

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

October 21, 2016

The Honorable Denise Turner Roth
Administrator
General Services Administration
1800 F St. NW
Washington, DC 20405

Dear Administrator Roth:

I am writing regarding the General Service Administration's (GSA) policies and practices related the handling of safety recalls for vehicles in the federal fleet. On October 5, 2016, Circa news reported that GSA auctions vehicles to the public without repairing known safety recalls. Their investigation found that of the 2,037 vehicles GSA auctioned to the public in August, 427 had open recalls. The press account also raises questions about how GSA responds to recalls for vehicles while they operate in the federal fleet.

High-profile examples in recent years have raised public awareness about the seriousness of recalls, yet automakers and auto safety regulators still face challenges in reaching consumers and successfully urging them to bring their vehicles in for needed repairs. According to data from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), an average of a quarter of all vehicles recalled in any year will be left unrepaired.

Auto dealers have long been prohibited from selling a new car to the public until any open safety recalls are remedied, and just last year, as part of the Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act, Congress prohibited most rental car companies from renting or selling a vehicle to the public until recalls are remedied.

Although GSA is under no current requirement to repair recalls in a timely manner while being used by federal employees or before sale to the public, the federal government should take every step possible to keep federal employees and the broader American driving public safe.

To better understand the agency's policies and practices related to vehicle safety recalls, I request that you provide the following information:

1. Copies of all agency regulations, guidance and other policies related to the handling of vehicle safety recalls for the federal fleet.
2. A description of GSA's process for notifying the federal agency and/or federal employee in possession of a federal vehicle when GSA is notified of a recall on that vehicle.
3. A description of any steps GSA takes to notify those participating in a public auction of specific open recalls on a vehicle.
4. Any correspondence between the agency and NHTSA in the past five years regarding known or suspected safety defects on vehicles in the federal fleet.

5. Any correspondence between the agency and automakers in the past five years regarding known or suspected safety defects on vehicles in the federal fleet.

Additionally, I request that you provide my staff a briefing on federal fleet policies and practices. I request that you provide this information and briefing as soon as possible but no later than November 4, 2016.

Thank you for your prompt attention to this matter. If you have any questions, please contact Nick Choate of my staff at 202-224-6154 or Nick_Choate@mccaskill.senate.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Claire McCaskill". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "C" and "M".

Claire McCaskill
United States Senate