



THE SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION
WASHINGTON, DC 20590

May 6, 2014

The Honorable Edward J. Markey
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Markey:

Thank you for your April 28 letter requesting that the U.S. Department of Transportation advise owners of all General Motors (GM) vehicles that are subject to the ignition switch recall (No. 14V-047) to cease driving their vehicles until they are repaired. You also requested that the Department call upon GM to issue a similar warning.

Our top priority is ensuring consumer safety, and as the Department continues its ongoing investigation into the timing of GM's recall, we are closely monitoring GM's recall-related communications to consumers. In appropriate circumstances, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) may require a manufacturer to advise owners not to drive their vehicles until a safety-related defect or noncompliance is remedied. In this case, however, NHTSA has thoroughly evaluated the interim guidance that GM has issued to all affected vehicle owners and determined that such an action is not necessary at this time. Based on the Agency's engineering expertise, our consideration of the nature of the ignition switch defect, and the testing conducted, NHTSA is satisfied that for now, until the permanent remedy is applied, the safety risk posed by the defect in affected vehicles is sufficiently mitigated by GM's recommended action. As a reminder, GM's recommended action for owners of affected vehicles is to remove all other items from the key ring attached to the vehicle key and to always wear a seat belt.

Given the widespread concerns and out of an abundance of caution, NHTSA has taken measures above and beyond normal protocols. Our NHTSA engineers examined the geometry and physics of the vehicle key, ignition switch, and steering column of the affected GM vehicles. They also reviewed testing data, drawings, and specifications submitted by GM related to the vehicle key, ignition switch, and steering column (discussed further below).

In addition to these steps, NHTSA issued a special order to GM that sought testing on the efficacy of GM's interim guidance to consumers to use only the vehicle key. GM responded by providing a significant amount of information, which included summaries of its testing, videos and still pictures of the tests, and test data that we believe support its interim guidance to consumers.

The Honorable Edward J. Markey

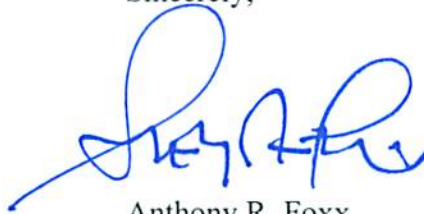
In the interim-guidance tests, GM drove vehicles containing the defect over a variety of road conditions, such as potholes, panic stops, and angled railroad crossings. The NHTSA reviewed GM's testing material and believes the information supports GM's position that the subject vehicles are safe to operate provided that the key that is placed in the ignition cylinder is not attached to a key ring containing other items. The NHTSA is working towards making the testing information public.

Additionally, at NHTSA's request, GM is sending to owners a letter explicitly detailing the risks posed by the ignition switch defect. *See* the enclosed letter from GM dated April 30. The letter also warns that these vehicles contain another defect in the ignition cylinder that could cause the vehicle to roll away. To reduce the chances of these malfunctions, the GM letter advises owners to remove all other items from the key chain except the ignition key, and to always make sure that the vehicle is in "park" when exiting the vehicle.

The NHTSA continues to monitor the recall, mine available data, and take appropriate action as warranted. The Department is committed to doing everything necessary to ensure that GM quickly remedies the vehicles involved in its recalls and keeps at-risk consumers informed. The Department is dedicated to ensuring the safety of all vehicles operated on public roads and we are closely monitoring GM's actions in this case.

I appreciate your commitment to motor vehicle safety, and I share your concerns about the defective ignition switch. I have sent a similar letter to Senator Richard Blumenthal. If I can provide additional information or assistance, please feel free to call me. If members of your staff have questions, they may contact Mr. Dana Gresham, Office of Governmental Affairs at (202) 366-4573.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Anthony R. Foxx', is written over a light blue horizontal line. The signature is fluid and cursive.

Anthony R. Foxx

Enclosure



[REDACTED]

You have received or are about to receive a letter about the safety recalls we are conducting. These recalls replace ignition switches, ignition cylinders and keys on the Chevrolet Cobalt and HHR, Pontiac G5 and Solstice, and Saturn ION and Sky.

Here's why we are conducting the recalls: We learned the ignition key is too easy to turn, so if your car is jostled or jolted, it's possible for the key to move from "run" to "accessory" especially if you have a heavy keychain.

We have conducted more than 80 tests including tests at very high speed and in extremely rough road conditions. Some were very severe tests including driving over a railroad crossing at high speed and driving over river rocks, potholes and cobblestones. We put these vehicles in extreme conditions. The conclusion of this extensive testing with just the key is that the key did not move out of the run position. These tests show the vehicles are safe to drive if you take everything off your key ring, and drive using ONLY the ignition key.

We have also recalled the vehicle to address a defect in the ignition cylinder, where you insert your key. It may be possible to remove the ignition key while the engine is running. This makes a rollaway vehicle possible.

To get your vehicle fixed as soon as possible, here's what you need to do:

- Please call your local Chevrolet, Buick, GMC or Cadillac dealer today and ask to speak to the service department.
- Share your contact information and Vehicle Identification Number with the dealer. When the parts come in, your dealer will call you to schedule an appointment.
- Take everything off your key ring, and drive using ONLY the ignition key.
- When you get out of your car, always make sure it is in "Park" (or for manual transmissions, in reverse gear with the parking brake on).

It will take a number of months to build enough parts to fix every car. These are large recalls and the parts have been out of production for a while. But we are making them as quickly as possible.

In the meantime, we ask for your patience. And please remember to drive using ONLY the ignition key and always wear your seat belt.

If you have specific questions that I haven't covered, please call our Customer Care team at (800) 222-1020 or visit gmignitionupdate.com.

I know that these recalls may have worried and inconvenienced you. On behalf of everyone at GM, we are working to retain your trust. We are confident we can learn from this and become a better company.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Alan Batey".

Alan Batey
President, General Motors North America