



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

Deputy Administrator

1200 New Jersey Avenue SE.
Washington, DC 20590

April 8, 2011

The Honorable Debbie Stabenow
United States Senator
221 West Lake Lansing Road, Suite 100
East Lansing, MI 48823

NVS-216 mec
Ref. No. 10274625

Dear Senator Stabenow:

Thank you for your correspondence on behalf of your constituents, the [REDACTED] Family, concerning their late mother's model year (MY) 1997 Chrysler Town and Country minivan. On behalf of National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), please accept our sincere condolences for the loss of their mother, [REDACTED]

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 motor vehicle equipment when our investigations indicate that they contain safety defects in their design, construction, or performance. 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 appreciate the report you provided on behalf of the [REDACTED] family. In their correspondence, they indicated that their mother placed her MY 1997 Chrysler Town and Country minivan into the park position and got out of the vehicle with the engine running. Your constituents stated that when she was out of the vehicle, it self-shifted into reverse and knocked her to the ground, pinning her underneath the left front tire. Your constituents request NHTSA's Office of Defects Investigation physically inspect their mother's vehicle. In addition, they feel this is a widespread problem in Chrysler minivans and request that NHTSA open an investigation.

We recently responded directly to the [REDACTED] family and enclosed a copy of our response for your review. The agency will continue to monitor your constituent's concerns regarding Chrysler minivans. We have respectfully requested certain information from the [REDACTED] family. We would like to review and add to our files the police accident report, the vehicle service history, and the report from the [REDACTED] technical expert on the tragic incident.



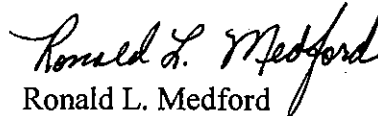
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Page 2

The Honorable Debbie Stabenow

I hope this information is helpful. If you have any questions, please have your staff contact Mr. Chan D. Lieu, Director, Governmental Affairs, Policy and Strategic Planning or Mr. Claude H. Harris, Acting Associate Administrator for Enforcement, at (202) 366-3217.

Sincerely yours,


Ronald L. Medford

Enclosure

cc: Washington Office