

NHTSA Complete Record Information



Printed: 9/8/2005

NHTSA #: ES05-007363

XREF #: ES05-007362

Delivery: REG

Rec'd Date: 9/6/2005

Doc Type: CNG

Address To: NOA02

Referred By: NEC-110

Doc Date: 8/25/2005

Due Date: 9/16/2005

S10 #:

DOT/I #:

RMP #:

Subject: LTR FM [REDACTED] (NV) RE POTENTIAL DESIGN PROBLEM FOR HONDA & ACURA VEHICLES RE TOWING VEHICLE BEHIND A MOTOR HOME, 2002 ACURA MDX BROKE LOOSE FM MOTORHOME AT THE UNIBODY FRAME, REPLY DIRECTLY TO CONSTITUENT & COPY SENATOR

Ack Date:

**Sign Office: SENIOR AA
VEHICLE SAFETY**

Cleared Date:

File Loc:

Added By: SHARRIS x62534

Ack By:

Signature: RONALD MEDFORD

Cleared By:

XREF File:

Modified By: LOGLESBY

Signed For:

Cleared For:

Closed Date:

COMPLETE CONTACT INFO:

The Honorable JOHN ENSIGN
UNITED STATES SENATE

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

Tel: 202-224-6244 Fax: E-mail:

10136665

2005 SEP -8 AM 7:41

COMPLETE COMMENT INFO:

Comment Details

9/7/2005 10:57:22 AM

Entered By: SHARRIS

Comment By: Sandra Harris

Comment

REF ES05-007362, DUPLICATE CONSTITUENT LTR, DIFFERENT SENATOR, ASSIGNED TO NVS-200 W/SAME DUE DATE OF 9/16/05

COMPLETE ROUTING INFO:

Assigned To	Task	Asgn Date	Deadline	Returned Date
NVS-200	REPLY	9/7/2005	9/16/2005	
	Return Process	9/8/2005		9/8/2005
ODI	REPLY	9/8/2005	9/13/2005	
NVS-010	INFORMATION	9/7/2005		9/7/2005
NOA02	INFORMATION	9/7/2005		9/7/2005
NIA-110	INFORMATION	9/7/2005		9/7/2005
I10	INFORMATION	9/7/2005		9/7/2005
I20	INFORMATION	9/7/2005		9/7/2005

COMPLETE ATTACHMENT INFO:

Description

Added By

Date & Time

Assign to Michael
9/8/05

JOHN ENSIGN
NEVADA

COMMITTEES:
ARMED SERVICES
COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND
TRANSPORTATION
HEALTH, EDUCATION, LABOR,
AND PENSIONS
BUDGET
VETERANS' AFFAIRS

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-2805

August 25, 2005

205 RUSSELL SENATE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20510-2805
(202) 224-6344

233 LAW VESPA BOULEVARD, SOUTH
SUITE 2000
LAS VEGAS, NV 89101
(702) 368-6888

400 SOUTH VIRGINIA STREET
SUITE 700
RENO, NV 89501
(775) 886-8770

600 EAST WILLIAMS STREET
SUITE 204
CARSON CITY, NV 89701
(775) 882-8111

website: ensign.senate.gov

Ms. Jacqueline Glassman
Deputy Administrator
National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
400 Seventh Street, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20590

Dear Ms. Glassman:

I was recently contacted by constituents of mine [REDACTED] of Henderson, Nevada, who are concerned about potential design problems among certain Hondas and Acuras that may pose a dangerous threat to highway safety. A copy of their correspondence is enclosed for your review.

I would very much appreciate your review of [REDACTED] concerns. Please copy me with your response to the attention of Mr. David Quinalty in my Washington, D.C. office. I appreciate your consideration in this matter and look forward to working with you in the future.

Sincerely,


JOHN ENSIGN
United States Senator

JB:dq
Enclosure

cc: Dr. & Mrs. Joel G. Adler

RECEIVED
WASHINGTON, DC 20590
2005 SEP - 6 A 3 34
OFFICE OF CHIEF
COUNSEL

ESDS-007362

10:27
WASHINGTON, DC 20590

2005 SEP -6 A 10:27 a.m.

OFFICE OF CHIEF
COUNSEL

Rec'd 7/11

EXECUTIVE SECRETARIAT

2005 SEP -6 P 2:48

TRAFIC SAFETY ADM.

HENDERSON, NEVADA

July 1, 2005

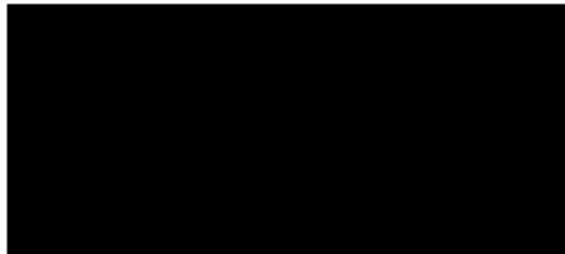
Honorable John Ensign
United States Senator
Lloyd D. George Federal Building
333 S. Las Vegas Blvd, Suite 8016
Las Vegas, Nevada 89101

Dear Senator Ensign:

I am writing this letter to you in regards to a potential design problem for Honda & Acura automobiles sold in our country. I am enclosing a copy of a letter and pictures sent to Mr. Jim Roach, Vice President of Honda America Corporation on May 16, 2005. As of this date, I have not had any communication from Honda America.

I feel that if the automobile manufactures are suggesting, in their manuals, that we can tow their vehicles behind a motor home, that their anterior unibody frame should be reinforced. With those modifications, the situation that occurred to me will not repeat itself, causing potential injuries and possible fatalities. I was very fortunate, that when my vehicle broke away from my motor home, that it ended in the desert and not hitting head on another vehicle. I am enclosing pictures of the vehicle. If you would take close observation of the unibody frame (pictures #1,2) and the heavy metal base plate (picture #3,4). You will note that the bolts are still attached to pieces of the unibody, where it broke away from the rest of the auto.

This letter is to enlist your help in trying to avoid this severe situation from occurring again, which possibly can cause severe injuries or even fatalities. I thank you in advance for your understanding and prompt attention to this matter.



**Black Letter to Jim Rowan
Pictures**

**cc: Senator Harry Reid
Congresswoman Shelly Berkley
Congressmen John Porter**

[REDACTED]
Henderson, Nevada [REDACTED]

May 16, 2005

American Honda Motor Company, Inc.
Jim Roach, Vice President
1919 Torrance Blvd.
Torrance, California 90501-2746

RE: 2002 MDX
2HNYD18482H [REDACTED]

To Whom It Concerns:

First, let me introduce ourselves to you as customers who have purchased four Acuras over the last seven years from Falconi Acura in Las Vegas, Nevada. Until May 2005, my wife and I were superb advertisement for the Acura vehicle. We also have an MDX, information above, which we tow behind our motorhome.

In your owners manual you outline that we are able to pull the MDX on all four wheels behind a motorhome. Well, this letter is to inform you of a very potential dangerous flaw in your vehicle.

On April 26, 2005, in Phoenix, Arizona, on our return from a long 5,800 mile trip to the East Coast, our MDX broke loose from our motorhome at the unibody frame. I have a breakaway system, plus a brake system on the auto when we are pulling it behind our motorhome. The breakaway system did not function effectively as the complete front of the vehicle came off the MDX. As the enclosed pictures will show, the base plate of our tow system actually tore the THIN metal of your unibody frame. The six large bolts that attach the base plate to the unibody frame were still attached to torn pieces of unibody frame. We were very fortunate that the MDX broke loose and went into the desert. It could of been a very disastrous tragedy with fatalities.

I have pulled that MDX behind two different motorhomes for over 39,000 miles with no problems until last month. I contacted the sales manager, Daryl Suta and service

COPY

manager, Mike Hanna, at Felooni Acura and they were appalled. I was given the Client Relations Department number by them to call. Personally, I think it should be called the "Client Public Deconstruction Department"!

On May 2, 2005, at 8:31 AM, I called your Client Relations Department and talked to a Samantha, who is a supervisor, that answer my call. I told her that I was concerned about the potential problem and what had happen. I was amazed of the inattentiveness to all the details and aspects of a potential problem that you have in regards to this situation. I told her that I would be happy to send her pictures and suggested that Acura send a representative to look at the vehicle. She refused to do that, and told me, "At your expense, you could have the vehicle towed to one of our dealers." I told her there is an Acura dealer within two miles of where the vehicle is located, and she said, "That won't happen!" She then said, "What do you want out of this?" And I said facetiously, "Replace my vehicle!" Her comment was, "That ain't going to happen!" She told me that I can acquire an attorney or have my insurance company contact our legal department. As you know, if there is a manufacturers defect the insurance will not pay for damages.

I had no interest in suing Acura or asking for anything other than some understanding and concern about the safety of the American public in your vehicles. I did contact Blue Ox, the manufacturer of the tow bar that I use, and they were very concern and asked for pictures. Since Acura has no interest in the safety of the American Public and are just interested in selling as many vehicles as possible, this is what I am going to do. I am going to send a story of the accident and pictures to the National Institute of Highway Safety, my US Senators and Representatives, all of the RV trade magazines. Also on all of my many travels across this country and the RV Rallies, I will present a program about the potential problems of the unibody used on all of Honda Autos. I told this to Samantha and her comment was, "Be my guest!!"

This letter is to inform you in writing, of a potential design problem, that you have with these vehicles and your position in regards to it. If, 'God Forbidding' there is a serious accident due to the breaking of the base plate from the unibody frame, that I will be the first in line to offer my services to any potential suit against your Company. I will testify that I have informed your Company of the safety problem, your lack of concern, and the attitude in regards to the safety of the American Public.

It is my recommendation, that on any vehicle that you manufacture, that Honda claims can be towed on all four wheels, that you reinforce the anterior portion of the unibody where the base plate attaches. Also, let me inform you that you lost a very good customer, who has been a good advertisement for your vehicles.

Very truly yours,

[REDACTED]

cc: Vince Consal, esq
National Highway Institute
Falconi Acura