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

Administrator

1200 New Jersey Avenue SE.
Washington, DC 20590

June 9, 2010

The Honorable Henry C. Johnson
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

NVS-216 mec
Ref. No. 10319820

Dear Congressman Johnson:

Thank you for your correspondence dated March 3 on behalf of your constituent, [REDACTED] concerning her model year (MY) 2004 Toyota Camry. Your correspondence was received on March 11.

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) is the Federal agency responsible for improving safety on our Nation's highways. They are authorized to order manufacturers to recall and repair vehicles or items of motor vehicle equipment when their investigations indicate that they contain safety defects in their design, construction, or performance. In order for the agency to initiate an investigation, they look carefully at the body of consumer complaints and other available data to determine whether a defect may exist.

NHTSA appreciates the report you provided on behalf of [REDACTED]. Reports from motorists are a very important source of information for us. In [REDACTED] letter she indicated that she encountered sudden acceleration in her MY 2004 Toyota Camry on two occasions and requested that her vehicle be included in the recently announced Toyota recalls that address this issue. We are glad to hear that [REDACTED] took her vehicle to a dealer to identify the cause of the unintended acceleration and had her driver's floor mat removed. We are aware of deaths associated with this issue and believe that no driver should have an unsecured floor mat on the driver's side.

Toyota has recalled other vehicles for a defect that causes the accelerator pedal to be slower to release and harder to depress. The MY 2004 Camry uses a different accelerator pedal than that produced by CTS, which is being recalled. Therefore, [REDACTED] vehicle is not included in this recall; however, NHTSA is monitoring the non-recalled vehicles to determine whether they are experiencing a similar problem. It is unclear whether this is the phenomenon that [REDACTED] experienced.

The Honorable Henry C. Johnson

Nonetheless, we understand your concern about the reports of unintended acceleration in earlier model Toyota vehicles that are not subject to the current recalls as a result of these concerns.

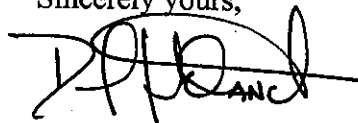
NHTSA is now undertaking a comprehensive look into the safety of electronic throttle control (ETC) systems in all vehicles sold in the United States equipped with that technology. The prestigious National Academy of Sciences (NAS) will examine the broad subject of unintended acceleration and electronic vehicle controls across the entire automotive industry. Separately, NHTSA has enlisted National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) scientists with expertise in areas such as computer controlled electronic systems, electromagnetic interference, and software integrity to examine the issue of unintended vehicle acceleration, specifically in Toyota vehicles.

NAS, which includes the National Research Council, will examine the broad subject of unintended acceleration and electronic vehicle controls across the entire industry over the course of 15 months. This will not be limited to Toyota, but will cover all vehicle manufacturers. A panel of experts will review possible sources of unintended acceleration, including electronic vehicle controls, human error, mechanical failure and interference with accelerator systems. The experts will look at software, computer hardware design, electromagnetic compatibility and electromagnetic interference. The panel will make recommendations to NHTSA on how its rulemaking, research, and defects investigation activities may help ensure the safety of electronic control systems in motor vehicles.

The NHTSA review of the ETC systems in Toyota vehicles is to be completed by late summer. NHTSA has brought in NASA engineers and other experts in subjects such as electromagnetic compatibility as part of a shorter-term review of these systems used in Toyota vehicles to determine whether they contain any possible flaws that would warrant a defect investigation. NASA's expertise in electronics, hardware, software, hazard analysis and complex problem solving ensures this review will be comprehensive. If either study should identify a potential safety related defect, an investigation will be opened.

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 stylized flourish at the end.

David L. Strickland