Toyota's Comment on Senator Grassley's Letter

July 13, 2012

On July 12, 2012, U.S. Senator Charles Grassley, R-Iowa, sent a letter to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) questioning whether its investigation of unintended acceleration claims involving Toyota vehicles was sufficiently thorough in regard to a phenomenon known as "tin whiskers.

Here is Toyota's response:

There is no problem with the electronic throttle control systems in Toyota vehicles – and all the scientific evidence confirms it.

So-called "tin whiskers" are not a new phenomenon and do not represent a mysterious or undetectable problem in a vehicle's electronics. Indeed, no data indicates that tin whiskers are more prone to occur in Toyota vehicles than any other vehicle in the marketplace.

Further, no one has ever found a single real-world example of tin whiskers causing an unintended acceleration event, nor have they put forth any evidence of unintended acceleration occurring in a Toyota vehicle because of tin whiskers forming inside an accelerator pedal position sensor.

Toyota's systems are designed to reduce the risk that tin whiskers will form in the first place and multiple robust failsafe systems are in place to counter any effects on the operation of our vehicles in the highly unlikely event that they do form and connect to adjacent circuitry. In the unlikely event that tin whiskers cause a short- circuit in the pedal position sensor, our systems detect the fault, illuminate the malfunction indicator light and put the vehicle into "limp home" mode, allowing the driver to safely move the vehicle to the side of the road as designed.

On a related note, we trust that if you quote Sean Kane or Michael Pecht either directly or by reference in your story, you will clearly identify them as paid consultants engaged by attorneys suing Toyota for money.

For more on Tin Whiskers, please view this posting from January 2012:
https://pressroom.toyota.com/releases/tin+whiskers+other+discredited+unintended+acceleration+theories.htm