

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

June 8, 2018

The Honorable Heidi King
Acting Administrator
National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
1200 New Jersey Avenue SE, West Building
Washington, D.C. 20590

Dear Acting Administrator King:

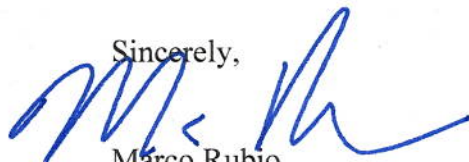
I write to thank you for your recent visit to Florida to meet with community leaders to discuss the airbag recall completion rate and the urgent need to address this significant safety concern throughout the state. As you are aware, Florida ranks number three in unrepaired vehicles impacted by the Takata airbag recall, with more than 1.4 million vehicles still in need of repair. While I applaud your visit to bring further attention to the urgent need for faster completion rates, I encourage the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) to take a more active role in coordinating efforts with industry to ensure automakers are not behind schedule in ensuring affected vehicles are appropriately fixed. NHTSA has called this the "largest and most complex safety recall in U.S. history," and it is critical that the agency redoubles its efforts to ensure consumers are aware and protected from the significant safety concerns presented by these airbags.

It is my understanding that NHTSA has determined the root cause of the airbag problem to be the use of ammonium nitrate-based propellant without a chemical drying agent. Environmental moisture and high temperatures, in addition to other factors, can cause improper inflation of the airbag and propel shrapnel into vehicle occupants. Additionally, a March 2018 Senate report highlighted that only six of the 17 automakers involved in the recall have acceptable loaner car policies for customers in need of repair. This report highlights the need for increased efforts by NHTSA to ensure automakers improve their completion rates and provide necessary options for consumers nationwide to safely address their vehicular needs.

When a safety issue of this magnitude is presented, it is essential that government agencies provide direction and oversight to ensure industry compliance is achieved. I applaud your visit to South Florida to meet with community leaders to address the urgency of this issue, and request the NHTSA to implement appropriate safeguards and provide increased efforts to protect Floridians and affected individuals nationwide.

Thank you for your attention to this matter and I look forward to working with you.

Sincerely,



Marco Rubio
U.S. Senator