



U.S. Department of Transportation
**National Highway Traffic Safety
Administration**



March 12, 2021

[REDACTED]
Brentwood, TN [REDACTED]

NEF-109 tgd
Ref. No. 11388185

Dear [REDACTED]:

Thank you for the email about your model year (MY) 2011 Subaru Outback vehicle. Your email was forwarded to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's (NHTSA) Office of Defects Investigation. I am pleased to respond.

NHTSA is the Federal agency responsible for improving safety on our Nation's roadways. We are authorized to order manufacturers to recall and repair motor vehicles or motor vehicle equipment when our investigations indicate that they contain safety defects in their design, construction, or performance. We also monitor the completion rates and adequacy of manufacturers' recall campaigns.

We appreciate the report you provided. Reports from motorists are a very important source of information for NHTSA. We reviewed our database to identify whether a safety defect trend exists with the continuously variable transmission (CVT) in MY 2011 Subaru Outback vehicles. At this time, NHTSA has not identified sufficient evidence to support the opening of a safety defect investigation or the initiation of a recall. However, we added your email to your original report in NHTSA's database, where it will be used with other reports to identify any safety defect trends that may require our attention. You can learn more about NHTSA's investigation and recall process on our website at https://www.nhtsa.gov/sites/nhtsa.dot.gov/files/documents/mvdefectsandrecalls_808795.pdf

In addition, we are aware of Subaru's Special Coverage Program (Bulletin No. 16-107-17) that extends the warranty for the CVT to 10 years or 100,000 miles, whichever comes first. There are several Subaru models included in the special coverage program, like your MY 2011 Outback. However, you reported that your vehicle has 160,000 miles, which exceeds mileage limitation for the program.

Please note that the issuance of a special coverage program by a manufacturer does not necessarily mean that a vehicle contains a safety-related defect in accordance with our statute, the National Traffic and Motor Vehicle Safety Act. Manufacturers may issue these types of actions at their discretion to address a known problem unrelated to motor vehicle safety and to restore customer satisfaction. While NHTSA continuously monitors manufacturer special coverage programs to identify potential vehicle safety issues for which a recall is necessary, the agency does not otherwise regulate special coverage programs. Thus, the manufacturer remains responsible for all aspects of special coverage programs including the nature and scope of the repair and the vehicle make, model and years at issue.

We encourage you to continue to work with Subaru and your dealer to explore the potential for an amicable resolution to your problem. You may ask your dealership for a meeting with a Subaru district manager regarding your problem. You may also consider contacting your local Consumer Protection Agency or the Tennessee Attorney General's Office regarding your problem and rights under state law. In addition, the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) regulates and investigates warranty and dealership problems, reimbursement matters, and fair-trade practices. Therefore, if you believe this issue potentially relates to such a practice, you may contact the FTC to discuss the matter. There are three ways to contact the FTC: by toll free telephone at 877-382-4357; by mail at Federal Trade Commission, CRC-240, Washington, DC 20580; and by using the Internet complaint form at www.ftccomplaintassistant.gov.

Finally, you may also consider contacting the Better Business Bureau (BBB) Auto Line. The BBB offers free mediation/arbitration to resolve warranty disputes under guidelines established by the FTC. Remedies include repair, reimbursement, repurchase or replacement, depending on program eligibility. You can visit their website at www.bbb.org to file a complaint and review eligibility information, or call the BBB Auto Line at 800-955-5100.

If you encounter a safety-related problem with a motor vehicle or motor vehicle equipment in the future, please complete an electronic Vehicle Owner's Questionnaire online at www.nhtsa.gov or call the Vehicle Safety Hotline at 888-327-4236. Also, owners' complaints, safety recalls, manufacturers' service bulletins, etc. can be reviewed on our website.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Randy Reid".

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