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January 5, 2005

To whom it may concern:

My name is [redacted] I am currently the owner of a 2001 Kia Sportage Convertible, a car that should have been a dream come true, but has turned into my worst nightmare!

January 27 2005

In September of 2001, while on my way to college, my old Chevy cavalier stopped running. It was at that point in time I approached my parents and asked to purchase my own car (I was 17 at the time...). Upon their approval we began the search for the right car. Without a moments hesitation I knew that I wanted a Kia. After all everyone in my family had owned a Kia, and loved them! So the very next day we set foot in the Annapolis Kia dealership where I purchased a brand new Kia Sportage. It came with everything a teenage girl could want: CD player, soft back roof, power windows, power locks, an alarm, and of course the title in my name "a ticket to freedom."

It was not two weeks after owning the vehicle that I noticed several problems. I took it back to the dealer where they replaced all of the belts, adjusted the brakes, replaced the cup holder, and adjusted the convertible top. Thinking nothing of it, I continued driving the car, after all it had a 10-year, 100,000-mile warranty, the repairs were free (at the time). It was not more then two weeks after that, I again noticed problems with the car. This time the brakes needed complete replacement, the cup holder replaced for the second time, and the alarm wires readjusted. Still, assuming that Kia had fixed the problem I continued on with my car and life, not knowing what would become of my "dream car."

It has now been three years since I have taken ownership of the vehicle; it currently has 63,000 miles on it and is unsafe to drive. The list of problems could go on for miles. I have had the following repairs made since the original purchase date of the car (most all major repairs occurred within the first two years of ownership, and still persist to cause the same problems):

(Keep in mind that I bought the car brand new with only 10 miles on it from my test drive...)

1. Replacement of the brakes- 5 times (including new pads and 2 sets of new rotors)
 2. Replacement of the belts (all 3 major operating belts)- 5 times (current replacement in progress)
 3. Adjustment of the belts (all belts, including ac belt)- 4 times
 4. Replacement of the AC compressor and belt
 5. Replacement of the ignition coil, spark plugs, and engine wiring- 2 times
 6. Replacement of the CD player- 5 times (current replacement in progress)
 7. Replacement of the car alarm system (including all locks and wiring in all three doors)
 8. Replacement of the right rear axle and bearing
 9. Replacement of the right front strut (current replacement in progress)
 10. Replacement of the cup holder- 4 times
 11. Replacement of the rear window (convertible top, major scratching upon purchase)
 12. Replacement of the window fuse- 20 times
 13. Replacement and adjustment of the driver's side window gears
 14. Replacement of the catalytic converter (current replacement in progress)
 15. Replacement of the center console- 2 times
 16. Unfixed leak to the under carpet storage area in the trunk
- And list goes on...

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I am sure you are wondering why I feel this is all so important for you to know. You see when I purchased the car, Kia also sold me an extended warranty to give my car 10 years or 120,000 miles. Currently my car is in shop (where it has spent most of its life) waiting repairs that Kia will no longer cover under my warranties. They feel it is regular maintenance that my belts and front strut be replaced. Normally I would tend to agree, however I have replaced them numerous times in the past with genuine Kia parts, at Kia service shops, and still the problems persists. Obviously the extra \$2000 spent on my "extended" warranty, or the \$19,000 I financed to purchase the car and warranty in the first place have done me no good. Perhaps no amount of money will when it comes to Kia.

Throughout my many efforts to repair my car, I have kept up the proper maintenance needed for the vehicle; Oil changes, tire rotations and balances, etc....I have also made it a point to keep a record of my trips to the dealership service shops. I have provided Kia Motors Corporate Office with these documents in hopes that they would help one of their customers by doing the right thing, accepting that they sold a bad car, and helping set the record straight. I have learned however that this may never happen in my lifetime.

I have told my story to the Better Business Bureau. However, the claim was denied due to mileage on the car (most of which was due to driving for repairs). I understand how the Maryland State Lemon law works, and I understand that yes my car is three years old, and has close to 64,000 miles on it. The part that remains a mystery to me is how can Kia Motors continue to sell warranties that unable to comply with problems with my car. Also, I have been told many times that belts on Kia cars squeal, and break (I was informed of this by several members of the Kia corporation). Why should this corporation be allowed to sell a consumer a product that is unsafe? Furthermore, this corporation appears to show no remorse, or concern for their customers when they are faced with the types of problems I am having. I am at a loss for what to do next, and currently am without a car, as my car has been in the shop for the past 3 weeks awaiting the parts that they say will get it running again (the parts that they have on back order and are not willing to expedite, extending the length of time my car will be out of commission). I have taken my case up with Kia Motors Eastern Division of their corporate offices. They have been of zero help with my problem. Surely anyone can see that this car is a LEMON, "it has many problems". I recently asked them for a loaner car while mine remains in their shop, or perhaps a rental car. This request however was denied; apparently Kia Motors cares nothing for its customer's satisfaction or service. I feel that if they did, helping a dedicated customer as myself should not be as hard as I am finding it to be.

This is why I turn to you. Your office has helped so many people in our area for so long, and I hope that by sharing my story with you, you may be able to offer me the guidance and or assistance that I lack. I am a college student, working a full time and part time job, struggling to make ends meet. I pay for school with no financial aid, rent, car insurance, cost of living expenses and on top of everything else I am stuck having to pay endless amounts of money to a car dealership and bank that obviously cares nothing for my business or customer satisfaction. Kia makes their offer so appealing to young buyers such as myself. New cars, low prices and unbelievably long warranty plans.

What I would like to add is that yes, some Kia's are good cars. As I stated before, my family has owned 5 in the past and loved every one of them so much that

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they have remained loyal Kia customers, that is until I purchased my Kia and they have all seen the lack of cooperation and durability I have encountered. However, if someone does end up with a Lemon, I would like to try and understand why Kia Motors cares little to nothing of customer satisfaction?

Any feedback that your office can offer would be greatly appreciated, I can be reached by phone at:

Arnold, MD 21012
Or by email at:

I cannot thank you enough for your time and consideration. I know that in my heart somewhere in this world there is a group of people doing some good, and I feel confident your office retains these types of people. Thank you for supporting our community and always reaching out to help consumers like myself in need.
Sincerely,