



U.S. Department
of Transportation

National Highway
Traffic Safety
Administration

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

1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

May 14, 2013

The Honorable Charles E. Grassley
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

NVS-216 nam
Ref. No. 10505072

Dear Senator Grassley:

Thank you for your correspondence on behalf of your constituent, [REDACTED]
concerning his wife's model year (MY) 2011 Ford Focus 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 motor 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 trend may exist. We do not have authority to act on isolated problems or resolve disputes between individual owners, dealers, or manufacturers.

[REDACTED] indicated his wife's MY 2011 Ford Focus was equipped with Hankook Optimo H725 tires (size P195/60R15). He also stated at approximately 42,000 miles, the left front tire began to wobble because it was out-of-round. A mechanic rotated and balanced the tires but shortly afterwards both front tires began to wobble. [REDACTED] mechanic indicated the tires had adequate tread depth but the internal radial steel reinforcement belts failed and caused the out-of-round condition in the tires. [REDACTED] feels there was a manufacturing and/or design flaw with the Hankook tires on his wife's vehicle. He replaced them with a set of Michelin tires. He has retained the Hankook tires and contacted NHTSA and Ford to offer the tires for examination. Also, [REDACTED] believes NHTSA should consider a mandatory recall of Hankook tires equipped on MY 2011 Ford Focus vehicles.

We have reviewed our database in an effort to identify whether a safety defect trend exists with regard to Hankook Optimo H725 tires (size P195/60R15) installed on MY 2011 Ford Focus vehicles. At this time, there is insufficient evidence to warrant opening a safety defect investigation or to initiate a recall. Also, NHTSA's Office of Defects Investigation respectfully declines [REDACTED] offer to examine his Hankook tires at this time.

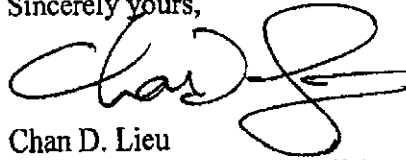
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The information provided has been entered into our database. It will be considered with future reports to identify any safety defect trends that may require our attention. For [REDACTED] information we enclose a brochure explaining the NHTSA investigation and recall process which is also on our web site at www-odi.nhtsa.dot.gov/recalls/recallprocess.cfm. We recommend that [REDACTED] contact Ford, his local dealer, or a Hankook tire retail center for further assistance.

I hope this information is helpful. If you have any questions, please contact me or Ms. Nancy L. Lewis, Associate Administrator for Enforcement, at (202) 366-3217.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Chan D. Lieu", with a stylized flourish extending to the right.

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

Enclosure