> At a news conference, Toyota said it would instruct dealers to shorten the vehicles' existing pedal by about three-quarters of an inch. The company said it would also start equipping its vehicles with smart pedals, a system that the Center for Auto Safety said should be required for all cars.
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> Smart gas pedals sense when a vehicle's gas and brake pedals are being pressed simultaneously, and a computer tells the engine to disregard the gas pedal. The technology has been used for years by European automakers like BMW, Audi and Volkswagen.
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> **Toyota is confident the steps will solve the unintended acceleration problem, said Irv Miller, a company spokesman. "We have come to the conclusion this is pedal misapplication or pedal entrapment," he said. "We continue to find no reason to believe that there is a problem with the electronic control systems."**

74. On December 5, 2009, the *Los Angeles Times* printed an editorial entitled "Toyota's acceleration issue-Blaming floor mats may not be enough; the automaker needs to look at its vehicles' electronics," which stated in part:

> Toyota did the right thing when it recalled more than 4 million cars and trucks in response to mounting reports of unexpected and uncontrolled acceleration. But rather than sticking to its argument that the malfunctions stem from poorly designed pedals that get entangled with floor mats, the automaker should consider what happened to Eric Weiss. Otherwise, it may never get to the root of a problem that has claimed 19 lives in recent years.
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> As The Times' Ken Bensinger and Ralph Vartabedian have reported, Weiss says he had stopped his 2008 Tacoma pickup at an intersection in Long Beach in October when the truck, on its own, suddenly accelerated toward oncoming traffic. He was able to avoid a collision by clamping on the brakes and turning off the engine, but the incident left him reluctant to get behind the Tacoma's wheel again. And Weiss says the mats weren't the problem - he'd removed them months ago on his dealer's advice. His experience, combined with similar complaints by other Toyota owners and additional pieces of evidence, points to a potential electronic problem, not a mechanical one.
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> • Weiss was fortunate that his truck didn't have a keyless ignition system like those in many Lexus and Prius models. To turn off one of those engines while moving, drivers must press the "on" button for three seconds - a task that's neither intuitive nor easy in a runaway vehicle.

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