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TO: National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
U.S. Department of Transportation
400 7th Street S.W.
Washington DC 20590

RE: Safety of 2006 Subaru Foresters

DT: 28 February 2006

This is to inform you of a serious safety concern I have experienced with my 2006 Subaru Forester.

I purchased a 2.5 X Forester on 1 February 2006 and very shortly thereafter discovered the low-beam headlights fail to provide sufficient light for safe travel, even at 35-40 MPH. The design of the headlight fixture results in what appears to a driver to be a room-darkening-shade lowered ahead of the vehicle. This "shade" very seriously reduces a driver's vision except in the low-down area beneath it which *is* illuminated by the low beams.

Further, the line of the "shade" dips even lower when the vehicle is descending even a small slope and, when approaching a hill, the low beams do not illuminate the road ahead until the vehicle begins its ascent. As a result of this, it is impossible for a driver to see what is in the road ahead without switching to high beams, which is ill-advised if there is oncoming traffic. (In my case, there was a deer in the dark ahead of me, which I narrowly missed. The Forester brakes *do* work well!)

Alignment adjustments made by the dealer's service department have failed to correct the problem because this dangerous lighting appears to be caused by the new design used for the headlights on 2006 Foresters. This new headlight unit has a grooved, straight-line design at the top of the "glass" area that apparently causes the "room darkening shade" effect in front of the vehicle.

A design change is needed immediately, to include retrofitting all existing 2006 Foresters. Until then, these Foresters are unsafe.

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