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2004 NOV 23 AM 10:28

Port Jefferson Station, NY

November 12, 2004

DOT Auto Safety Hotline
400 7th St., SW
Washington, DC 20590

RE: 1997 Mercury Grand Marquis - defective plastic intake manifold - Ford refuses to replace.

1996 Lincoln Town Car - defective plastic intake manifold - Ford refuses to replace.

To Whom It May Concern:

I own a 1997 Mercury Grand Marquis as well as a 1996 Lincoln Town Car which BOTH have had defective plastic intake manifolds within the past four months. Talk about bad luck! Ford refuses to take responsibility in reimbursing me for BOTH of these defective manifolds. Ford and Mercury are virtually the same vehicles; both makes have models that are almost indistinguishable, other than a few cosmetic details.

In the timeframe July 20, 2004 to November 8, 2004, the manifolds in BOTH my 1997 Mercury Grand Marquis and 1996 Lincoln Town Cars have cracked. In BOTH instances, I was driving down the road when the temperature gauge began to run hot and white smoke poured out of the hoods of both cars, emitting the smell of engine coolant. BOTH automobiles had to be towed to my mechanic's shop. **The cost incurred to me to repair BOTH cracked manifolds was \$ 2,319.54.** I am presently on social security disability because I suffer from a very rare and debilitating disease. My wife and I live on a fixed income and have now been placed in debt due to BOTH these defective manifolds having to be replaced.

Apparently the Ford Motor Company refuses to acknowledge the close relationship that these car companies have. Prior to 1996 a "brilliant" engineer at Ford had the bright idea to make the intake manifolds of the 4.6L engine out of plastic. Ford's claim for endorsing such an idea was based on the claim it was to make the manifold easier to manufacture and easier to place on the engine.

This was a very radical concept in engine design. In order to overcome the heat generated by the engine, that would melt the new plastic manifold, the engineers decided to route the coolant system through the manifold. Running the coolant system of a vehicle through the intake manifold could present a problem. The coolant system in BOTH of my vehicles running through the plastic intake manifold **does pose a problem**, especially when the manifold cracks. When the manifold cracks, the compromised coolant system of the car empties its entire contents on the engine. This results in engine overheating.

Justice

Evidently these manifolds crack, and they crack a lot. They fail so often that Ford issued a recall (Technical Service Bulletin Number 01M02) on certain 1996 - 2001 Crown Victoria Police Interceptors, certain 1996 - 2001 Crown Victoria Taxis, certain 1996 - 2001 Lincoln Town Car Limousine and Livery Vehicles with 4.6L SOHC engines. I also learned online that they recalled the intake manifold on the Thunderbird and Mercury Cougars built in 1997 also.

The Ford Motor Company is not accepting responsibility for BOTH of my defective manifolds; **I have had to incur a cost in repairs for both cars, totaling \$ 2,319.54.** I have attached for your records the bills for BOTH manifold replacement jobs. **I am requesting that Ford Motor Company reimburse me in full, \$2,319.54, for the cost of replacing BOTH these defective manifolds.**

My wife and I have been loyal customers and would have never considered purchasing a different brand of automobile until now. I am requesting that Ford Motor Company "do the right thing" and reimburse us, "the little folks" who support this company through numerous purchases. As I referenced in an afore-mentioned paragraph, I truly believe I am entitled to FULL REDMBURSEMENT FOR BOTH MY DEFECTIVE MANIFOLDS, as the individuals who were able to benefit from the Technical Service Bulletin Number 01M02.

Ford knows that the intake manifolds in BOTH of my automobiles are defective manifolds; they have replaced the exact part on cars that are nearly identical. As a Mercury customer, I have called and complained, wrote letters, and vowed never to buy another Ford product unless I receive full reimbursement for BOTH the defective manifolds. By not acknowledging the numerous issues pertaining to ALL the defective manifolds, for ALL owners, is an injustice. To date, Ford's response to the individuals such as myself has been that they have thumbed their proverbially noses at me and other loyal customers.

I look forward to hearing from a representative from your agency. Please feel free to contact me at my home number 631-474-8554. Thank you for your prompt attention with respect to this issue.

Very truly yours,

Attachments: (2) repair bills

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