

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

VQ-10683333-5662

[REDACTED]
Glastonbury, CT
December 6, 2014

National Transportation Safety Board
490 L'Enfant Plaza, S.W.
Washington, DC 20594

I am deeply concerned that your investigation of air bag explosions does not include cars manufactured before the year 2000. Case in point: Our son who lives in Brooklyn, NY drives a 1995 Mazda 6, which we sold to him in 2008 when we purchased a 2008 Mazda 6. On July 22, 2014, while on a return trip to Brooklyn from Connecticut, heading west into Waterbury, CT in the middle lane of I-84, both air bags spontaneously exploded, filling the front of the car with smoke and flying shrapnel in addition to the deflated material from the bag itself. The incident reduced his view of this busy highway to zero. He could easily have been killed, or at least severely injured but, fortunately, three things saved him: He is very tall so he was not sitting close to the steering wheel; the shrapnel flew forward and smashed his windshield instead of his face; and he had a front seat passenger, who was able, by opening the window wide for visibility, to steer him safely through the traffic in the right lane and off onto the shoulder. By some miracle, his only injury was a burned hand.

This double air bag explosion was not the result of a collision of any kind, not even a pot hole or rough road. It was completely spontaneous. This occurred before all the publicity about air bags hit the news outlets and neither he nor we had ever heard of such an occurrence. He needed his car back in driveable condition in a hurry so, not knowing what else to do, we recommended that he take it to our local garage that had been servicing it ever since we bought it. They, too, had never encountered this problem before, but they installed some used air bags and directed him to a business that replaced his windshield. It was all rather costly. Unfortunately, the garage did not keep any record of the air bag manufacturer nor of the replacement bags, so we have no proof that the faulty ones were made by Takata. However, in view of what has been happening since all over the country, it seems reasonable to assume that they were Takata bags. Now everyone in our family is nervous about driving. My daughter-in-law and I are both quite short so we sit close to the steering wheel.

With no evidence to produce, we could never prove that Takata was the cause of this mishap, but it seems as if the car manufacturers should be held accountable for installing life-threatening equipment in their cars. This seems like a legitimate cause for a class-action suit. The dealers are telling car owners that there is nothing they can do about the situation. They're claiming that they don't even know what company made the air bags in the customers' cars. I'm sure that information could be traced by using the VIN on each car, if they wished to. The VIN for my son's Mazda is 1 YVGE 22 C9 S5 [REDACTED]

We would appreciate any comments you might have on this problem. Thank you.

Sincerely,
[REDACTED]

cc: Senator Richard Blumenthal