

JUL - 5 2011

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Auto Safety Hotline at 1-888-327-4236 (1-888-DASH-2-DOT). Written correspondence should be addressed to the Associate Administrator for Safety Assurance NSA-10, NHTSA HQ, 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE., Washington, DC 20590

Re: Sudden Uncontrolled Acceleration 2003 Toyota Corolla 4D EEL VIN No. JTDBR38E132 [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Slayton MN [REDACTED]

I was traveling north on 169 June 20, 2011 at the posted speed limit, when the sign indicated a reduced speed zone ahead. The radio and CD player were off and I never use the cell phone while driving. I reduced my speed to the posted limit by pressing down on the cruise control so that when I got to the new speed limit I was traveling at the new posted speed at any time there was a change in the speed limit. There were trucks in the right lane ahead of me, so I moved over to use the left lane. It was rainy. I was approaching the "Prepare to stop when lights are flashing" sign before the intersection of Webster and Minnesota 169 when the yellow lights began to flash. My foot was not on the gas because I was using the cruise control. I checked around me and then I began my stop. I was aware that when I began to brake I had plenty of time to do a safe stop but as I tried to brake, the car was moving faster than it should be. I was aware of a very loud noise. I had to press harder and harder on the brake. I like coming to a controlled stop with a gradual slow down and not a sudden stop but instead of slowing down the car was not slowing down normally. It felt like the car suddenly was trying to go faster and it was resisting the stop. I was pushing harder and harder on the brake as the sound around me grew louder. I could feel and hear the ABS working. The ABS sounded like a high pitch noise and very fast pulsing. I don't generally have to use a hard brake so I noted the ABS mentally. I came to a complete stop before going through the intersection of Webster and MN 169 which had a red light now but the engine was roaring. I shifted down to 1 and/or 2 and the car shuddered; I tried to shift up to Park but as I got to R (reverse) the car tried to buck back so I put it in Neutral and turned off the car. The car was silent but I kept my foot firmly on the brake. I looked over to the car in the right lane which is to my right. The woman in the car was looking at me obviously alarmed with her eyes very large and her mouth open. I put my emergency lights on but I remained seated in the car because it doesn't seem safe for me to get out. The light turned green and the traffic proceeded around me. I turned on the engine in neutral to test the car and it sounded normal. There was no traffic in front, behind or beside me in any lane going north or turning into my path so I put the car into Drive. The car was acting normally. The traffic on Webster still had a red light so I drove across the intersection onto the right shoulder. I think I put the car from Drive to Neutral to listen to it. I began to drive when there was no traffic around and the car continued to act normally. I stayed about 10 miles below the posted limit at that point. I tried to keep more than ample space between me and any car in front of me, when I was passed by other cars. The car acted well although I did not use the cruise control at all at this point. I stopped at the Food Coop in St. Peter to call

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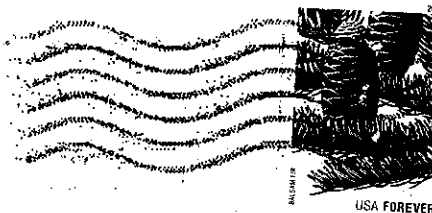
the dealership. I tried to describe the problem as clearly and precisely as I could. I was abruptly interrupted when I stated that I had been using my cruise control and I was told that this problem has nothing to do with cruise control. I was trying to meticulously focus on and describe each and every detail that led up to the uncontrolled racing of the engine when I was interrupted. This made it difficult to describe any clues that led up to this incident. I was told to go check the car floor mats immediately. It was raining really hard so I put the cell in my pocket and when I got to the car I asked the group of people in the car next to me to verify that the pad was in place and asked them to note that it was hooked. I found out later that June 19, 2011, the night before I left Slayton MN to travel to Minneapolis, my spouse [REDACTED] [REDACTED] had noted that the driver floor mat was in the proper place and hooked when he cleaned the inside and outside of all the windows. I wanted to be focused in case the event occurred again so I took a break to use the bathroom, buy some coffee (for when I got to the dealership), call my spouse to tell him a few details about what happened and my intent to go to the dealership. The car started and drove normally. I drove with lots of space between me and the car ahead, but slightly below the speed limit. I did not use the cruise control. The dealership did a routine car check and checked the gas pedal controls. I asked for an agreement that they were going to notify and work with their corporate head quarters to solve this problem but they would not put this in writing. I paid the bill for the checks they did. The dealer manager indicated that the Toyota Company has always determined that the source of this problem was the driver side floor mat, and driver error, although he stated he was not saying that I had made any driver errors. I have been driving for 42 years and the conclusion I make is that the source of the problem has not been identified or fixed.

[REDACTED] dated 6-25-11

[REDACTED]
Slayton MN [REDACTED]

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Associate Administrator for Safety Assurance
NSA-10, NHTSA HQ
1200 New Jersey S.E.
Washington DC 20590

