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The manufacturer of a car should not implement a feature that requires the seat belts to be in use in order to start the car because doing so would infringe on the rights one has to the property they own. One has the right to use anything they personally own however they like, to an extent. Obviously just because you bought a gun doesn’t mean you can shoot whoever you want. As long as you are not infringing on anyone else’s rights when expressing your own, you are in the clear. By forcing the riders in the car to wear a seatbelt the manufacturer is saying they know better than the customer, which may be true, but it should be up to the customer. The customer should be allowed to decide what risks they bear and when especially if it’s about their own property. This scenario is similar to a recent bill that was passed in multiple states called Right to Repair which says consumers have the right to repair and modify the products they buy where consumers previously had to use the manufactures offered services. This bill supports the idea that consumers have the right to do what they want with the things they purchase or own. Some other unintended consequences of implementing the seat belt feature such, as there is now an extra point of failure when trying to start the car, the added cost of designing, implementing and upkeep of the design, and the added inconvenience of the design could cause customers to try and circumvent the design anyway, leaving the seat belt always engaged, causing the opposite of the intended goal.

An argument for the opposite position would argue that the customer’s safety is more important than the customer’s right to do what they want with their property and that the manufacturer has an obligation to make the car as safe as possible for the consumer. You could argue that the manufacturer knows better than the consumer because they have larger access to information like crash statics from internal testing of their vehicles. Because the manufacturer has access to this knowledge base that the consumer might not necessarily have, they are obligated to protect the consumer when they are using their product by implementing this extra safety feature. Any added cost associated with this new feature would be justified and added on to the price of the vehicle. The added inconvenience of having to put on a seat belt just to start the car would just a quirk of the vehicle that customers would get use to.

This argument is incorrect because the manufacturer has no obligation to the customer to design the safest vehicle, only to design one that complies with the standards set by the NHTSA. Just because you have more knowledge about something doesn’t necessarily mean that you get to make decisions for others. The consumer gains the right to use things the things they own however they want when they purchase them. The manufacturer could not know how the consumer will end up using the product therefore they shouldn’t dictate, or force, how it should be used.