

NHTSA ccmMercury Routing Slip



CL-11160831-1610

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

Printed: 1/28/2019

NHTSA #: ES19-000145	Rec'd Date: 1/28/2019	Referred By: NAD-200
XREF #:	Doc Type: CNG	Doc Date: 1/28/2019
Delivery: EML	Address To:	Due Date: 2/25/2019
S10 #:	DOT/I #:	RMP #:
Subject: EMAIL FROM SENATOR SHAHEEN ON BEHALF OF HER CONSTITUENT [REDACTED] REGARDING GENERAL MOTORS BRAKE LINE RECALL		
Ack Date:	Ack By:	Signed For:
Sign Office: DIRECTOR, GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS	Signature: BRIAN BARNARD	
Cleared Date:	Cleared By:	Cleared For:
File Loc:	XREF File:	Closed Date:
Added By: RBRANSOM x63756	Modified By: Rhonda.Bransom	
Most Recent Comment:		

Author:

THE HONORABLE JEANNE SHAHEEN
UNITED STATES SENATE
2 WALL STREET, SUITE 220
MANCHESTER, NH 03101
Tel: Fax: E-mail:

Assigned To	Task	Asgn Date	Deadline	Returned Date
NEF-010	REPLY	1/28/2019	2/18/2019	
NGA-010	SIGN	1/28/2019		
NCC-010	CONCUR	1/28/2019		

U.S. Senator Jeanne Shaheen
New Hampshire

2 Wall Street, Suite 220
Manchester, N.H. 03101
(603) 647-7500
Fax: (603) 647-9352

506 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510
(202) 224-2841
Fax: (202) 228-3194

www.shaheen.senate.gov



COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS

FOREIGN RELATIONS

APPROPRIATIONS

ARMED SERVICES

SMALL BUSINESS AND
ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Privacy Release Form

The Privacy Act of 1974 requires written consent from the constituent before information can be obtained from a government agency's records. To better serve you, please complete this form entirely and return it to me. If you are enquiring on behalf of someone else, that person must sign this form. Please be advised that all information you provide on this form will be held in the strictest confidence by my office and will not be used for any other purpose other than your case.

Full Name: [REDACTED]

Address: [REDACTED]

City: Merrimack State: NH Zip code: [REDACTED]

Social Security Number: [REDACTED] Date of Birth: 1 / 1

Home Phone: [REDACTED]

Cell Phone: [REDACTED] Email Address: [REDACTED]

I prefer to be contacted by: Home Phone Work Phone Cell Phone Email

Federal Agencies Involved NHTSA

Have you, or a family member, ever served in the military?

Have you contacted other Congressional or Senate offices about this issue? Yes No

If yes, whom have you contacted? Sen Hassen

I authorize Senator Shaheen's office to communicate information about my case with the following individual (s) -lawyer- family member -friend:

I freely and willingly authorize Senator Shaheen and her staff to make inquiries into my personal records, and/or files to obtain information about me pertaining to my request for assistance. I understand that I may revoke this authorization at any time.

Signature: [REDACTED]

Date 12/21/18

Return this form and send it to:
2 Wall Street, Suite 220, Manchester, NH 03101 or fax to (603) 647-9352

ES19-000145

Please briefly explain your problem. In writing, provide a detailed account. Include any additional relevant correspondence that you have initiated or received concerning this matter.

Please see my email regarding NHTSA's handling of Gen. Motors brake line non-recall. Email was sent ~12/12/18. (Copy enclosed)

Please state how you would like Senator Shaheen to help you.

Please do whatever necessary to hold NHTSA and GM accountable, if not to issue a recall then at least to notify affected owners of the vehicles in question.

Military or Veteran's Issues

Rank _____ Unit _____ Duty Station _____
Veterans Case Number _____

Medicare Issues

I am having problems with: Part A Part B Part D
Medicare Number _____

Social Security Issues

Type of Claim Filed _____
Has the claim been denied? Yes No Office you are dealing with _____

Immigration Issues

Receipt Number _____ Name of Beneficiary _____
Alien Number A- _____ Date of Birth _____ Place of Birth _____
Type of Petition _____ Consulate Involved _____
Current Immigration Status _____

Please print and sign this form and send it to:

2 Wall Street, Suite 220, Manchester, NH 03101 or fax to (603) 647-9352

Re: "G.M. Resists Recalling Trucks Over Brake Lines", NY Times, July 7, 2014

This is to address a determination previously made by NHTSA. Of concern to me are NHTSA's failure to notify, and GM's use of weasel words to shirk responsibility.

In spite of my 2003 Chevy Suburban passing New Hampshire's mandatory safety inspection in May of 2018, in August of 2018 a hydraulic brake line burst, resulting in loss of brake function. The line burst at a point below the driver's door and just forward of the ABS modulator, where the lines cross over the top of the frame and are exposed to wheel spray. At the point of failure, the lines are overlaid and obscured by a large bundle of electric wires. The attached photo shows the failure point, with the sheathed wire bundle moved up out of the way. The mileage at the time was approximately 167500.

With regard to the NHTSA determination NOT to recall "almost 1.8 million full-size pickup trucks and sport utility vehicles from the 1999 to 2003 model years for corrosion-related brake failures", as summarized in the 7/7/14 NY Times article, does NHTSA's decision to absolve GM of responsibility on this issue also absolve NHTSA and/or GM of responsibility to NOTIFY owners that they are in grave danger if they are still operating their vehicles with the original brake lines? NHTSA should know from their own records that a large number of these vehicles are still on the road. I know because I see them every day.

As for GM's excuses:

- "G.M. has resisted recalling the pickups and sport utility vehicles, telling regulators that rusted brake lines are a routine maintenance issue."
 - Brake lines are not a moving part. How are they "maintained"?
 - A complete electronic search of the 516 page owner's manual* yielded a single, very tepid mention of any need for brake line inspection, with nothing about corrosion or maintenance: "Inspect the complete system. Inspect brake lines and hoses for proper hook-up, binding, leaks, cracks, chafing, etc." (Page 6-15). Furthermore, inspection of the rear brake line running several feet from the ABS unit to the rear axle is IMPOSSIBLE due to its location above the frame, where it is boxed in by the chassis, frame and fuel tank.
- "In addition, the automaker says, the vehicles have dual brake lines, so "the affected vehicle would be capable of stopping.""
 - Stopping, no doubt, just in the nick of TOO LATE! Stopping at an intersection? You will be in the intersection before you stop. In traffic? You will be exchanging pleasantries and insurance info with the driver in front. And god forbid your brakes fail when a child runs in front of you! Fortunately (incredibly!) in my case, the failure occurred in my driveway.
- "In a statement this year about the issue, the company said that rusted brake lines were an industrywide problem."
 - GM no longer uses brake lines like the ones in these vehicles. If those brake lines were adequate why were they changed in subsequent years?

Bransom, Rhonda (NHTSA)

From: website@shaheen.senate.gov
Sent: Wednesday, December 12, 2018 4:44 PM
To: webmail@shaheen-iq.senate.gov
Subject: Contact Request

<IP>72.64.8.83</IP>
<APP>SCCMail
<FIRST> [REDACTED] </FIRST>
<LAST> [REDACTED] </LAST>
<ADDR1> [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] CITY>
<STATE>NH</STATE>
<ZIP> [REDACTED] /ZIP>
<PHONE> [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] </EMAIL>
<ISSUE>TRN</ISSUE>
<MSG>Re: "G.M. Resists Recalling Trucks Over Brake Lines", NY Times, July 7, 2014

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With regard to the NHTSA determination NOT to recall "almost 1.8 million full-size pickup trucks and sport utility vehicles from the 1999 to 2003 model years for corrosion-related brake failures", as summarized in the 7/7/14 NY Times article, does NHTSA's decision to absolve GM of responsibility on this issue also absolve NHTSA and/or GM of responsibility to NOTIFY owners that they are in grave danger if they are still operating their vehicles with the original brake lines? NHTSA should know from their own records that a large number of these vehicles are still on the road. I know because I see them every day.

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• "In a statement this year about the issue, the company said that rusted brake lines were an industrywide problem."

o GM no longer uses brake lines like the ones in these vehicles. If those brake lines were adequate why were they changed in subsequent years?

• ""Brake line wear on vehicles is a maintenance issue that affects the auto industry, not just General Motors," the company said." (Emphasis mine.)

o "Brake line wear"??? Again, brake lines are not moving parts! My brake lines did not wear out. They corroded because they were made with inferior grade metal.

o "Everyone does it" has never been an acceptable excuse. It should not be accepted here.

I replaced all my brake lines with stainless steel lines costing \$105 for the complete set (today's cost), which is less than three tenths of one percent (0.3%) of the \$39,000 original list price of my vehicle in 2003. The added cost to GM to use stainless steel at the time of manufacture would, I assume, be a small fraction of that. I have the original brake lines, should anyone wish to see them.

I sent NHTSA as much of the above as they would allow (1900 characters). It was registered by them as Complaint Number 11160831.

* The 2003 Chevrolet Tahoe/Suburban Owner Manual </MSG> </APP>

Bransom, Rhonda (NHTSA)

From: Korkor, Julie (NHTSA)
Sent: Monday, January 28, 2019 2:09 PM
To: Bransom, Rhonda (NHTSA)
Subject: FW: Congressional Inquiry to be Forwarded
Attachments: [REDACTED]

Importance: High

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

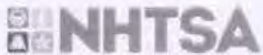
Rhonda,

Please control the attached and notify me when done.

Thanks,

Julie Korkor

Office of Executive Correspondence
U.S. Department of Transportation
National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590
202-366-5470 (office)
julie.korkor@dot.gov (email)



From: Caldwell, Megan (NHTSA)
Sent: Monday, January 28, 2019 12:35 PM
To: Korkor, Julie (NHTSA) <julie.korkor@dot.gov>
Cc: Barnard, Brian (NHTSA) <brian.barnard@dot.gov>
Subject: FW: Congressional Inquiry to be Forwarded
Importance: High

Hi Julie,

Please control!

Thank you,

Megan

From: Bergling, Julie (FMCSA)
Sent: Thursday, December 27, 2018 2:28 PM
To: Caldwell, Megan (NHTSA) <megan.caldwell@dot.gov>

Cc: Barnard, Brian (NHTSA) <brian.barnard@dot.gov>; Peters, Sara (NHTSA) <sara.peters@dot.gov>

Subject: FW: Congressional Inquiry to be Forwarded

Importance: High

Hi Megan,

Can you please handle this inquiry?

Thank you,

Julie

From: Jennings, Connor (Shaheen) <Connor_Jennings@shaheen.senate.gov>

Sent: Wednesday, December 26, 2018 10:58 AM

To: Bergling, Julie (FMCSA) <julie.bergling@dot.gov>

Subject: Congressional Inquiry to be Forwarded

Importance: High

Hi Julie,

Can you forward the attached release form and letter from [REDACTED] concerning the National Highway Transportation Safety Administration's handling of an issue he'd like addressed? He would like to report GM's response to the failure of brake lines on his pickup truck.

Thank you!

Connor

Connor Jennings

Special Assistant for Constituent Services

Office of US Senator Jeanne Shaheen

2 Wall Street, Suite 220

Manchester, New Hampshire 03101

Manchester T-TH: 603.647.7500

Dover M-W-F: 603.750.3004



sign up for
THE SHAHEEN REPORT

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