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INFORMATION ACT (FOIA), 5 U.S.C . 552(B)(6)

U.S. Department  
of Transportation

**National Highway  
Traffic Safety  
Administration**

1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE  
Washington, DC 20590

April 6, 2017

[REDACTED]  
Temple, TX [REDACTED]

NEF-109 nam  
Ref. No. 10548964

Dear [REDACTED]

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's (NHTSA), Office of Defects Investigation appreciates the report you provided concerning your model year 2003 Mercury Mountaineer. Last year our office received an unprecedented increase in the number of correspondence due to the Takata air bag recalls. Our limited resources were overwhelmed and we are now just getting to your letter. We regret any inconvenience this delay may have caused you.

You can be assured that your complaint has been reviewed and will be considered along with other complaints for future defect investigations and to identify safety-related defect trends. If you feel the vehicle issue you experienced still poses a safety risk and has not been resolved by the manufacturer or dealer; we would appreciate an updated report of your problem. If you send another letter, please indicate that you sent your original complaint to NHTSA in 2016, to ensure we expedite our review and send an appropriate response if warranted. Our technical experts review each and every call, letter, and online report of an alleged safety problem filed with NHTSA. Although we have no jurisdiction over defects that are not safety-related, we do review each report that suggests a potential safety defect involving groups of motor vehicles or vehicle equipment. There is no established number of reports that must be filed before NHTSA investigates an issue.

If your letter requests general information about a motor vehicle or motor vehicle equipment, we recommend that you visit our Internet website at [www.safercar.gov](http://www.safercar.gov). This site provides information concerning motor vehicle recalls, manufacturers' service bulletins, complaints from vehicle owners, etc. Most decisions to conduct a recall and remedy a safety defect are made voluntarily by manufacturers prior to any involvement by NHTSA. Manufacturers are required to fix the problem by repairing it, replacing it, offering a refund, or in rare cases repurchasing the vehicle. In some cases, an investigator from the Office of Defects Investigation may call to clarify information from your report. Unfortunately, the large volume of reports received by the Agency does not permit a return call for each report filed.

We enclosed a brochure explaining NHTSA's investigation and recall process, which is also on our website at [www-odi.nhtsa.dot.gov/recalls/recallprocess.cfm](http://www-odi.nhtsa.dot.gov/recalls/recallprocess.cfm). Using our vehicle identification number (VIN) lookup tool, you can access recall information provided by the

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manufacturer conducting the recall which may be not posted yet on NHTSA's site ([www.nhtsa.gov/recalls](http://www.nhtsa.gov/recalls)). We entered the VIN you provided and no open recalls were found for your vehicle at this time. Please note that vehicle issues concerning warranty, maintenance, dealer customer service, and reimbursement claims do not fall under NHTSA's jurisdiction. You may consider contacting your local Consumer Protection Agency, Better Business Bureau, Federal Trade Commission, or the Office of Attorney General in your State for assistance regarding these matters.

Sincerely,



Randy Reid, Chief  
Correspondence Research Division  
Office of Defects Investigation  
Enforcement

Enclosure