



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

1200 New Jersey Avenue SE.  
Washington, DC 20590

May 18, 2009

[REDACTED]  
Asheboro, NC [REDACTED]

NVS-216 et  
Ref. No. 10269229

Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you for your correspondence concerning your model year (MY) 1997 Pontiac Grand Prix. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's (NHTSA) Office of Defects Investigation (ODI) received your correspondence on May 11, 2009.

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.

We appreciate the report you provided. Reports from motorists are a very important source of information for us. In your letter you indicated that your vehicle was destroyed on April 1, 2009, due to an under hood fire and explosion of your MY 1997 Pontiac Grand Prix vehicle. You mention that you received a safety recall notification concerning under hood fires after the incident happened and you are seeking a new replacement vehicle.

The National Traffic and Motor Vehicle Safety Act requires a manufacturer to remedy the noncompliance or safety-related defect without charge to the owner; however, it does not require manufacturers to reimburse vehicle owners for other costs associated with the safety defect, including damage caused by a vehicle fire. Nor does the Act provide assistance or guidance on seeking reimbursement from the manufacturer by pursuing the matter with NHTSA. We have no authority to intervene on behalf of consumers to resolve disputes between individual owners,



dealers, manufacturers, or insurance companies. We recommend, if you have not done so already, that you contact your local Consumer Protection Agency, Better Business Bureau, or the North Carolina Office of the Attorney General regarding your problem.

Additionally, the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) has jurisdiction over paint, fraud or deception, warranty and dealership problems, remuneration matters, and fair trade practices. There are three ways you can contact the FTC: by the toll free telephone at 1-877-FTC-HELP (1-877-382-4357); by mail at Federal Trade Commission, CRC-240, Washington, DC 20580; and by using the Internet complaint form at <http://www.ftc.gov/ftc/complaint.htm>.

Should you encounter a safety-related problem with a motor vehicle or item of motor vehicle equipment in the future, we would appreciate it if you would complete an electronic Vehicle Owner's Questionnaire online at <http://www.nhtsa.dot.gov/ivoq> or call the Auto Safety Hotline at 1-888-327-4236. 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 cursive script that reads "Randy Reid".

Randy Reid, Chief  
Correspondence Research Division  
Office of Defects Investigation  
Enforcement