



U.S. Department
of Transportation
**National Highway
Traffic Safety
Administration**

1200 New Jersey Avenue SE
Washington, DC 20590

March 10, 2008

[REDACTED]

Jacksonville, FL [REDACTED]

NVS-216 et
Ref. No. 10219510

Dear [REDACTED]:

Thank you for your correspondence dated January 31, 2008, concerning the problem you encountered with your model year (MY) 2000 Mercury Cougar. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's (NHTSA) Office of Defects Investigation received your correspondence on February 25, 2008.

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. We also monitor the adequacy of manufacturers' recall campaigns. 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.

We appreciate the report you provided. Reports from motorists are a very important source of information for us. We have reviewed our database in an effort to identify whether a safety defect trend exists with regard to transmission fluid leakage problems in MY 2000 Mercury Cougar vehicles. At this time, there is insufficient evidence to warrant opening a safety defect investigation. The information you provided has been entered into our database. It will be considered with future reports to identify any safety defect trends that may require our attention.

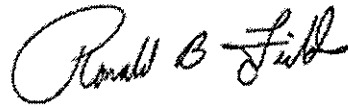
As you know, there is a Technical Service Bulletin (TSB) concerning transmission fluid leakage from vent hoses in certain MY 2000 Mercury Cougar vehicles. However, the issuance of a TSB does not necessarily reflect the existence of a safety-related defect in accordance with the National Traffic and Motor Vehicle Safety Act. Neither the Ford Motor Company (Ford) nor



NHTSA has determined that the vehicles in question contain such a defect. Therefore, NHTSA cannot require Ford to perform the corrective action described in the TSB on your vehicle at no cost to you.

Should you encounter a safety-related problem with a motor vehicle or item of motor vehicle equipment in the future, you can complete an electronic Vehicle Owner's Questionnaire online at <http://www.nhtsa.dot.gov/ivoq>. Also, a summary listing of vehicle owners' complaints, safety recalls, manufacturers' service bulletins, etc. can be obtained at <http://www.nhtsa.dot.gov/cars/problems>.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ronald B. Fields". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Ronald" being the most prominent.

Ronald B. Fields, Chief
Correspondence Research Division
Office of Defects Investigation
Enforcement