



U.S. Department
of Transportation

National Highway
Traffic Safety
Administration

Administrator

400 Seventh Street, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20580

DEC 22 2004

The Honorable George Allen
United States Senator
507 East Franklin Street
Richmond, VA 23219

NVS-216 aae
Ref. No. 10099948

Dear Senator Allen:

Thank you for your correspondence dated September 28, 2004, on behalf of your constituent, ... wrote concerning a problem his daughter encountered with her model year 2000 Mazda Protégé vehicle. The Federal Trade Commission forwarded your correspondence to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) for a response. It was received on October 27, 2004.

NHTSA is the Federal agency responsible for improving safety on our Nation's highways. We are authorized to order manufacturers to recall and repair vehicles or items of motor vehicle equipment when our investigations indicate that they contain serious safety defects in their design, construction, or performance. In order for the agency to initiate an investigation, we look carefully at the body of consumer complaints and other available data to determine whether a defect may exist. We cannot act on isolated problems or resolve disputes between individual owners, dealers, or manufacturers.

We appreciate the report you provided on behalf of ... Reports from motorists are a very important source of information for us. Each report is analyzed and entered into a database to help us determine whether an investigation into a possible safety defect is warranted.

Clearly, transmission failure and the cost of its replacement are frustrating. While frustrating, the type of transmission problem Mr. Lautigar described is not related to motor vehicle safety within the meaning of our authorizing statute. The agency has no jurisdiction over non-safety defects, warranty, and remuneration matters. If ... has not done so, he may consider contacting his local Consumer Protection Agency, Better Business Bureau, or the Virginia State Office of the Attorney General regarding his problem. He may also ask his local dealership for a meeting with Mazda Motor Corporation's district manager regarding his problem.

I hope this information is helpful. If you have any questions, please contact
Mr. Ronald L. Medford, Senior Associate Administrator for Vehicle Safety, at (202) 366-1810.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jeffrey W. Runge". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Jeffrey W. Runge, M.D.

cc: Washington Office

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Original Signed By

Jeffrey W. Rungs, M.D.

cc: Washington Office

NHTSA: NVS-210: Congressional Response

NVS-216: alonso ext 6-6903

NHTSA Control No. ES04-008259

ODI Control No. 10099948

Draft: aae 11/16/04

Revised: mjj 11/17/04

Final: mec 11/22/04, mec 12/07/04, mjj 12/15/04

cc:

I10, I20

NEC-110, NIA-110

NOA-010, NOA-02

NVS-010, NVS-200, NVS-216

Subject/Chron/Optical Disk/CRD

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