

NVS-200

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10120402

2005 APR 29 AM 5:52 4/12/2005

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
Attention: Administrator
400 7th Street SQ
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Sir or Madame:

I'm writing you about an issue that I consider to be a safety issue with my 2004 Mini Cooper S. The issue relates to the placement of the horn buttons on the steering wheel. Rather than placing the horn button in the center of the steering wheel, like every other car I've ever driven in my 25 years of driving, Mini elected to place two horn buttons to the right and left of the center of the steering wheel. I find this to be a safety issue because in the event of an emergency, I immediately try to honk the horn by pressing the middle of the steering wheel.

Just this past weekend, I was nearly run off the road by a driver who apparently didn't see me and started to move into my lane. I immediately tried to honk my horn by pressing in the middle of the steering wheel. Of course, nothing happened. Similar incidents have happened in the past but this last one concerns me the most because I had my wife and 2 kids in the car.

I wrote Mini and complained about this issue last year. Maybe at least in part due to my letter, the 2005 Mini has corrected this issue and the horn is now in the center of the steering wheel. I feel as though this issue is a serious enough safety issue that Mini should be required to retrofit all Mini's previous to model year 2005 with the new horn located in the center of the steering wheel.

I look forward to your response.

[Redacted]

[Redacted]
Carlsbad, CA
[Redacted]

EXECUTIVE SECRETARIAT
2005 APR 25 1A 10:40
NATIONAL HIGHWAY
TRAFFIC SAFETY ADMIN.

[Redacted]
Carlsbad, CA

*Answered
5/3/05*