

July 16, 2018

Mary T. Barra  
Chairman & CEO  
General Motors Company  
300 Renaissance Center  
Detroit, Michigan 48243

Dear Ms. Barra:

On June 21 of this year, my tight-knit community of Roseburg, Oregon was left grief-stricken when a mother accidentally left her 21-month-old daughter in a hot car during her work shift, as an unintended consequence of departing from her typical morning routine. The precious little girl, Remington, did not survive the incident.

While all cases of hot car deaths or injuries are undoubtedly tragic, this case was particularly poignant. The mother, Nicole Engler, is a 38-year-old Family Nurse Practitioner at Evergreen Family Medicine. She has been described by her coworkers as having a public servant's heart and as a loving and attentive mother. Prior to Remi's birth, Nicole and her husband, Pete, spent fifteen years trying to conceive her. Remi was the couple's only child and long sought after "miracle baby." While the community at large has now begun to move on after a brief period of heightened awareness and emotional distress, the Engler family will not recover from this for years, if ever. Their lives, as I'm sure you can imagine, have been utterly destroyed.

We live in a smart world. We have smart phones, smart TVs, smart cars, smart watches, smart speakers, smart thermostats, smart locks, smart refrigerators, smart toilets and smart doorbells. Do a web search on the word "smart" and practically every consumer product pops up as a suggested search. We may live in a smart world, but with constant distractions and endless to-do lists, most of our brains are distracted at best and on continuous overdrive all too often. I think we can all confess that lapses in memory occur: *Why did I just walk into the kitchen again? Did I already take my allergy pill today? How did I just drive all the way home from work and not remember anything about the drive?* These are harmless scenarios, but what about when a lapse in memory has fatal consequences as it does in 36 cases of hot car deaths in the United States every year? In this instance, Nicole's brain was operating out of the basal ganglia or "on autopilot" as she drove to work. The more complex task of strategizing her day took precedence as the hippocampus and frontal cortex worked together. This is an automatic process of the brain, but the trauma induced by such a lapse in memory is beyond what any human being should ever have to endure. While 36 actual deaths may occur, at least 36 other people – namely those who bear the impossible burden of being responsible for the incident – experience *living death* in the aftermath.

With the existence of technology that could easily be applied to prevent these horrific consequences of otherwise ordinary lapses in memory, one must ask: *why, for the namesake of Remi Engler, is it not adopted?* In my research to uncover why the existing child car seat

reminders designed by concerned parents, compassionate co-workers, and clever college students have failed to gain market acceptance, I found the answer appears to be that most people perceive the odds of it happening as being too remote to warrant its application. The problem is this: it *does* happen. It doesn't have to.

I have the pleasure of driving a 2017 GMC Yukon Denali. As a mom to two children in car seats, GMC has impressed me with its industry leadership in including a "Check Rear Seat" visual reminder and chime notification in the Yukon and other models. This is indisputably helpful and evidence of a positive step toward the goal of eradicating hot car deaths. Other existing features of the Yukon Denali that I believe could aid in the prevention of hot car deaths include: a passenger sensing system, power windows, automatic climate control, a security system with self-powered horn, hands-free calling, internal movement sensors, the OnStar Safety and Security package and GMC Connected Services. Existing infrared technology could easily be incorporated into the vehicle in order to detect life even in the event that a child or pet was asleep. If programmed accordingly, such technology could essentially see via movement sensor or infrared, *feel* via weight sensor, or *listen for* via hands-free calling microphone – or some combination thereof – any life inside the vehicle after the driver and any adult passengers had exited. If, after a defined length of time, a detected child or pet was not removed, the vehicle's alarm would trigger and harm reduction measures would ensue. This might include auto-descending windows if the vehicle's interior reached a specified temperature, notifying the vehicle's owner via GMC Connected Services, and phoning OnStar with the vehicle's GPS coordinates to relay to emergency personnel. I invite you to view the enclosed flowchart as a graphical depiction of one proposed system.

Tragedies such as the Englers' are preventable, but this issue must be addressed upstream by auto manufacturers directly. With General Motors' Vehicle Safety Group having a self-proclaimed family-focused agenda, I believe your company is ideally suited to pioneer this effort.

Respectfully Submitted,



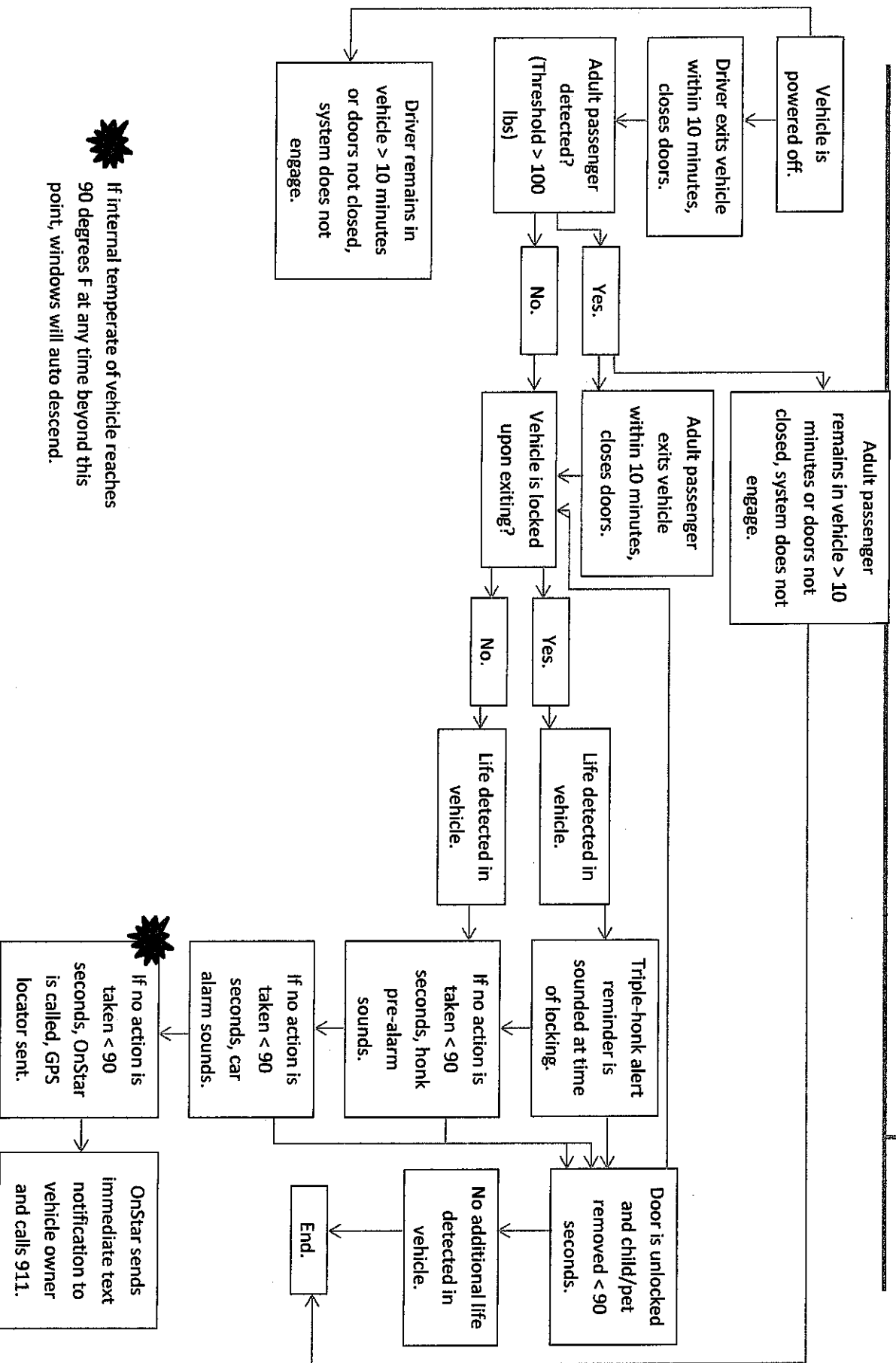
Tiffani M. Parker, MBA  
Entrepreneur & Dance Mom


Attachment

CC: Donald J. Trump, President of the United States  
Melania Trump, First Lady of the United States  
Ron Wyden, United States Senator  
Jeff Merkley, United States Senator  
Peter DeFazio, United States Representative  
Kate Brown, Oregon Governor

**CC:** Floyd Prozanski, Oregon State Senator  
Dallas Heard, Oregon State Senator  
Cedric Hayden, Oregon State Representative  
Jim Hackett, President & CEO, Ford Motor Company  
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Timothy J. Powell, MD, President, Evergreen Family Medicine  
Matthew Bershader, President & CEO, ASPCA  
Ian Campbell, Managing Editor, The News Review  
Michael Siconolfi, Investigations Editor, The Wall Street Journal  
Dick Baltus, Editor in Chief, UV Magazine  
Innovators Magazine Attn Editor  
CNN News Attn News Editor  
FOX News Attn News Editor

# Sample Child/Pet Reminder System in GMC, Tiffani Parker 2018



 If internal temperature of vehicle reaches 90 degrees F at any time beyond this point, windows will auto descend.