

## Blind Spots: A New Way to See Through Them

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It may come as no shock that concentrated, aware driving is crucial to the safety of those on the roads. Unfortunately, distracted driving is commonplace, leading to many preventable deaths on the roads. Blind spots have proven to be especially difficult to work around. Technology that can monitor these areas and alert drivers when something is in their blind spot has been implemented in many vehicles; however, there is no legislation requiring the usage of these mechanisms, resulting in crashes that could have easily been avoided. Requiring the use of blind spot technology and redistributing collision fees to install these systems can drastically increase safety on the roads.

Inclusion of blind spot detectors dramatically decreases the likelihood of vehicle collisions. A 2019 study compared crash incidence between vehicles with and without blind spot sensors. The results of this study demonstrated that 23% of crashes were prevented just by using this technology. At the time, only 17% of vehicles actively used this technology, while 57% had the technology installed but opted not to use it<sup>1</sup>. If only 17% usage of this technology improved safety by 23%, it is clear the public would greatly benefit from legislation mandating the use of blind spot detection.

This may sound ideal but is not simple in practice. Vehicles that have this technology are often much more expensive than the average vehicle<sup>2</sup>. Of course, requiring installation of these

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<sup>1</sup> "Blind Spot Warning Technology Contributes to a 23 Percent Reduction in Lane Change Injury Crashes. | ITS Deployment Evaluation." Accessed January 19, 2025. <https://www.itskrs.its.dot.gov/2019-b01384>.

<sup>2</sup> Bartlett, Jeff S. "Blind-Spot Warning Is Now Factored Into CR's Overall Score for Cars." Consumer Reports, October 24, 2018. <https://www.consumerreports.org/automotive-technology/blind-spot-warning-factored-into-overall-score-for-cars/>.

systems would only drive the market price for vehicles further up. If these vehicles are unaffordable, people will not buy them, and blind spot crashes would likely increase. This raises a far more complicated question: how could a program like this be funded?

According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, 840,000 crashes a year are related to blind spots<sup>3</sup>. If a person who caused a blind spot collision were required to pay a fee, the collected revenue could be used as a government subsidy to cover the cost of installing these systems. Typically, the price of one blind spot monitoring system begins at \$200<sup>4</sup>. If each person responsible for these crashes were charged this amount, nearly 170 million dollars of revenue would be generated yearly and redistributed to car manufacturers to install these systems.

Not only would this lead to increased accessibility to this technology, but it would increase attentive driving. Knowing they could be charged an additional fee for a crash, drivers would be careful to check their blind spots. This alone would help protect drivers, bikers, and pedestrians at risk of being hit.

Blind spot technology has become essential to improving road safety. Additional fees charged to someone who caused a crash could be redistributed to car manufacturers; these systems could then be easily added to cars without increasing the cost of the vehicle, making blind spot technology accessible and affordable.

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<sup>3</sup> Rutter Mills. "The Dangers of Blind Spots." Accessed January 19, 2025.  
<https://www.ruttermills.com/resource/car-accident-info/the-dangers-of-blind-spots/>.

<sup>4</sup> "The Installation Cost Of Blind Spot Monitoring Systems," July 21, 2022.  
<https://blindspotmonitor.com/installation-cost-of-blind-spot-monitoring/>.