

Comment from Anonymous Anonymous

The concept of a camera based rear view mirror has some merit but as a standalone device, I would say no.

Honda Motors currently offers a camera mounted under their standard side mirror, as an assist. That is superior to a sole camera acting as a means of rear/side views. Then there is the issue of damage, cost to repair, calibration, dirty lenses, snow and/or ice forming on the camera, camera failure, computer software failure with the never ending software updates, and of course, driver adaptation to such a new device. Can older drivers adapt? What are the privacy implications of mirror views (and locations) being uploaded to unknown servers and the information being sold to unknown companies that may use that information with unfettered access?

Nothing will ever replace or be superior to the existing glass mirror as the main mechanism to see behind or to the side of a vehicle. I would say that having the option to add a camera underneath or along side of a traditional mirror is the best way to add increased visibility with the very important default function of having a real mirror in the event of a camera failure.

To give an example, I have an Italian car that needs a new windshield. Sounds simple, right? No. The windshield houses several cameras for lane departure warning, pedestrian detection, among several other functions. Only one dealer in my area has the model specific equipment to re-calibrate the cameras. Current wait time is 2- 4 weeks. Imagine these mirrors needing calibration or repair when the owner lives 100 miles from the nearest dealer? Drive without rear or side visibility? That cannot be safe. What about folks, who already fail to take their cars to their dealer for recalls and updates? Faulty cameras on the road with the real possibility of accidents occurring as a result. We really do not need drivers being distracted by yet another display screen. Several vehicle manufacturers offer multiple display screens right now, imagine three or four flashing across the dash, especially in the dark.

Stick with the basics and add to that. No need to re-invent the wheel. I see this idea as a very expensive nightmare.

A better suggestion for car safety would be to mandate UV-proof headlight lens materials. In 3-4 years of sun exposure, automobile headlights begin to cloud up, and turn opaque yellow decreasing forward night time visibility drastically. That dangerous safety problem is what NHTSA should be holding hearings on.