

CL-10508025-3472

April 1, 2013

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

APR - 8 2013

To: USDOT  
NHTSA  
Office of Defect Investigation (NVS-210)  
1200 New Jersey Ave. S.E.  
West BLDG.  
Washington, D.C. 20590

From: [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
Maumee, Ohio [REDACTED]

Re: Defective Pinch Sensors sliding and rear doors in 2013 Chrysler Town and Country  
Limited Model  
Leased March 23, 2014  
120 miles at time of incident (61 on vehicle when leased)  
200 miles this date  
vin# 2C4RC1GG5DR [REDACTED]  
Reference# this complaint called in: 52435

The attached copy of a letter to Chrysler Grp LLC details the incident and attempts to repair and resolve the defects with the Dealer so far.

Briefly, the dog was almost crushed by the sliding door the day after I had leased the vehicle. The salesperson said the door would stop. This was not true as I later learned when the service manager tested it. Though it will stop with push back force, a limb or small person would be crushed.

The service manager determined that all other vehicles on the lot function the same ways. So it appears that this is not an isolated defect with my car.

The liftgate also requires increasing force to stop as it lowers and I could not stop it when it is within a foot or so of closing.

The attached letter describes this more completely.

Kindly note this issue in your database and consider further investigation if, as may be, this malfunction involves a number of vehicles.

Thank-you for your consideration in this regard.

[REDACTED]

NM  
41113  
SMD

March 31, 2013

To: Chrysler Group, LLC  
Customer Care  
P.O. Box 21-8004  
Auburn Hills, Mi 48321-8007

From:

[REDACTED]  
Maumee, Ohio [REDACTED]

cc: Charlie's Dodge  
775 Illinois Ave  
Maumee, Oh 43537

Re:  
Case# 23263512

Defective pinch sensors automatic sliding doors and lift door 2013 Town and Country

On Sunday, March 24, 2013, one day after I leased the vehicle, my dog tried to jump out as the sliding door was closing. I yelled "back" while leaning forward to block her. She hesitated, then retreated, backing up, as did I, in time to avoid being hit by the closing door.

I called the salesperson to who assured that the door would have stopped. This was not the case.

On March 23, 2013 I asked the service manager to check the function of the sliding doors to test the stop and retract function. He did so by placing his hand against the door to block closure, pressed the automatic close button, and continued to press his hand against the door as it slid the entire toward the frame. It neither stopped nor retracted causing him to retract his hand inches before the door closed and latched. He repeated this several times and each time the sensors failed to stop and retract the door but continued to slide to inches before closing and latching against the frame. Each time he removed his hand inches from closure.

The door will stop and retract, but requires firm push back. A small dog or limb caught in this would be crushed.

I told the sales person and asked that the dealer accept return or exchange of the car. (

She, two sales managers and a co-owner said I would have to keep the car for at least two weeks and until after it had been titled. Though I might be able to trade after that, it would be at a significant loss to me of at least \$5,000.

I was encouraged to drive the vehicle in the meantime to "become comfortable" with it.

The sales staff present, salesperson and manager as well as a co owner said the sliding doors were safe and "no one had ever been injured in a minivan sliding door."

This was not true. There have been injuries and at least one death. Recently an owner attempted to remove a lawn chair blocking a door and it crushed both the chair and his arm. A toddler's hand was smashed. Earlier a child was killed when the door of another brand crushed his head

An article regarding the safety of sliding door systems states they "are safe as they retract upon merely sensing an obstacle and that the NHTSA requires this.

Later that day, I called another sales manager who said the door stops and retracts immediately with a light touch and he that had demonstrated the feature with just a "pinky". He recommended that I schedule a service appointment as mine must be defective.

When I called the service manager, he first checked other cars on the lot and determined that they functioned the as mine did. Concluding it was was not an isolated defect of my car which could be adjusted, he did not schedule another appointment.

I called the sales manager back, left a message and asked the salesperson to report the problem to Chrysler. She said to drive the car and come in the middle of next week. Perhaps after it was looked at again, the dealership would report it.

The NHTSA recalled come Dodge Caravans 2012 for a lift gate malfunctions.

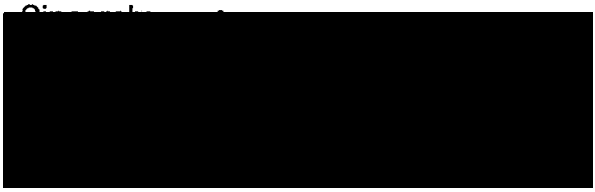
The amount of force necessary to stop mine as it lowers increases as it descends such I could not stop it within about one foot of closure. There is more than one reported head injury.

At age 70, with impaired balance, fragile bones, conditions common at this age, it is possible, if not likely, there may be times I might need to suddenly grab the door frame, door or lift gate frame to stop or break a fall even if it were already closing. I might lean on a frame to steady myself or for leverage when loading or unloading and/or in slippery conditions and when the system may already be in the process of closing or might need to hold a door or frame and/or in doing so could also inadvertently press the closure button even if the door was not already closing. Someone could be sitting with legs extended and not realize that they or someone else had accidentally leaned against a button and not notice before it was too late.

This is a brand new car and it seems an exchange or a non defective vehicle or return is best for my safety.

If this is neither possible nor likely to occur soon, I ask that Chrysler authorize return of the vehicle with cancellation of the lease contract at no cost to me in order that I may obtain another vehicle.

Thank-you for your kind consideration in this regard.

Sincerely,  


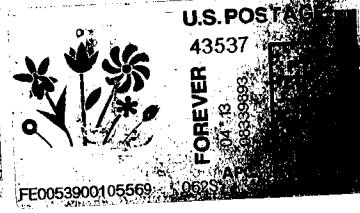
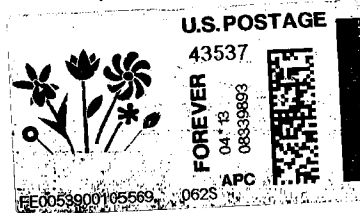
Sincerely,

[Redacted]

Maumee, Oh

[Redacted]

[Redacted]  
McCombs, Or [Redacted]



NHSTA- Office of Defects Investigation  
(NUS-210)  
1200 New Jersey Ave, S.E.  
West Bldg.  
Washington, D.C. 20590

