



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

1200 New Jersey Avenue SE.  
Washington, DC 20590

August 25, 2011

The Honorable Bernard Sanders  
United States Senator  
1 Church Street, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor  
Burlington, VT 05401

NVS-216 et  
Ref. No. 10411388

Dear Senator Sanders:

Thank you for your correspondence on behalf of your constituent, [REDACTED]. [REDACTED] wrote your office concerning her model year (MY) 2002 Isuzu Rodeo vehicle.

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) is the Federal agency responsible for improving safety on our Nation's highways. We are authorized to order manufacturers to recall and repair vehicles or motor vehicle equipment when our investigations indicate that they contain 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, we look carefully at the body of consumer complaints and other available data to determine whether a defect may exist. We cannot act on isolated problems or resolve disputes between individual owners, dealers, or manufacturers.

We appreciate the report you provided on behalf of [REDACTED]. Reports from motorists are a very important source of information for us. [REDACTED] indicates that a dealer inspected her MY 2002 Isuzu Rodeo for excessive corrosion of the rear suspension lower link brackets, which is the safety defect identified in NHTSA Safety Recall Campaign No. 10V-436 (summary enclosed). [REDACTED] is dissatisfied with Isuzu's decision and to tow her vehicle to another service center for repairs based on the determination that it is unsafe.

A staff member of NHTSA's Office of Defects Investigation (ODI) attempted to contact [REDACTED] on August 3 and August 8 to obtain additional information and have been unable to reach her. ODI also contacted Isuzu to obtain more information about the recall status of [REDACTED] vehicle. They were unable to assist us without a vehicle identification number. You stated that your office has received requests for assistance from other constituents that own vehicles affected by the recall. They have concerns about vehicles with entire frame corrosion, rental vehicle allowances, and repurchase offer amounts.

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The recall instructs dealers to visually inspect the vehicle's rear suspension lower link bracket for corrosion. If excessive corrosion has damaged the rear suspension lower link bracket, the vehicle operator may experience poor handling and could potentially cause a crash. Cases where the lower link bracket is separated from the vehicle's frame, a reinforcement bracket will be installed. For vehicles with little or no corrosion in that area the dealer will treat the area with an anti-corrosion compound to reduce the likelihood of additional corrosion in the future. NHTSA has not identified an unreasonable safety risk that suggests that the scope of the recall remedy be expanded to include overall frame corrosion in MY 1998 through MY 2002 Isuzu Rodeo and Honda Passport vehicles at this time. We will continue to monitor this problem and take the appropriate action if necessary.

In the rare event that a reinforcement bracket cannot be installed or would not satisfactorily remedy the excessive corrosion in the area of the rear suspension lower link bracket, Isuzu may offer to repurchase the vehicle at the Kelly Blue Book value. The actual price will vary, depending on the model year of the vehicle, its mileage, trim level, and overall condition, (unrelated to any corrosion that may exist in the area of the rear suspension lower link brackets) less a reasonable allowance for depreciation.

The Federal Government cannot reimburse vehicle owners for any costs associated with safety recalls or assist vehicle owners in obtaining reimbursements for costs associated with an alleged defect. We suggest that [REDACTED] and your constituents continue to work with Isuzu and Honda regarding the repurchase offer amounts, rental car allowances, the recall remedy and frame repairs.

I hope this information is helpful. If you have any questions, please contact me or Mr. Claude H. Harris, Acting Associate Administrator for Enforcement, at (202) 366-3217.

Sincerely yours,



Chan D. Lieu  
Director, Governmental Affairs,  
Policy and Strategic Planning

Enclosure

cc: Washington Office