

MAR 8 2006

The Honorable John Cornyn
United States Senator
Occidental Tower
5005 LBJ Freeway, Suite 1150
Dallas, TX 75244

NVS-216 mec
Ref No: 10149779

Dear Senator Cornyn:

Thank you for your correspondence dated January 20 on behalf of your constituent, [REDACTED]. Your correspondence was received on February 6. [REDACTED] wrote concerning a crash involving his model year (MY) 1997 Chevrolet Lumina vehicle, which resulted in the death of his daughter. Please express our deepest condolences to the [REDACTED] family for their loss.

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) is the Federal agency responsible for improving safety on our Nation's highways. We are authorized to order manufacturers to recall and repair vehicles or items of motor vehicle equipment when our investigations indicate that they contain serious safety defects in their design, construction, or performance. In order for the agency to initiate an investigation, we look carefully at the body of consumer complaints and other available data to determine whether a defect may exist. We cannot act on isolated problems or resolve disputes between individual owners, dealers, or manufacturers.

[REDACTED] notes that the Lumina had been the subject of a previous recall related to a steering defect and is trying to determine whether that defect may have played a role in this crash. We sympathize with [REDACTED] concerning his request for assistance in determining the cause of the crash; however, this does not fall under our jurisdiction. Only an expert in crash reconstruction can provide an educated opinion as to the cause in a specific crash. His insurance agency may be able to provide him with helpful information.

Given the nature of this agency's jurisdiction, I express no opinion concerning [REDACTED] suggestions for legislation to enhance punishments for crimes committed by persons that are in the United States illegally.

CONSUMER

FILE SYMBOL

INITIALS/ENG

DATE

FILE SYMBOL

INITIALS/ENG

DATE

FILE SYMBOL

INITIALS/ENG

DATE

Page 2

The Honorable John Cornyn

I hope this information is helpful. If you have any questions, please have your staff contact me or Mr. Ronald L. Medford, Senior Associate Administrator for Vehicle Safety, at (202) 366-1810.

Sincerely yours,

Original Signed By

Michael W. Harrington
Director of External Affairs

cc: Washington Office

NHTSA: NVS-210: Congressional Response

NVS-216: mec 66257

NHTSA Control No. ES06-000738

ODI Control No. 10149779

Draft: mec 02/28/06, mec redraft 03/02/06

Revised:

Final: mec 03/03/06

cc:

NVS-010, I10, I20

NEC-110, NLA-110

NVS-200, NVS-216

Subject/Chron/Optical Disk/CRD

I:\Congress FY2006\10149779