


Butte City CA 

DEC 10 2014

24 November 2014

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
Washington, D. C.

Subject: Dangerous Driver Side Air Bags

Ladies and Gentlemen:

I note with interest the current recalls you have requested for air bag explosions with metal fragments. I wish to tell you about an air bag explosion that has crippled my wife, bringing her close to a paraplegic. Her hands are near useless and there appears to be little that can be accomplished for her.

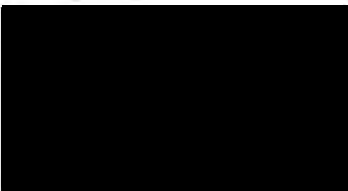
It all started in 2012 when the two of us were driving our 2010 Dodge Grand Caravan along a four lane street in Yuba City, California.  was driving at 25 mph, I was seated alongside her. We were both wearing our seat and shoulder belts. A vehicle came from in front of a parked UPS delivery truck directly into our path. Our van was totaled.

Both our air bags deployed. I am well over 6' in height, had my seat all the way back and the seat tilted slightly back. Fortunately for me, the air bag never touched me and I never had a bruise nor an injury of any type.

Unfortunately, my wife  is of short stature and sits with her seat elevated and forward. The airbag hit her with such force, she was unconscious for 20 minutes or more, the dodge insignia from the center of the steering wheel permanently imprinted on her stomach and she has been increasing in nerve damage from spinal injuries caused by the air bag and resulting whiplash.

In short, there should be an option for drivers to disable the steering wheel air bag. In my opinion and from personal experience, it is far more dangerous than no airbag at all when it comes to those drivers of shorter stature. It should be a driver, not government option whether a steering wheel airbag is utilized.

This being a Federal Mandate, I urge you to check into accidents and see how many limited stature drivers would be better served with no airbag. If, as I suspect, they are extraordinarily dangerous, you should encourage The Congress to modify your law accordingly.



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