



**Monthly Report** – Sept.- Nov. 2014, Vol. 2, Nos. 9 – 11 – ISSN 2332-063X

## Safety & Justice in America 2014

Louis V. Lombardo

### **What do crash victims have to be thankful, and not thankful, for?**

2014 so far has been an eventful year for us all.

Consider the GM Ignition Switch, and the Takata exploding Airbag Deployment and Non Deployment dangers, and the Jeep infernal gas tanks that we all face every day.

Some of us have died, some of us seriously injured, some of us still to be injured as occupants and some of us to be injured as pedestrians struck by vehicles that suffer sudden loss of power and control (SLOPAC).

This year of 2014 has revealed the clear and present dangers of defects in vehicles and the defects in government and corporate organizations.

We can be thankful that a number of people and organizations have stepped forward to discover, reveal, and act to inform and fix these defects and help past, present, and future crash victims.

### **Who Should We Thank?**

We must thank the trial lawyer Lance Cooper and his engineer Mark Hood for discovering the ignition switch defect. See

[http://www.nytimes.com/2014/03/29/business/a-florida-engineer-unlocked-the-mystery-of-gms-ignition-flaw.html?\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2014/03/29/business/a-florida-engineer-unlocked-the-mystery-of-gms-ignition-flaw.html?_r=0)

<http://www.nytimes.com/2014/03/13/business/gm-reveals-it-was-told-of-ignition-defect-in-01.html?action=click&contentCollection=Business%20Day&module=RelatedCoverage&region=Marginalia&pgtype=article>

We must thank Clarence Ditlow and the Center for Auto Safety for analyzing the scope of the defect and its fatal consequences and reporting it to NHTSA and the public in March of 2013. See

<http://www.nytimes.com/2014/03/14/business/gm-air-bag-failures-linked-to-303-deaths.html>

And we must thank Clarence, Joan Claybrook, Ralph Nader and others for working for nearly five decades to improve auto safety. See <http://www.autosafety.org/> and <http://www.nader.org> and [http://topics.nytimes.com/top/reference/timestopics/people/n/ralph\\_nader/index.html](http://topics.nytimes.com/top/reference/timestopics/people/n/ralph_nader/index.html)

We must thank the members of the media for informing the public through articles, video reports, and editorials. In particular, the NY Times, LA Times, USA Today, Washington Post, Automotive News, the Detroit News and Free Press, AP, Reuters, Bloomberg, ABC, CBS, and NBC have provided excellent coverage alerting and informing the public of the defects, the dangers, and the failures of both corporations and government to protect Americans.

We also must thank legislators in both houses of Congress for holding productive Hearings. In the House: the Energy & Commerce Committee. And in the Senate: the Senate Commerce Committee. Excellent questions and documents revealed important insights into the problems and needs. And it continues with the Senate Nominations Hearing Dec. 3, 2014 on the nominee Mark Rosekind to be the next NHTSA Administrator. See

<http://www.autonews.com/article/20141130/OEM11/312019965/is-nhtsa-nominee-up-to-the-task>

[http://www.commerce.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?p=PressReleases&ContentRecord\\_id=29489d31-08fe-479b-a7c3-f07497b2f758](http://www.commerce.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?p=PressReleases&ContentRecord_id=29489d31-08fe-479b-a7c3-f07497b2f758)

And last but not least we must thank the crash victims who have come forward with their stories. See

<http://www.nytimes.com/2014/05/27/business/13-deaths-untold-heartache-from-gm-defect.html?module=Search&mabReward=relbias%3As%2C{%221%22%3A%22R1%3A11%22}&r=0>

## **The Steps Forward This Year Must Be Prologue**

Crash deaths in the U.S. currently occur at a rate of nearly 100 per day. Serious crash injuries occur at the rate of nearly 400 per day. Crash injuries of all severities occur at a rate of about 10,000 per day. Societal losses from U.S. crashes amount to more than \$2 Billion per day in the U.S.A. [1]

As I wrote in the July 2014 Monthly Report:

*The GM Recalls come at a time when the nation is celebrating its Declaration of Independence that held “Safety” as a fundamental purpose. During just the expected 8 years of President Obama’s Administration, the nation is on track to record nearly 250,000 crash deaths (more than twice the number of Americans killed in the Afghanistan, Iraq, Korean, and Viet Nam Wars -- combined). Plus 1 million serious crash injuries. And all crashes are expected to result in \$7 Trillion of societal losses in America during these eight years. See <http://www.careforcrashvictims.com/assets/MonthlyReport-June-July-2014.pdf>*

So what can and must President Obama do to protect Americans from crash force violence that is killing, maiming, and costing enormous U.S. treasure every day in the U.S.A.?

First, he must set goals. Over the past years, I have urged his appointees that headed NHTSA to do so. The corporate captivity of NHTSA has become common knowledge. Now by President Obama's actions and inactions we shall see whether or not the state of corporate captivity reaches into the White House itself. See my Monthly Reports and Blog posts at <http://www.careforcrashvictims.com/index.php>

Without a vision, the people perish. The American people need and deserve better leadership as I wrote in January 2014. See <http://www.careforcrashvictims.com/assets/monthly-report-jan2014.pdf>

Second, the president must appoint people willing and able to plan and act to achieve such goals as "Vision Zero" crash deaths in a decade. NYC Mayor De Blasio has provided the example. See updates on the NYC Vision Zero program of goals, appointments, and legislation, at <http://www.streetsblog.org/category/issues-campaigns/vision-zero/>

Third, the President should support progressive safety legislative initiatives. See [2 – 4]

Fourth, the president must use his executive powers to fulfill his duties to protect all Americans – in red States and blue. Let us ask that he invite to his State of the Union address crash victims, Ralph Nader, and Mayor De Blasio – representing the safety needs, the solutions, and elected leaders.

President Obama can do much to improve safety in his remaining years in office. It is for the people to demand that he live up to his duties.

[1] <http://www.careforcrashvictims.com/assets/MonthlyReport-June-July-2014.pdf> and

<http://www-nrd.nhtsa.dot.gov/Pubs/812032.pdf> and <http://www-nrd.nhtsa.dot.gov/Pubs/812013.pdf>

[2] [http://www.commerce.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?p=Legislation&ContentRecord\\_id=e83c6a02-478b-482d-a748-06905c69111a](http://www.commerce.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?p=Legislation&ContentRecord_id=e83c6a02-478b-482d-a748-06905c69111a)

[3] <http://www.mccaskill.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/MVHSEASummary.pdf>

[4] <http://www.markey.senate.gov/news/press-releases/in-wake-of-gm-safety-recalls-markey-and-blumenthal-introduce-legislation-to-ensure-transparency-more-reporting-to-prevent-auto-injuries-fatalities>