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**Subject: LETTER FROM SENATOR SESSIONS ON BEHALF OF CONSTITUENT [REDACTED] RE
BRAKE FAILURES ON HIS MOTORHOME
(DOT/I#2010-1141)**

Ack Date:
Sign Office: ADMINISTRATOR
Cleared Date:
File Loc:
Added By: BMILLINGS x65470

Ack By:
Signature: STRICKLAND
Cleared By:
XREF File:
Modified By:
BERNADETTE.MILLINGS

Signed For:
Cleared For:
Closed Date:

Most Recent Comment:

Author:

CL-10335953-2879

The Honorable JEFF SESSIONS
UNITED STATES SENATE

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-0104
Tel: Fax: E-mail:

Assigned To	Task	Asgn Date	Deadline	Returned Date
NVS-200	REPLY	6/8/2010	6/18/2010	
NVS-010	INFORMATION	6/8/2010		6/8/2010
NIA-110	INFORMATION	6/8/2010		6/8/2010
NOA-010	INFORMATION	6/8/2010		6/8/2010
NOA02	INFORMATION	6/8/2010		6/8/2010

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United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-0104

June 1, 2010

Mr. Heiden Shahmoradi
Acting Assistant Secretary for Government Affairs
Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave, SE
Washington, D.C. 20590

Dear Mr. Shahmoradi:


Enclosed is a copy of correspondence I received from my constituent, [REDACTED] regarding brake failures on his motorhome. I would appreciate it if you would examine this matter and respond directly to [REDACTED] copying my office with your final response. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Constituent:

[REDACTED]
Fairhope, AL [REDACTED]

Office of Senator Jeff Sessions
41 West I65 Service Road North, Suite 2300-A
Mobile, Alabama 36608-1291

Very truly yours,



Jeff Sessions
United States Senator

JS: st

May 11, 2010

[REDACTED]
Fairhope, Al [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Honorable Jeff Sessions

335 Russel Senate Office Building

Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Sessions:

I did not find a listing in your website dealing with problems with the Department of Transportation so I am writing directly to you since I have been unable to get a response from the Sec of Transportation .

Attached are letters I have written to the Secretary of Transportation regarding a serious brake safety recalls by Workhorse Chassis, 850 Stephenson Hwy, Troy MI ,48803, that manufacturers 10 ton chassis for recreational motorhomes. Like many others, I have been unable to use this expensive motorhome safely since I purchased it new nearly 9 years ago.

Also, attached is a letter I wrote to Workhorse Chassis that also was not acknowledged or answered.

Any help you can provide to expedite resolution of this critical brake problem and enforcement of the same safety laws that Toyota Motors is being held responsible for will be greatly appreciated by, according to Workhorse, 49,000 other affected motorhome owners.

Thanking you sincerely for your assistance,

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

P.S. I am 82 years old, 1 born & raised in Alabama

May 11, 2010

[REDACTED]
Fairhope, AL [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Mr Ray Lahood
Secretary of Transportation
1200 N.J. Av S.E.
Washington DC, 20590

Attached is a letter I wrote you a month ago regarding unresolved Federal Transportation Safety recalls on Workhorse Motorhome Chassis' that can cause complete brake failures on 10 plus ton Motorhomes.

As of today, I have neither received an acknowledgement to this letter or answers to my questions that could help resolve this critical problem.

Sincerely

[REDACTED]

Copy to Hon Jeff Sessions, Senator, State of Alabama

April 14, 2010

[REDACTED]
Fairhope, Al [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Mr Ray Lahood

Secretary of Transportation

1200 N.J. Av S.E.

Washington DC, 20590

I want to commend you on the response you have given to the problems Toyota Owners have been having with their cars, including fines for failing to report defects to your agency even for a few days. I only wish the same attention could be given to protect owners of Recreation Vehicles on Workhorse Chassis' produced as long ago as July 2000 that are having very serious brake problems. Workhorse tells me there are at least 49,000 vehicles affected. They have repeatedly postponed promised dates for corrective parts (defective Bosch Calipers) and recently they advised they are just now "tooling up" for the parts and gave no estimated date for availability.

My first near fatal brake failure on our new 2002 Motorhome occurred July 11, 2003 when we lost braking when descending a narrow twisting mountain road in north Georgia. Only through skillful driving, hand brake, downshifting, help with other cars giving us room and just plain luck were we able to bring the 10 ton vehicle to a stop. The front right wheel was smoking and nearly caught on fire. After spending overnight on the road, Workhorse towed us 200 miles to Columbia, SC, their nearest Workhorse facility. Love Chevrolet had to replace all burned out parts in that wheel including calipers, ABA sensors, pin kit, rotor, oil seals, pads, etc. They were aware of the design problem in the brakes related to a type of plastic (instead of steel) component in the caliper pistons that expanded with heat preventing the brake from releasing from the braking position. They said Workhorse was aware of the problem.

In January, 2004, we again lost all brakes on I-26 south of Ashville, N.C., narrowly avoiding a rear end collision with an 18 wheeler by swerving into the emergency lane. Again, we were towed to Fletcher Chevrolet, Fletcher, N.C. where they determined both rear calipers had stuck causing overheating of the brake fluid to a gel. At least 3 times since, we have had brakes overheating due to stuck calipers requiring removal of the wheels and lubricating the caliper pins.

It was not until July 2005, two years after our first near fatal accident due to brake failure, that Workhorse sent us a copy of dealer bulletin 50401-C describing a "defect involving brake caliper hanging in a partial apply position that can get extremely hot causing severe damage to brake parts". This notice was replaced by Interim Notice Safety Recall 50901-C in May 2009. Even to today, replacement calipers are the same parts that nearly cost us our lives or serious injury at least 3 times.

Despite the history of brake problems with our Motorhome and provisions in the recall notices for repair costs related to the defective calipers, Workhorse has twice denied reimbursement our requests for such costs. More importantly, we have had to operate our vehicle with defective brake calipers since it was purchased in October 2001, nearly 9 years. We cannot sell our motorhome at a fair market price and we are reluctant to use it for fear of further brake failures. When we do, we must stop frequently to inspect for hot brakes.

I have full documentation including work orders and letters to and from Workhorse, I would be glad to provide.

My question is, what is or has been done to provide penalties or fines to Workhorse that might motivate them to correct these serious defects in a more timely manner? Also, is there any assistance you can provide to give us some kind of relief in this serious matter?

Thank you for any consideration you may provide in this critical matter.



February 5, 2010

[REDACTED]
Fairhope, Al [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Mr Andrew Taitz, Chairman and CEO
Workhorse Custom Chassis LLC
600 Central Ave
Suite 305
Highland Park, IL 60035

Re: My VIN 5B4MP67GX13[REDACTED] 2002 motorhome and Recall 50901C; updated Interim Notice of Dec. 2009, Workhorse 1/7/10 and my 1/12/10 response attached.

I am asking for your help due to lack of response from your recall department in Troy, Mi. to my Jan 12 despite a subsequent fax inquiry and two phone messages left with Customer Service

Our Motorhome purchased new, has had repeated serious brake problems dating back to 2003, two years before the recall. We have experienced 3 near fatal crashes involving us and other vehicles due to unexpected brake failure. One time the vehicle had to be towed 200 miles to a Workhorse facility for temporary repairs. My wife refuses to travel in it anymore. Your last repair facility deemed it unsafe to drive until ABS sensors are replaced which they believe is causing the noisy brake sounds and pulling to left in to traffic when stopping (a condition reported even when the vehicle was under warranty and never fixed).

Workhorse on Jan 7, 2010 denied my request for reimbursement for past repairs and my request to repair continuing problems stating; "...the notice state this interim repair is to be administered only to those vehicles have experienced a historical or current CALIPER(S) failure..." and said the latest repairs at Prattville Auto & Repair did not involve caliper malfunction. As you can see in my attached January 12, the vehicle has a long history of brake problems related to caliper and ABS sensor problems. The reason I took the vehicle in to Prattville Auto & RV was (in addition of a \$500.00 Generator problem caused by non-use) was because of overheating smelly brakes.

During 2009, we were advised permanent repair parts would be available in Fall of 2009, then late 2009, and now later this year, 2010 because the parts are in the "tooling" stage.


This is a \$106,000 motorhome which we have been able to use very little because of serious brake problems and now cannot use it or sell it because you have deemed it unsafe to drive. It has been in storage since October. Please help us get to the RIGHT person to make this vehicle safe to drive so we can certify this to a buyer and/or use it ourselves. We just put \$2200 in new tires for our last trip in Oct that had to be cancelled after the first 100 miles due to overheating brakes which undoubtedly as twice before caused ABS failure and related problems.

Any help you can provide to get this issue off center will be greatly appreciated. My claims clearly fall within the provisions of Recall 50901C and I feel we have been damaged far beyond the requests we have made to Workhorse Custom Chassis. We have been more than pleased with every other aspect of our motorhome including the engine and the chassis.

[REDACTED]

07-Jun-10

2010 Senate Report - Governmental Affairs Correspondence
Control Sheet (I-10), Room 10408

Control Number: 2010 -- 1141
Date DOT Received: 6/7/2010
Date DOT Entered: 6/7/2010
Member's Date: 6/1/2010
Member Last Name: Sessions
Member First Name: Jeff
Member Organization: United States Senator
Address1: 41 West 165 Service Road North, Suite 2300-1
Address2:
City: Mobile
State: AL
Zip: 36608
Constituent File Name: 
Constituent Date:
Action Office: National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
Subject: brake failure on his motor home
Action Office Code: NHTSA
Due Date: 7 /2 /2010
Member Contact: Susan Thompson
Pending: Yes
Member Contact Phone: (251) 414-3083
Closed Date:
Remarks:
Direct Reply/Comeback Copy Yes
Congressional Affairs Contact