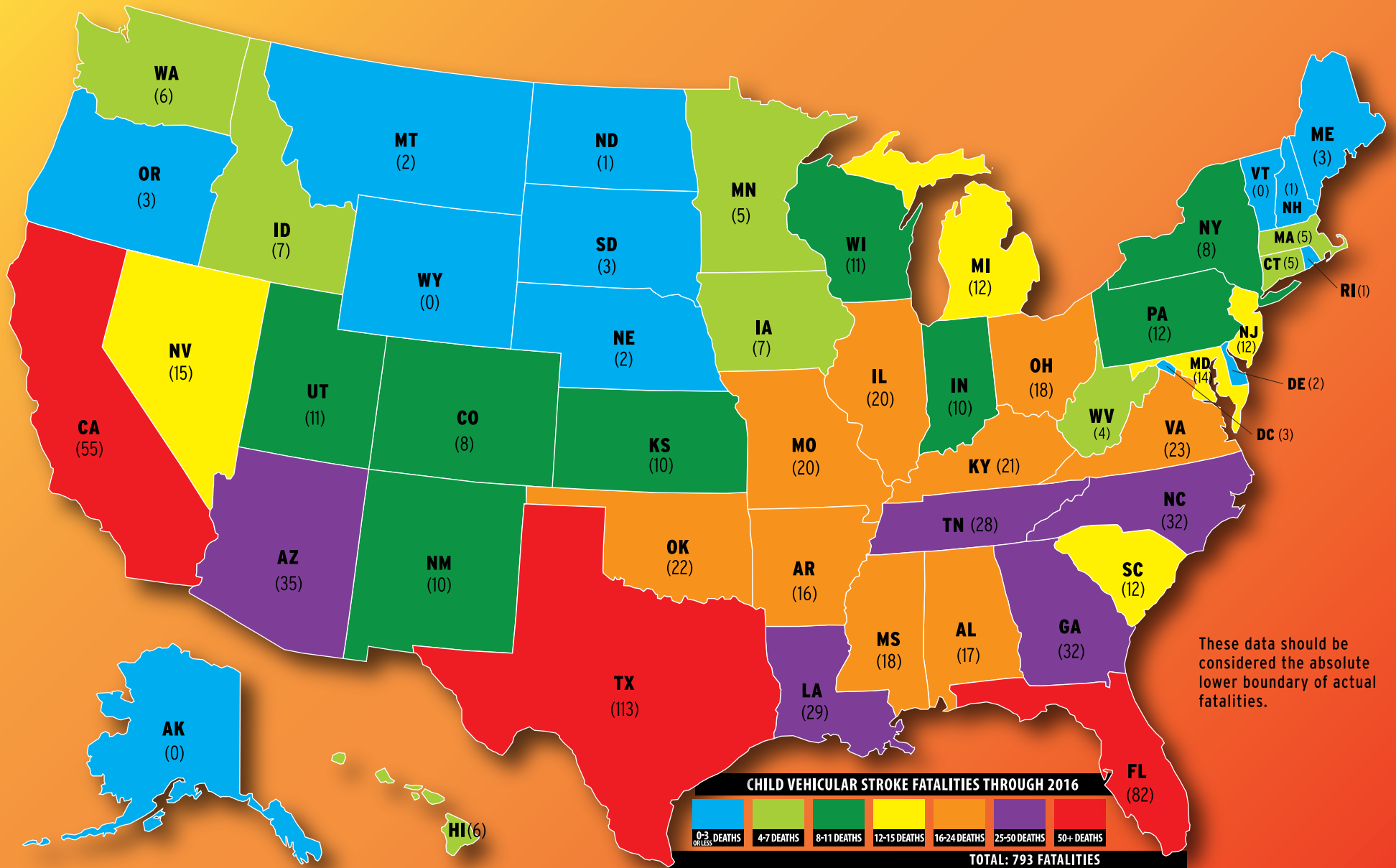


KIDS AND CARS.ORGTM

LOVE THEM PROTECT THEM

Data Source: KidsAndCars.org
as of March 2018

U.S. Child Vehicular Heat Stroke Fatalities by State (1990-2016)



Data Source: KidsAndCars.org for children age 14 and younger (as of Jan. 2017). See back for details.