

[REDACTED]
Calimesa, CA
[REDACTED]

April 24th, 2022

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
1200 New Jersey Ave. SE
West Building
Washington, DC 20590

To the reader,

I am the current owner of a 2020 Hyundai Elantra VIN# 5NPD84LF7LH [REDACTED]

Attached is a follow up letter of complaint to Hyundai America.

I believe the response I have received should be brought to your attention.

I have patiently explained to Hyundai America the vehicle in my possession that they manufactured has a serious operating defect. Their Customer Service Specialist refuses to acknowledge that components of the vehicle are defective and further, to blame me for the problem.

I would hope that someone at your office would contact Hyundai America and have a serious discussion about how Hyundai America handles situations that jeopardize the safety of their customers.

Thank you for taking the time to review [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Also Contacted:

California Office of the Attorney General
National Highway Traffic Safety Board
Hyundai Korea Via "Contact us" email
Better Business Bureau Via "Contact us" email
CARFAX
Consumer Reports Magazine
Car and Driver Magazine
Kelly Bluebook
J.D. Powers

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April 24th, 2022

Barry Ratzlaff, Vice President, Customer Satisfaction
Hyundai Motor America
10550 Talbert Ave.
Fountain Valley, CA 92708

UNRESOLVED FACTORY DEFECT

I AM STILL DRIVING A LIABILITY

Mr. Ratzlaff,

On February 25th 2020 I purchased a Hyundai Elantra from Hyundai Inland Empire.

VIN5NPD84LF7L [REDACTED]

At this writing the current mileage is: 11,089 miles.

In 26 months I have brought the vehicle to the dealership 5 times to correct a recurring problem with the transmission.

At low speeds (heavy traffic and parking lots) the vehicle will sometimes hesitate and then lurch forward. I fear this may cause an accident and injury to myself and/or others. This in turn will reflect negatively on my driving record AND increase my insurance premiums.

The first time I brought the vehicle back to the dealership to resolve this problem I was told that the vehicle was "learning" how I drive. I commented that how I drive depends on the traffic were I am, the weather and the time of day.

The transmission control chip was checked out, and updated.

The second time I brought the vehicle in I was told that I should drive it in NORMAL. I prefer to drive it in SMART due to the handling characteristics and gas mileage. The chip was again reset. The third time the chip was reset on April 28th. There was no commentary as to how I drive. (This notation is underlined for a reason).

All 4 service visits were performed at no charge

When I continued to complain I was put in contact with a series of Customer Service Specialists who appeared to "pass the buck" to one another. Your Customer Service Specialist Henry K. finally contacted me. He immediately told me that he was looking in to the issue and had begun to "gather the paperwork associated with the vehicle".

Hyundai Corporate then sent a Technician to the dealership who supposedly had more knowledge and more advanced diagnostic equipment. The vehicle was in the shop for 5 days and I had to fight for a loaner vehicle

The technician could not locate the problem.

Note: I have a neighbor, recently retired, who worked for General Motors. He expressed surprise that the problem could not be diagnosed through the OBD port on the vehicle.

Henry K. and I continued to exchange emails and phone calls.

Henry K. called to tell me that all of the paperwork had been gathered and that Hyundai was preparing to buy back the vehicle.

Henry then asked me the following question "Do you drive with one foot or two?" I asked him what he meant and his reply was "Do you brake with your left foot or your right foot?" I replied "It's an automatic transmission, of course I brake with my left foot." Henry then stated "Then the problem is you NOT the vehicle. You drive incorrectly".

End of conversation and end of discussion.

I am surprised that Hyundai, an international corporation would permit an employee whose function was to directly interface with customers be allowed to make arbitrary customer relations decisions based solely on personal prejudice.

Due to the summarily rejection of my concerns I have over the past several months researched various aspects related to motor vehicle operation.

1. There is nothing in the Hyundai Instruction Manuals supplied with the vehicle that discuss a correct or incorrect way to apply the brakes.
2. I have not found any mention of traffic laws that prohibit left foot breaking.
3. My research also revealed that there are several sensors in the vehicle that could individually or in concert create the undesired faulty action in a Hyundai Elantra.
4. Left foot breaking is often used during automobile racing (given that the transmissions are different) with many drivers considering it to be commonplace and advantageous.

In my original letter of complaint to you I specifically asked if this situation had any impact on the warranties advertised in conjunction with the vehicle.

I received no reply to this question.

Additionally I repeatedly paid even closer attention as how I operated my vehicle. In a safe location I strongly pressed down on the break pedal, raced the engine to over 3000 RPM's, and then quickly removed my left foot from the break pedal. The vehicle simply moved forward in a manner consistent with the engine speed. No hesitation, no lurch.

During the months of November and December 2021 I made it a point to operate the vehicle as Henry K. described as "the proper way". I found that my reaction time had to be altered. It became very stressful.

Starting in January 2022 I have been again slowing and stopping the vehicle by using my left foot on the brake pedal. At this writing I have again become comfortable and confident when out in traffic.

In the course of earning a living I was often required to travel to many states across the U.S. I have rented vehicles of most makes and models from the various car rental agencies. Additionally I have driven the largest trucks U-Haul has to offer across the country from California to New York and back. At no time has any vehicle malfunctioned in the manner I have been describing.

I have operated vehicles of many types of roads ranging from multilane freeways and tollways to 2 lane country roads and, as a volunteer, the dirt fire access roads in National Forests.

I have never been involved in an accident. (Check with State Farm if you wish.)

Since I had been looking forward to the purchase of this vehicle I have found these events disappointing and distressing.

I am not happy with this vehicle or Hyundai Am [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Cc: Office of the Attorney General, California
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Carfax
National Highway Traffic Safety Board
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Car and Driver Magazine
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