

**INFORMATION Redacted PURSUANT TO THE FREEDOM OF
INFORMATION ACT (FOIA), 5 U.S.C. 552(B)(6)**



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

Administrator

1200 New Jersey Avenue SE
Washington, DC 20590

April 7, 2010

The Honorable Steven C. LaTourette
Member, U.S. House of Representatives
1 Victoria Place, Room 320
Painesville, OH 11077

NVS-216 nlm
Ref. # 10313257

Dear Congressman LaTourette:

Thank you for your correspondence dated February 19 on behalf of your constituents, [REDACTED]. The [REDACTED] contacted your office concerning unintended acceleration events they experienced in the model year (MY) 2003 Toyota Camry they previously owned. Your correspondence was received on February 22.

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (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. 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 [REDACTED]. Reports from motorists are a very important source of information for us. We received the [REDACTED] previous correspondence on May 5, 2006. Information submitted by vehicle owners using Vehicle Owner's Questionnaires (VOQs) are automatically entered into our complaint database, the data is then reviewed and analyzed by NHTSA's Office of Defects Investigation (ODI) to determine whether an investigation is warranted. Due to the volume of VOQs received and limited agency resources, NHTSA cannot respond to all submitters of these questionnaires. While ODI did not contact the [REDACTED] to investigate their incident, their report was reviewed. We apologize for any confusion this may have caused the [REDACTED].

[REDACTED] indicate in their letter that the sudden acceleration events in their vehicle were caused by faulty electronics. In recent years, NHTSA has conducted several investigations into possible causes of unwanted acceleration incidents experienced by owners of various Toyota

Page 2

The Honorable Steven C. LaTourette

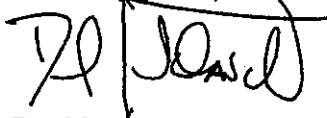
vehicles. In each case, NHTSA interviewed drivers, examined the vehicles, and explored possible causes. NHTSA paid special attention to the electronic control systems in these vehicles in an attempt to determine whether those systems had a defect. To date, NHTSA has not been able to identify a defect trend in those systems.

NHTSA is now undertaking a comprehensive look into the functional safety of electronic throttle control (ETC) systems in all vehicles sold in the United States with that technology. ODI investigators are working with experts from NASA in electronics and throttle control systems, automotive manufacturers, suppliers of throttle control system components and others with expertise in related fields of engineering and science to gain a complete understanding of the design strategies, testing methods and experience with the issue of sudden acceleration. These efforts will include the possible influence of electromagnetic interference, software anomalies and other electronic issues. If warranted, future investigations may be opened.

For more information, consumers can contact the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's Hotline at 888-327-4236 or the Toyota Experience Center at 1-800-331-4331 or the Lexus Customer Assistance Center at 1-800-255-3987. Information from Toyota is also posted at <http://www.toyota.com> and <http://www.lexus.com>.

I hope this information is helpful. If you have any questions, please contact me or Mr. Daniel C. Smith, NHTSA's Associate Administrator for Enforcement, at (202) 366-3217.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "D. Strickland", with a large, stylized flourish extending from the end of the signature.

David L. Strickland

cc: Washington Office