



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

1200 New Jersey Avenue SE.
Washington, DC 20590

September 29, 2011

The Honorable Timothy J. Walz
Member, U.S. House of Representatives
227 East Main Street, Suite 220
Mankato, MN 56001

NVS-216 nlm
Ref. No. 10420272

Dear Congressman Walz:

Thank you for your correspondence on behalf of your constituent, [REDACTED]. [REDACTED] wrote your office concerning her model year (MY) 2003 Toyota Corolla 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 items of motor vehicle equipment when our investigations indicate that they contain safety defects in their design, construction, or performance. We cannot act on isolated problems or resolve disputes between individual owners, dealers, or manufacturers.

[REDACTED] indicated that she experienced an unintended acceleration event in her MY 2003 Toyota Corolla vehicle. The incident occurred when she attempted to reduce her vehicle's speed with the cruise control engaged after applying the brake. She explained that her vehicle began to accelerate, forcing her to apply the brakes hard enough to activate the antilock brake system. When the vehicle stopped, the engine was roaring so she shifted to neutral and shut the vehicle off. She stated not having a problem after that incident and disagrees with a dealer's assertion that the unintended acceleration was caused by the driver's side floor mat or driver error.

[REDACTED] took appropriate action during the incident by:

- Braking firmly and steadily – not pumping the brake pedal;
- Shifting the transmission into neutral;
- Steering to a safe location;
- Shutting the engine off; and
- Calling her dealer or repair shop to report the incident.

We have reviewed our database in an effort to identify whether a safety defect trend exists with regard to unintended acceleration problems in MY 2003 Toyota Corolla vehicles. At this time, there is insufficient evidence to warrant opening a safety defect investigation. The information you provided has been entered into our database. It will be considered with future reports to identify any safety defect trends that may require our attention.

Page 2

The Honorable Timothy J. Walz

In addition, [REDACTED] vehicle is not included in Toyota's recalls to address unintended acceleration. The MY 2003 Toyota Corolla was not produced with a CTS accelerator pedal, which is the type of pedal involved in the recall campaign. Furthermore, NHTSA has not identified a safety risk with floor mat pedal entrapment in the MY 2003 Toyota Corollas.

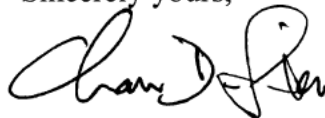
In February 2011, the U.S. Department of Transportation released results from an unprecedented 10-month study of potential causes of unintended acceleration in Toyota vehicles. NHTSA launched the study in the spring of 2010, at the request of Congress, and enlisted National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) engineers with expertise in areas such as computer controlled electronic systems, electromagnetic interference and software integrity. NASA researched whether electronic systems or electromagnetic interference played a role in incidents of unintended acceleration.

NASA engineers found no electronic flaws in Toyota vehicles capable of producing the large throttle openings required to create dangerous high-speed unintended acceleration incidents. The two mechanical safety defects NHTSA identified more than a year ago – “sticking” accelerator pedals and design flaws that enable accelerator pedals to become trapped – remain the only known vehicle based causes for these kinds of unsafe unintended acceleration incidents.

The agency's response to uncontrolled acceleration can be reviewed in our Executive Summary and Full Report for the NHTSA-National Aeronautics and Space Administration investigation on unintended acceleration in Toyota vehicles online at <http://www.nhtsa.dot.gov/ua>.

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,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Chan D. Lieu".

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

cc: Washington Office