

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

US Dept. of Transportation
NHTSA Office of Defect Investigation (NVS-210)
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
West Building
Washington, DC 20590

OCT 29 2010

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The purpose of my complaint is to make Nissan Altima owners aware of a major defect that could prove dangerous, and is pushed aside by Nissan Consumer Affairs everytime there is a complaint.

I am the owner of a 2002 Nissan Altima 2.5 S. I have owned this car for close to 8 years and have approximately 42,000 miles on it. I purchased it brand new in 2002 from a Nissan dealership. Just recently I had a routine oil change done in my car and my mechanic noticed an enormous rusted hole on the driver side of the floor panel underneath the car, the passenger side also had a big rusted spot where another hole is developing. One can actually see the carpeting and wiring through the hole, and eventually my foot will fall through the opening if the carpeting gets worn out from underneath. Even worse - if some debris from the road gets trapped in that hole while I am driving my vehicle, the wiring on the side can get exposed and it could be life threatening. I brought it to a local Nissan Bodyworks repair shop where I was advised to replace the entire floor panel, since it was so badly rusted. The estimate came out to a total over \$2,000.

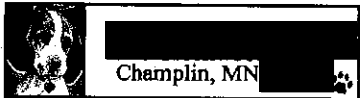
This comes as a complete and total shock, since I hardly drive my vehicle and take very good care of it. It is kept in a sealed garage of a private house. The vehicle also gets washed regularly, especially during winter months. The underbody is cleaned periodically (at the very least once a week in winter) to make sure the salt and sand/dirt does not cause deterioration. It also gets waxed every so often. When the floor coverings get wet during the cold months, I take them out and dry them before placing them back in. I believe the defect is due to the absence of drain holes in the floor pan underneath the vehicle. The drain holes are visible to have been outlined, but never drilled through. They are simply not there! The water from the air conditioner gets trapped on top of the floor panel and collects there, eventually causing rust. There is definitely, without a doubt - a defect. The manager of the Nissan body shop has also concluded that this is due to a defect in the design, and he also mentioned that he has seen this type of damage in an Altima before, except that one was still on a warranty. I also did extensive research on internet. There are hundreds of cases same as mine, and everyone is getting the response from Nissan "too bad - no warranty".

After filing a complaint with Nissan Consumer Affairs, I was given a run around and was eventually contacted by the regional case representative, and subsequently the regional manager. They have told me that they cannot do anything since there is no longer a warranty on the vehicle. They also said that they do not care if anything happens to me if debris from the road comes in contact with the wiring which is visible on the side of the vehicle through the rust holes. The only suggestion they had for me is that they will follow up with me after speaking with the body shop manager as to what protective measures I can take so this "rust situation" does not happen in the future. They came back saying that the manager of the Nissan Bodyworks had no suggestions, since this was not due to a fault on my part. In fact they proceeded to say that he stated that my vehicle is in excellent condition and is very well taken care of. The bottom line is Nissan is brushing everyone off and refusing to take responsibility for a manufacturing defect, they are simply using the "no-warranty" as an excuse to get away with it. This defect could no doubt prove to be fatal. Nissan should take responsibility for a major design flaw!!!!

Sincerely,

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TGW



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