

Toyota Update Regarding Dr. Chris Gerdes

March 11, 2010

In light of recent press reports, Toyota would like to clarify its relationship with Dr. Chris Gerdes, Director of the Center for Automotive Research at Stanford University. At Toyota's request, Dr. Gerdes was asked to provide an independent evaluation of a preliminary report and testimony to Congress given by Professor David Gilbert of Southern Illinois University at Carbondale. Dr. Gerdes concluded that Professor Gilbert's report "contains no evidence of any real world circuit malfunction that the Toyota [Electronic Throttle Control] system cannot detect." Toyota has not compensated Dr. Gerdes for this research and analysis.

At a recent press conference, Dr. Gerdes made clear that his analysis and opinions of Professor Gilbert's report "have been formulated with complete independence" and "should not be interpreted or described as an official position of Stanford University." He also stated that "I am not here today to defend Toyota . . . I am here to clarify the contents of a report which I believe has been misinterpreted. I am concerned that these misinterpretations are driving public fear and public policy."

Since then, a number of reports have noted that Toyota supports Stanford's Center for Automotive Research, as previously disclosed by Dr. Gerdes, and implied that this relationship influenced the results of Dr. Gerdes' work. These allegations are categorically false. Toyota is only one of many automotive manufacturers that support the Center for Automotive Research. In addition, Toyota supports other academic institutions that offer programs in the field, including the Division of Automotive Technology at Southern Illinois University.

Dr. Gerdes' independent analysis and commentary is separate from the analysis of the Electronic Throttle Control System ("ETCS-i") in Toyota and Lexus vehicles being performed by Exponent. Exponent is one of the world's leading engineering and scientific consulting firms. Toyota retained Exponent in December of 2009 to help evaluate reports of unintended acceleration in Toyota and Lexus vehicles equipped with the ETCS-i system. Toyota will make the results of Exponent's comprehensive, independent evaluation available to the public when it is completed. As with all such reliable engineering analyses, these results will contain the data and information necessary to validate Exponent's conclusions.