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To:

Jan. 21, 2006

Buick Customer Assistance Center
P.O. Box 33136
Detroit, MI 48232-5136

Copy: NHTSA,
U.S. Dept of Transportation
Washington, D.C. 20590

Subject: Steering Gear Problem, 2000 Buick Regal

I recently had a steering gear failure on my 2000 Buick Regal at 52,718 miles. Problem occurred at low speed, on left hand turn only, such as parking or around a corner. The more pressure applied on steering wheel, the more it locked up. There was no problem at highway speeds.

A local Pontiac dealer found failure in steering gear assembly and said it was not dealer repairable. The charge for this was $35.74, and an estimate of $1,172.89 plus tax for replacement. As I felt this was a safety issue, I inquired about possible factory adjustment

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on cost. I was told to call Buick CAC at 1-800-521-7300. After explaining problem there, I was told complaint was to be placed in file without any further action and to return to dealer.

Upon checking other sources, I had the gear assembly replaced by a rebuilt assembly for $689.50 including a tie rod end damaged in repair due to design and disassembly. I was shown problem before it was cut off and agreed to replacement. This service facility has done work for me before and has always been very satisfactory. As of now, the replacements are working as well as they did when vehicle was new.

I do feel that this problem was a safety issue and thought GMC might offer some adjustment, and that both Buick and NHSTA should be aware of it.

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Where am I coming from?
I am an 81 year old, and my work experience included seven years at Chevrolet dealerships in parts and service departments, approx. twenty years in Vehicle Development, Engineering Staff, GM Technical Center; two years in GM Auto Safety Engineering; and five years in GM Purchasing, mostly connected with engineering development projects so I have an interest in automotive safety concerns.

Sincerely,

(3) Enclosures

[redacted]

[redacted]

P.O. Box 768
HARRISON, MI [redacted]

[redacted]

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).

[redacted]
Harrison, MI [redacted]

[redacted]

NHTSA
U.S. Dept. of Transportation
Washington D.C. 20590