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JUN 24 2011

NHTSA Headquarters
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
West Building
Washington, DC 20590

June 13, 2011

To Whom It May Concern:

I want to alert you of a grave safety issue with rear seat belts hung from the ceiling of the vehicle.

My mother-in-law recently loaned us her new 2011 Honda Odyssey for our family vacation. The rear seat had a middle seat which folded down into a console. The seat belt for this middle seat was attached to the ceiling above in lieu of the seat itself. The other two back seats reclined and therefore, the seat belt hung in the general area that your hand would be while reclining.

During the long drive back home, my two daughters, ages 8 and 6, were reclining, napping, and playing in the back seat. All of a sudden my youngest daughter yelled and when my husband and I looked in the backseat, my oldest daughter had managed to wrap the seat belt around her neck several times! My husband immediately jumped in the back seat while I pulled off to the side of the road. It must have taken him over five minutes to get the seat belt unwrapped from her neck. We didn't have a knife or anything to cut it with or he would have immediately done so. Nor was there any safety release so it could be easily untangled. I've attached the pictures of my daughter's neck when we got home later that evening. You can see the bruises and red marks left four hours later! This situation could have easily gone the wrong way quickly. My concern is that if this could happen with my children, it could happen with anyone's children.

This situation is a definite life or death safety issue. The vehicle is designed for children to ride in the back seat and it is not safe for them. Plus, I'm sure there are other similar vehicles with seat belts hanging right in the way of bored hands. A safety release of some sort needs to be attached so these seat belts can easily be released in a similar event.

I called Honda's customer service number that week and a report was taken, but I wanted to also alert the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. If I can be of any assistance in this urgent matter, please feel free to contact me:

Thank you for your consideration in this matter,

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RW

**SOME PHOTOGRAPHS
HAVE BEEN
DAMAGED DURING
SECURITY
DOCUMENT SCAN**

Edmond OK

OKLAHOMA CITY OK 731

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