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NHTSA
U.S. Department of Transportation
Washington, D.C. 20590

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing this letter to inform you of a dangerous/potentially lethal situation that could occur with the 2003 Hyundai Tiburon, a car that both my wife and I own.

The cars are both front-wheel drive with a V6 engine and manual transmission. The original tires, Michelin 215-45-17, had very little traction in the rain and virtually no traction in snowy conditions. During a heavy snowstorm last February, the car was virtually useless in transporting us from a friend's home to our own home. We could not go more than 10 mph without the car sliding off the road and other vehicles were continually passing us. As this was a two-lane country road, there were no barriers and we almost ended up in a ditch several times. We tried to avoid coming to a complete stop because if we did, the car would get stuck and we would go nowhere. What should have been a 12-minute drive took us over an hour. We decided to replace the tires on both cars with all-weather tires, the Firestone Fusion 215-45-17. These tires handled better in rainy conditions but still did not handle well in the snow.

I have driven sports cars with high-profile tires in the snow before, but never in my life have I experienced this type of thing and felt so unsafe in a vehicle. I have contacted Hyundai on several occasions but they deny there is any problem, as do their dealerships.

Tire dealers want to sell me expensive all-season tires but won't guarantee proper traction because they claim the car is poorly designed and the 45 aspect ratio of the tires cannot be altered.

I finally ended up purchasing snow tires for my wife's car, and we will see if the car handles any better this winter. This is now the fifth set of tires I have had between the two cars.

Please test drive one of these vehicles and see if my claims are valid.

Sincerely,

[Redacted Signature]

West Dundee, IL [Redacted]

*Car & M. Kim
12/24/05*