



## Warning: Avoid Renting Cars When All Recall Repairs Aren't Up to Date

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Consumers may be shocked to learn that at present, car rental agencies are *not* legally required to honor all manufacturer recall repairs by timely fixing all vehicles in their fleets. Given this major safety loophole, Americans should *avoid* driving ticking time bombs off rental agencies' lots until they state, in writing, that a specific vehicle's recall repairs are fully up to date. After all, even so-called "minor" recall repairs can spell the difference between life and death under specific driving circumstances.

Currently, there isn't a single American state that legally requires all car rental agencies (or similar businesses like taxi services) to remove recalled vehicles from their operating fleets until all recall repairs have been completed. Fortunately, the U. S. Senate and the state of California are out in the forefront, trying to pass such legislation. The state of New York is also pursuing a legislative remedy for this problem.

As New York Senator Charles Schumer put it back in early March of this year, "Rental car companies should be immediately barred from renting cars that would be pulled from showrooms and car dealer lots because of safety recall concerns." He added that this legislative blind spot "boggles the mind."

### California is One Step Ahead

California Assemblyman Bill Monning recently introduced a bill designed to end this dangerous rental agency practice. He did so after learning about the deaths of two young California girls back in 2004. The Houck sisters, both in their early twenties, were traveling along in a Chrysler PT Cruiser rented from an Enterprise car rental agency when the

unthinkable happened. A part of the vehicle malfunctioned, causing the untimely deaths of these young women as they tragically crashed into a truck. Activists are hopeful that this bill (which was just narrowly passed by the California Assembly) will now move to the Senate and be passed there as well.

## Opposition to This Safety Legislation

As is often the case when big business fears financial losses, strong opposition exists to this legislation. Some parties are even offering the weak argument that it's unfair to force these new requirements on car rental agencies when they aren't being equally applied to taxi service fleets and other similar businesses.

Other arguments sound a bit like stall tactics. For example, some opponents say that a national standard for this type of legislation must be agreed upon before any one state can impose these types of requirements within its own borders. Hopefully, our more learned and conscientious legislators will see through these questionable arguments and insist upon immediately saving lives by passing these bills.

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