

THE PEDESTRIAN PROTECTION ACT

H.R.9408 | Congresswoman Mary Gay Scanlon (PA-05)

BACKGROUND

Over the past 15 years, pedestrian deaths resulting from car crashes have risen by 80 percent. In 2021, the last year for which data is available, nearly 7,400 pedestrians were killed in traffic collisions, and over 60,000 were injured. Additionally, an estimated 777 people were killed, and 17,505 were injured after being struck by a vehicle in nontraffic incidents. During this period, many popular vehicle models in the United States have become larger, higher, heavier, and include more blunt features.

There is a growing body of research that demonstrates the link between SUVs and pickups with these design features and increased risk for pedestrians, especially children.

- [Research](#) by the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety (IIHS) shows that these features are more likely to cause pedestrian deaths and that SUVs and large pickups are more deadly than cars.
- [A study](#) published by researchers at the University of Illinois at Springfield showed that children are eight times more likely to die when struck by an SUV compared to those hit by cars. The study also showed that crashes involving SUVs and pickups were more likely to result in pedestrian fatalities when compared to cars.
- [Additional research](#) shows that reducing a vehicle's front-end height, even by only four inches, could greatly reduce the number of pedestrian fatalities.

Further vehicle safety research has demonstrated that larger vehicles have reduced driver visibility, leading to higher rates of crashes with pedestrians, including cyclists and children. [IIHS research](#) has shown that larger SUVs and pickups are more likely to hit pedestrians while turning at intersections because of reduced visibility. Modern SUVs and pickups have larger front blind zones, and many popular models have front blind zones that [prevent the driver from seeing children passing in front of the vehicle](#).

THE BILL

The Pedestrian Protection Act would require the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) to:

- **Develop vehicle safety standards** to protect pedestrians, bicyclists, and vulnerable road users, including standards for dangerous features like vehicle height and hood and bumper design.
- **Implement a minimum visibility standard** for motor vehicles to reduce blind zones associated with pedestrian crashes.
- **Provide consumers with more information** about vehicle safety by updating NHTSA's New Car Assessment Program to include a driver visibility rating.

SUPPORT

The Pedestrian Protection Act is endorsed by The Center for Auto Safety, Advocates for Highway and Auto Safety, and Kids and Car Safety.