



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

1200 New Jersey Avenue SE.
Washington, DC 20590

October 10, 2008

[REDACTED]
Sparks, MD [REDACTED]

NVS-216 et
Ref. No. 10242611

Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you for your correspondence dated August 13, 2008, concerning your model year (MY) 1999 Pontiac Grand Prix. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's (NHTSA) Office of Defects Investigation received your correspondence on September 11, 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 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.

In your letter you expressed your dissatisfaction with Pontiac denying your reimbursement claims for recall pre-notification repairs performed on your MY 1999 Pontiac Grand Prix. Federal regulations require a manufacturer conducting a safety recall of motor vehicles or motor vehicle equipment to reimburse owners who have paid to obtain a remedy for the problem within a reasonable time, which in many instances is one year, prior to the manufacturer's notification.

Additionally, our statute does not require manufacturers to reimburse owners for costs associated with a safety recall (e.g., lost wages while the vehicle is being repaired, car rentals, damage caused by the defect, etc.). Therefore, any costs to repair damage caused to your ignition system by an oil leak resulting from a faulty valve cover gasket would not qualify as a reimbursable cost. The statute does not authorize the Federal government to reimburse vehicle



owners for any costs associated with safety recalls or assist vehicle owners in obtaining reimbursements for costs associated with an alleged defect. We are sorry we can not be of further assistance.

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 that reads "Frank S. Borris II". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized "F" and "B".

Frank S. Borris II, Acting Chief
Correspondence Research Division
Office of Defects Investigation
Enforcement