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Committee on Oversight and Government Reform
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My name is Kevin Haggerty and I owned a 2007 Toyota Avalon. In the past 6 months I have experienced 5 events where my car accelerated on its own. The first few times I experienced the car accelerating without my foot on the gas pedal I was driving through town. The car would go back to its normal rpms after driving a few miles, or after the car was stopped, turned off and restarted. After experiencing the sudden acceleration the third time, I took my vehicle to be checked by my local auto shop. They could not find anything wrong with my vehicle. After 2 more incidents I brought my car to a Toyota Dealership on November 11th, 2009 to be checked. After keeping my car for 2 days they found no unintended acceleration problems and confirmed that the factory mats were installed properly.

Then on December 28th, 2009 I was driving to work on Route 78 in New Jersey. The car began to accelerate without my foot on the gas pedal. As I pushed on the brake, the car continued to accelerate. At that time I was not able to stop my vehicle by pressing on the brake pedal. The only way I was able to slow the car down was to put the car into neutral. I got off the next exit which was the exit for the dealership. Determined to get the car to the dealership and show them first hand that this was happening, I drove approximately 5 miles by alternating from neutral to drive and pressing very firmly on the brakes. On my way there I called them and asked for the service manager to meet me outside. As I pulled into the front of the dealership, I put the car into neutral and exited the car. With the brakes smoking from the excessive braking and the car's rpm's racing, the manager entered my car. He confirmed that the gas pedal was not obstructed, the mats were properly in place and that the rpm's were very high. They contacted a Toyota Tech to come to the dealership and look at my car. He arrived within a few hours.

The dealership had my car for 1 and 1/2 weeks. When I was told the car was ready to be picked up, I asked what problem they had found. I was told by the service manager that "per Toyota" they replaced the throttle body and accelerator assembly including 1 or 2 of the sensors. Since they could not tell me exactly what problem they found with these parts and why they were replaced, I started doing some research about Toyotas online. I came across Sean Kane's name in multiple articles I read and decided to contact him. When I reached him, I explained my situation and expressed my fear of driving this car in light of what just happened. I no longer felt safe in it since nobody could explain why the acceleration problem occurred in the first place. Sean did not have an answer for the cause and was surprised that the dealership replaced parts and witnessed it first hand.

I was then contacted by ABC News and they were interested in doing a follow up story on accelerator problems. ABC also confirmed with Toyota that the parts taken out of my car were sent to Toyota's Corporate offices to be evaluated. I agreed to an interview

mainly because I wanted to help people understand how to safely stop a car by putting it into neutral. I continued driving my car out of necessity but refused to put my children in it.

About 3 weeks ago a local dealership owner, after hearing about my story, made me a generous offer on a new vehicle, as well as offered to pay off the balance of the loan on my Avalon. For my safety, as well as the safety of my family, I took him up on his offer.

Kevin Haggerty