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

VIN# 2GCEK19T331 [redacted]
2003 Chevrolet K1500

MAR 0 8 2011

February 28, 2011

CL-10390948-7468

U. S. Department of Transportation
National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
1200 New Jersey Ave., S.E.
West Building
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Sir or Madam:

I am writing in hopes that you can do something about an unsafe condition. We are afraid that some day our electronic dash in our 2003 Chevrolet Silverado truck will totally fail while we are driving it. I have attached a copy of the letter that I wrote to General Motors headquarters explaining the situation and what their response has been to date. Also included is a copy of the 7 year warranty extension issued by Chevrolet. I have nothing in writing from Chevrolet in response to my letter, other than the telephone conversations I have had with them. Even the Pontiac dealership put nothing in writing as to what they might be willing to do for us. Please read both attachments before continuing on with this letter.

You would think that in reporting the intermittent "clicking" problem over the years that they would have known about the warranty extension problem areas and made the association. When I took our 2009 Pontiac GT in for routine maintenance on April 12th, I talked with the technician about the occasional "rubbing" or "clicking" noise we were experiencing with the 2003 Silverado. They said to bring it by but that they didn't know what it might be without looking at it and that it was very hard to isolate an intermittent problem. Personally, we had never experienced any visible problems with the electronic dash so we remained blissfully ignorant to the nightmare awaiting us. Like I stated in the letter, "*Since General Motors said the special extended warranty had expired in March, and we had not experienced any outright visible problems until July, I really thought that GM would simply extend this time to cover the problem. We have very low mileage (22,300) and obviously Chevrolet had already recognized that the dash panel was defective by issuing the extended 7 year warranty. Since this was not presented as a recall, we did not take the truck in to have the panel replaced. Nor did we do anything with the extended warranty, since we had never had any known problems with the dash, until the erratic behavior of the speedometer in July.*"

Since July 2010, the speedometer has been acting inconsistently. The gauge is working fine when suddenly it starts registering speeds that are incorrect and the needle is slow to respond to any change in speed and it will not fall to "0" when you come to a complete stop. It usually corrects itself overnight (put not always) and then

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remains normal until the next intermittent episode which could be the next day or 3 weeks later. There is no pattern to the problem. You have no idea how fast or slow you are going, and it is terribly distracting and dangerous while you are driving. Now we are having problems with the doors locking and unlocking on their own, both while stopped and while driving. The headlights have gone out briefly. All of the dash display and side door light panels work intermittently. The powered, heated, memory seats sometimes have a jerky movement and "chattering" noise. Overall the problems have become more erratic, longer in duration, still intermittent, and they seem to spreading. We are afraid to drive the truck at night. Even during the day it is terribly dangerous when you don't know at what speed you are traveling. Who knows what will fail next. What else does the electronic dash control and when it fails, will it be life threatening?

We would like to file a complaint with whoever controls automotive recall practices, but we do not know who to contact. Could you assist us with finding out which office or bureau handles that action? This should never have been issued as a limited warranty extension.

We would also like to complain about the OnStar conversion from analog to digital. Why would Chevrolet release vehicles with OnStar analog knowing that in 2 years it will have to be converted to a digital system and not issue some type of letter or recall? If we had not contacted OnStar (and gotten a letter from them), we would never have known about the necessary conversion that was to be done free of charge. Even with documents in hand, we had to fight our way through a lengthy paperwork and personnel problem with Chevrolet or it would never have been done. Our truck has a low-grade battery power drain that we have had ever since the OnStar upgrade was done in 2005. We have taken the truck back to Connell Chevrolet dealership many times for that problem but they can find nothing to repair.

Thank you for your time and we look forward to hearing from you.

[redacted]

Harker Heights, TX [redacted]

[redacted]

July 19, 2010

General Motors Corporation
300 Renaissance Center
Detroit, Michigan 48265

To Whom It May Concern:

The morning of July 1, 2010, while I was driving our 2003 Chevrolet Silverado truck, I experienced a soft vibration through the steering wheel and an extremely soft 'grinding' noise. Neither of the conditions seemed alarming, and both symptoms would come and go. After I left my appointment in town, the sensations had stopped. I mentioned it to my husband to see if he noticed anything the next time he drove it.

On July 5, 2010, when we were almost home, the speedometer started acting up. It showed us going at a greater speed than we were traveling and the indicator did not drop consistent with our slowing speed. The speedometer settled between 10-15 mph at a full stop, but no lower – it just hung there, even with the engine off.

The next day, July 6th, we took the truck for a short drive on the highway and over a short stretch of rough road. This time the indicator showed the correct speed but was slow to respond when you let off the gas. Now, the speedometer settled to 5 mph at a full stop, but no lower – even with the engine off.

On July 15, 2010 I took the truck on some errands and now the speedometer was working correctly (down to 0 at a full stop, and responding accurately to changes in speed). At approximately 1:30 p.m., I stopped by the Patriot dealership in Killeen, Texas to report the problem and presented them with the 7 year extended warranty your company had issued. Because of our experiences with the speedometer, the technician set me up with an appointment for the next morning. I told him that the speedometer had not displayed any visible irregularities until now. Although I did inform him that 4-5 years ago when I would take the truck in for other service/maintenance work, I remarked on a "clicking" sound I would hear on and off from inside the cab. Since it was an intermittent problem that I only reported during other services, nothing was ever documented. Hindsight tells me that this noise was probably coming from the speedometer but I just didn't make the connection back then.

On July 16, 2010 I took the truck to the dealership for the 8:30 a.m. appointment. They (the technician and service manager) said it went out of warranty March 24th and to repair the speedometer would cost me $500 with parts and labor. I told him I was unhappy about the cost, not extending the warranty by these few months, and that I felt it was poor customer relations on their part to a long-time consumer of GM vehicles. I reminded him of the fact that I had reported an intermittent problem but nothing was ever recorded nor found (by Connell-Killeen and Connell-Copperas Cove or Patriot-Killeen

dealerships). Since the special extended warrant had expired in March, and we had not experienced any outright visible problems until July, I really thought that GM would simply extend this time to cover the problem. We have very low mileage (22,300) and obviously Chevrolet had already recognized that the dash panel was defective by issuing the extended 7 year warranty. Since this was not presented as a recall, we did not take the truck in to have the panel replaced. Nor did we do anything with the extended warranty, since we had never had any known problems with the dash, until the erratic behavior of the speedometer in July.

I called the 1-800 number listed in the extended warranty letter at 10 a.m. that same day because I was so unhappy with the dealership and how GM was handling the problem. Jeremy talked with me and, later, with my husband. We both told him about the problem we were having with the repair of the speedometer, the unsatisfactory customer relations, and that we have purchased top-of-the-line Chevrolet/Pontiac vehicles since the 1970's. In fact, 12 new GM vehicles, starting in 1978 up through 2009. We would certainly have purchased another new truck, but Chevrolet quit producing the quadra-steer and we are extremely pleased with that option, so we have simply maintained the one which we have currently. People think it is a new truck because it is so clean and are surprised when they discover it is a 2003.

When we were contacted on July 19, 2010 at 10:50 a.m., we were disappointed that GM management and the dealership only offered to replace the instrument panel free of charge while we were expected to pay for the labor. To tell you the truth, that was what I was expecting to be offered on July 16th and I "might" have considered it at that time. Now, after the hassle and the trips to the dealership plus the telephone calls, I am expecting GM to stand behind its product – especially when you were aware of the potential defect.

We have been loyal customers and firmly believe in the policy of "buy American". We have influenced many other people to purchase GM vehicles, and we have talked about the excellent quality of your vehicles and products. Please don't let us down after all these years.

Sincerely,

[redacted]

Harker Heights, TX [redacted]

[redacted]

Chevrolet
P.O. Box 909989
Milwaukee, WI 53209-9989

[redacted]

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HARKER HTS, TX [redacted]

Dear [redacted]

As the owner of a 2003 model year Chevrolet Silverado, your satisfaction with our product is very important to us.

This letter is intended to make you aware that your vehicle could develop a condition where one or more of the instrument panel gauge needles may stick, flutter, or become inoperative. This may cause inaccurate readings, including the speedometer and the fuel gauge.

Do not take your vehicle to your GM dealer as a result of this letter unless you believe that your vehicle has this condition.

What We Have Done: General Motors is providing owners with a special coverage that extends the warranty on the instrument panel cluster for the condition described above. If this condition occurs on your 2003 model year Chevrolet Silverado within 7 years of the date your vehicle was originally placed in service or 70,000 miles, whichever occurs first, the condition will be repaired for you at no charge.

What You Should Do: Repairs and adjustments qualifying under this special coverage must be performed by a General Motors dealer. If you believe your vehicle has this condition, contact your Chevrolet dealer to schedule an appointment at a time that is convenient for you. Your dealer will inspect the vehicle and if the condition is found, your dealer will replace the instrument panel cluster. When calling your dealer, please have your 17-character vehicle identification number (VIN) handy so your dealer can ensure the cluster will be available on your appointment date, if needed. Keep this letter with your other important glove box literature for future reference.

Reimbursement: The enclosed form explains what reimbursement is available and how to request reimbursement if you have paid for repairs for the special coverage condition.

If you have any questions or need any assistance, just contact your dealer or the Chevrolet Customer Assistance Center between the hours of 8:00 AM and 11:00 PM, EST, Monday through Friday. They can be reached at 1.800.630.2438. The deaf, hearing impaired, or speech impaired should call Text Telephone (TTY) 1.800.833.2438.

We are sorry for any inconvenience you may experience; however we have taken this action in the interest of your continued satisfaction with our products.

Scott Lawson
General Director,
Customer and Relationship Services

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Harker Hts, TX [redacted]

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U.S. Dept of Transportation
National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
Office of Defects Investigation NVS-210
1200 New Jersey Ave., SE.
West Building
Washington, D.C. 20590