

Windsor, California

MAY 23 4 7:19

The Center for Auto Safety
2001 S. Street, N.W.
Suite 410
Washington, D.C. 20009

May 12, 2006

Dear

I purchased a 1997 Dodge Caravan new and have had all the recommended service changes performed on schedule. The car has had oil changes every 3,000 miles and it now has 97,000 miles on it. I have had all the major service done at Lithia Dodge of Santa Rosa, California.

I brought the car to Lithia Dodge for the 90,000 service check on 4-14-05 and the cost of the all the services needed was \$989.49. Since that service, I have been having a problem with the engine and the service department can't seem to detect the problem. The following is a list of dates that I had to have my car towed in for service.

- 6/05-----the gauges in the dash panel became erratic and then flipped and remained on "O." The service engine light came on and remained on. The mechanic from Lithia placed electrodes to determine if he could find a code that would indicate the problem and could not detect one. He advised me to continue driving until "something major happens" and then he would be able to fix the problem. He said that the service engine light would turn itself off in a few days.
- 7/19/05----the gauges in the dash panel again became erratic and the service engine light came on. I drove the car to Benjamin Tire and Brake. They were unable to determine a code. They turned off the service engine light. The cost was \$31.11.
- 8/16/05----the car engine started and died out immediately. I had the car towed to Benjamin Tire and Brake. They found codes P1698 & P1695. Since the car was there for two days and seemed to be running OK, they did nothing. The cost was \$180.80.
- 9/30/05----the car engine started and died out immediately. I had the car towed to Benjamin Tire and Brake and on 10/3/05, they suspected that the cause may be due to a faulty BCM. They were hesitant to replace it because they could not give me a warranty, so they advised that I drive it to Lithia. The cost was \$90.00.
- 10/03/05---I brought the car to Lithia and explained what had been happening every month with the engine and they kept the car till 10/10/05. They called and said that they could not verify my concern. They found 1 fault--"no CCP/PCI bus message from BCM"--they would change the BCM because I requested it from the advice of the mechanics from Benjamin Tire, but Lithia would not guarantee that this would fix the problem. The cost was \$745.79.
- 11/16/05---the car engine again started and died out immediately. I had the car towed to Lithia. This time I was told that the PCM was shutting the fuel down & the front door lock rear latch was disarming switches. They replaced both front door switches. All door locks were working without problems before I brought the car in. The cost was \$451.24.

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5/24/06

12/15/05—the car engine again started and died out immediately. I had the car towed to Lithia. My brother came with me and we requested to speak with the manager. We were upset and frustrated about the service. We were told by the manager that if we were not happy with their service, we can take the car elsewhere. We were told that the car had a lot of mileage on it and what did I expect? I expected the service dept. to determine the cause of the problem and fix it! He kept the car until 12/22/05. He called and said that the BCM needed to be replaced and that since it was under warranty, there would be no charge.

5/1/06—the car engine again started and died immediately. I called to have it towed, but after waiting for 1 & 1/2 hours, I tried to start the car and it did start. I canceled the tow, but drove the car to Lithia. The turn signals did not work the entire trip from Healdsburg to Santa Rosa. They kept the car until 5/10/06 and said that the BCM needed to be replaced and that I also needed a multifunction switch. They replaced both and the car was now OK. The cost was \$269.79. I checked the signals after starting the car and they did not work. I called the service advisor back out and he sent the mechanic out. The mechanic said I now needed a flasher. They could install it then and the cost would be \$46.12 and they “would eat the labor cost.” It took less than 5 min. to install this flasher.

I really have doubts that anything was done to this car at all! I feel very unsafe driving it since I do not know when or where I will be the next time the engine stops. It did happen once on the freeway at the rush traffic hour which was truly frightening. I am handicapped, but so far, I have been able to get help as soon as the car stops. I hope to trade or sell the car soon. I would like it to be fixed before I do however. I feel that someone needs to check the service dept. at Lithia.

I have read extensive complaints about the service from Daimler/Chrysler on the Internet. The message is very clear that they do not care about the customers, nor their safety. I will definitely never buy another car from them.

Thank you for listening.

Sincerely,

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[REDACTED]

cc: Ms. Rosemary Shahan, Consumers for Auto Safety and Reliability
Mr. William A. Boehly, NHTSA Dept. of Transportation
Federal Trade Commission, Bureau of Consumer Protection
White House Office of Consumer Affairs
Consumer Reports
Mr. Tom La Sorda, CEO Daimler/Chrysler Corporation
Lithia Dodge of Santa Rosa