



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

1200 New Jersey Avenue SE.  
Washington, DC 20590

July 25, 2011

[REDACTED]  
Houston, TX [REDACTED]

NVS-216  
Ref. No. 10389288

Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you for your correspondence that was received by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), Office of Defects Investigation (ODI). In order to respond to the overwhelming number of letters received by ODI, we are answering you with this form letter.

NHTSA is the Federal agency responsible for improving safety on our Nation's highways. We are authorized to order manufacturers to recall and repair motor vehicles or items of motor vehicle equipment when our investigations indicate that they contain serious safety defects in their design, construction, or performance. We also monitor the adequacy of manufacturers' recall campaigns. In order for the agency to initiate an investigation, sufficient data must exist to warrant the expenditure of agency resources. We cannot act on isolated problems or resolve disputes between individual owners, dealers, or manufacturers.

Federal regulations require a manufacturer conducting a safety recall of motor vehicles or motor vehicle equipment to reimburse owners who have paid to obtain a remedy for the problem within a reasonable time, which in many instances is one year, prior to the manufacturer's notification. Certain restrictions apply, including the need to submit certain documents to the manufacturer. Owners should follow the instructions in the recall notification letter to file a claim. Owners who feel that their claim was wrongfully denied should pursue the matter with the manufacturer. Owners may also report any dispute to NHTSA by contacting the Department of Transportation's Auto Safety Hotline or by filing a complaint via the agency's Internet Web site. While NHTSA does not have the resources to intervene in individual disputes, it does monitor this data and may address situations where appropriate.

Additionally, our statute does not require manufacturers to reimburse owners for costs associated with a safety recall (e.g., lost wages while the vehicle is being repaired, car rentals, damage caused by the defect, etc.). Nor does the statute authorize the Federal government to reimburse vehicle owners for any costs associated with safety recalls or assist vehicle owners in obtaining reimbursements for costs associated with an alleged defect.

If you have not done so, you may consider contacting your local Consumer Protection Agency, Better Business Bureau, and the Office of Attorney General in your State regarding your problem. In addition, the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) has jurisdiction over non-safety defects, paint, fraud or deception, warranty and dealership problems, remuneration matters, and fair trade practices. There are three ways to contact the FTC: by toll free telephone at 1-877-FTC-HELP (1-877-382-4357); by mail at Federal Trade Commission, CRC-240, Washington, DC 20580; and by using the Internet complaint form at <http://www.ftc.gov/ftc/complaint.htm>.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Randy Reid".

Randy Reid, Chief  
Correspondence Research Division  
Office of Defects Investigation  
Enforcement