



U.S. Department of Transportation  
National Highway Traffic Safety Administration

DOT Auto Safety Hotline

**Vehicle Owner's Questionnaire**  
To Report Vehicle Safety Defects 2004 JAN  
1-888-DASH-2-DOT  
(1-888-327-4236)  
INTERNET: www.nhtsa.dot.gov/hotline

FOR AGENCY USE ONLY 100148

Date Received  
23 PM 12:27  
21-SEP-2005

Repository   
Reference No.  
10137249

**OWNER INFORMATION (Type or Print)**

Name: [REDACTED]  
Address: [REDACTED]  
City: STILLWATER State: MN Zip Code: [REDACTED]

Daytime Telephone Number: [REDACTED] E-mail Address:  
Evening Telephone Number:

Do you authorize NHTSA to provide a copy of this report to the manufacturer of your vehicle?  YES  NO  
In the absence of an authorization, NHTSA WILL NOT provide your name or address to the vehicle manufacturer.  
Signature of Owner \_\_\_\_\_ Date: / /

**VEHICLE INFORMATION**

17 digit Vehicle Identification Number Located at bottom of windshield on driver's side: 1G2HX52L9B [REDACTED]  
Make: PONTIAC Model: BONNEVILLE Model Year: 1994

Date Purchased: 01-JAN-98 Dealer's Name and Telephone Number: RAM AUTO SALES Engine: 6 No. Cylinders: Fuel Type: Gas

Original Owner:  Dealer's City: KENYON State: MN Zip Code:

Transmission Type: AUTOMATIC  Antilock Brakes  Cruise Control Powertrain: FRONT WHEEL DRIVE Vehicle Component Code: 061000 ENGINE AND ENGINE COOLING:ENGINE Multiple Failure: 2

**FAILED COMPONENT(S)/PART(S) INFORMATION**

Incident Date(s): 01-JUN-2005 Failure Mileage: 145250 Failure Speed: 5-10 mph. Part that failed was 3/4" diameter washer - all 4 in the back failed allowing engine to fall out. Part # that failed is 1640188

**ADDITIONAL ITEMS TO BE COMPLETED WHEN REPORTING A TIRE FAILURE**

Tire Make: Tire Model (Name or Number): Tire Size (Example P215/65R15)  
DOT No. (Example: DOTM18ABC038)  Original Equipment  Prior Repair Failure Location:  
Tire Component Code: Tire Failure Type:

**ADDITIONAL ITEMS TO BE COMPLETED WHEN REPORTING A CHILD SEAT FAILURE**

Make: Date Manufactured: Model No./Name:  
Seat Type: Installation System:  
Child Seat Component Code: Failed Part:

**APPLICABLE INCIDENT INFORMATION**

(Please describe in detail the incident(s), failure(s), condition, and injury(ies).)

Crash:  Yes  No Flipped:  Yes  No Number of Persons Injured: Number of Deaths: Reported to Police: N

Narrative Description of Incident(s), Crash(es), and Injury(ies). Please describe (1) events leading up to the failure, (2) failure and its consequences, and (3) what was done to correct the failure: (i.e. parts repaired or replaced (and if old part is available).

DT: THE CONTACT OWNS A 1994 PONTIAC BONNEVILLE. THE ENGINE FELL OUT OF THE VEHICLE IN JUNE OF 2005 WHILE SLOWLY PULLING OUT FROM A STOP LIGHT. HE HEARD A LOUD CLUNK AND LOST STEERING CONTROL, AND THE CAR DRIFTED TO THE CURB AND STOPPED. THE GM MANUFACTURER WANTED TO KNOW HOW THE VEHICLE WAS MAINTAINED. WHEN THE MANUFACTURER FOUND OUT THAT THEY DONE ALMOST ALL THE MAINTENANCE THEY TOLD HER THAT THE VEHICLE WAS TEN YEARS OLD. SHE UNDERSTOOD THIS, BUT SHE STILL FELT THAT AN ENGINE SHOULD NOT JUST FALL OUT OF A VEHICLE. HER PRIMARY CONCERN WAS TO MAKE NHTSA AND THE MANUFACTURER AWARE OF THIS PROBLEM BECAUSE IF DRIVING AT A HIGH SPEED AND THIS HAPPENED THEN YOU WOULD LOSE ALL STEERING CAPABILITIES. THIS WAS A SAFETY ISSUE. THE VEHICLE WAS REPAIRED AT A REPAIR SHOP AND THE REPAIR SHOP TOLD HER THAT THEY HAD A FORD TAURUS THAT HAD THE SAME PROBLEM. ALSO, ANOTHER DEALERSHIP TOLD HER THAT THEY HAD A DODGE INTREPID WITH THE SAME PROBLEM. THERE IS A FRAME THAT HOLDS THE ENGINE AND TRANSMISSION TO THE BODY OF THE CAR. THERE IS A LARGE THREE INCH DIAMETER WASHER THAT IS UNDER A METRIC .5 INCH DIAMETER BOLT. THE BOLT DID NOT FAIL, BUT THE WASHER DID FAIL. THERE ARE FOUR BOLTS IN THE REAR AND TWO BOLTS IN THE FRONT, AND THE TWO IN THE FRONT WERE OKAY, BUT THE FOUR IN THE REAR BROKE AWAY AND FAILED. THE GM BUSHING PART NUMBER IS 25538061 FOR THE FRONT TWO BOLTS. \*AK

Include, if available: Police/Fire Department Report, Photos, and Repair Invoice. ATTACH ADDITIONAL SHEETS IF NECESSARY

The Privacy Act of 1974 - Public Law 93-579 This information is requested pursuant to authority vested in the National Highway Traffic Safety Act and subsequent amendments. You are under no obligation to respond to this questionnaire. Your response may be used to assist the NHTSA in determining whether a Manufacturer should take appropriate action to correct a safety defect. If the NHTSA proceeds with administrative enforcement or litigation against a manufacturer, your response or a statistical summary thereof, may be used in support of the agency's action.

In June of 2005, I was stopped at a stop light, which turned green. As I started to accelerate (perhaps going 5-10 miles/hour), I heard a loud clunk and lost all steering control. The car drifted toward the curb, hit the curb and stopped. The steering wheel freely rotated all the way around without moving the wheels of the car at all.

I looked under the vehicle and saw that the back half of the support frame for the engine had come free from its mounts (four washers had failed). There are six total washers which hold the engine in the support frame, and the two front ones did not fail, only the rear four washers failed (the failed washer part number is 1640188 per GM invoice enclosed).

I had the car towed to my home where I removed the four bolts and damaged washers. The bolts were 0.5 inch diameter and the washers were 3 inches in diameter. The large washers had rusted away and allowed the bolts to pull through them, releasing the engine from the support frame. The loss of steering control was due to the separation of the steering column from the steering pump when the engine broke free from its mounts.

I ordered the replacement bolts and washers from a GM dealer and replaced them myself (invoice for the parts is enclosed). After replacing the damaged bolts and washers, I took the car into a repair shop to have it inspected to ensure that it was safe to drive. I also had to have the clock spring for the airbag replaced since it was damaged when the steering wheel spun freely. A copy of the invoice is attached.

I have also attached a copy of the GM diagram showing the part which failed. This diagram actually shows the two bolts and washers which support the front of the engine. The part which failed is marked part 4 (and the GM part # 1640188) in the attached drawing, and the four of them that supported the rear of the engine are the ones that failed.

I have retained the parts which failed and would be happy to provide them to you.

I have driven the car in Minnesota since I purchased it, and understand that road salt does cause corrosion of some vehicle parts. The design, however, should have been robust enough that a 10-year old car doesn't have the engine just fall out, irrespective of whether it's been housed in a northern climate. Further, if the implications of the failure are known to cause a complete loss of steering control, perhaps that washer should have been constructed of a material more resistant to corrosion, or the design of the support system done differently. It was also concerning to learn that this was not an isolated failure. The technician at the repair shop where we took our car told us that they had a Ford Taurus with the same problem previously. When I went to get the new parts, the technician at the local GM dealership told me that they had a Dodge Intrepid which had experienced the same failure.

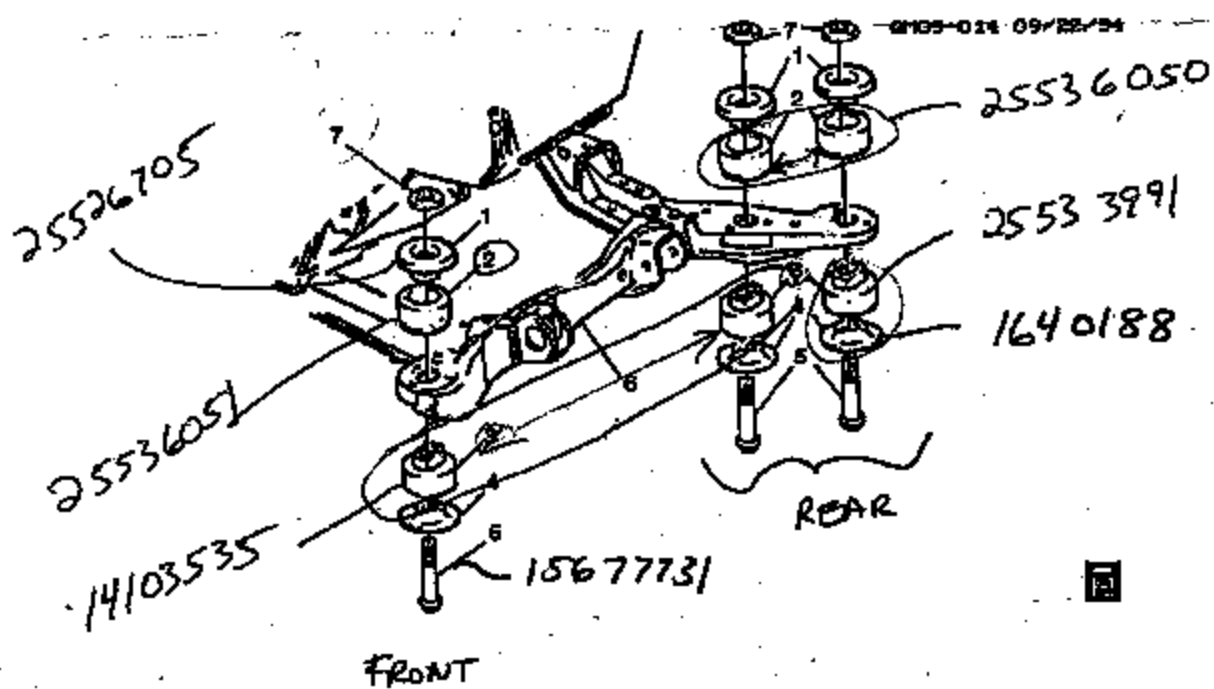
The reason I'm writing to you at NHTSA with this report of part failure is due to the complete loss of steering control I experienced when these parts failed. I was very fortunate to have the failure occur while I was slowly accelerating at a stoplight. If I had been driving at highway speeds, the failure would have caused me to completely lose steering control would likely have caused a fatal accident for me as well as for others in nearby vehicles.

Thank you for your attention to this matter, and please feel free to contact me with any further questions about this part failure.

Sincerely,



Model: PONTIAC, Year: 94, Model: Bonneville



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ProQuest Automotive EPC

**THE ATTACHMENTS TO THIS  
DOCUMENT HAVE BEEN REMOVED  
TO PROTECT UNWARRANTED  
INVASION OF PERSONAL PRIVACY  
PURSUANT TO EXEMPTION 6 OF  
THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION  
ACT (FOIA), 5 U.S.C. 552(b)(6).**