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GM DESIGNED & REJECTED SAFER IGNITION SWITCH IN 2001
Secretly Resurrected 2001 Switch in 2006 Silent Remedy under Same Part Number

In a letter to General Motors CEO Mary Barra, the Center for Auto today revealed for the first time that GM had designed two ignition switches in 2001 for the Saturn Ion and Chevrolet Cobalt but rejected the safer design in favor of an unsafe but cheaper design. In late 2006, GM resurrected the safer design under the same part number in a silent remedy that went undiscovered until 2013.

The Center discovered the two ignition switch designs in obscure but “smoking gun” documents submitted to the U.S. Congress prior to CEO Barra’s testimony. The documents are the Engineering Drawings done in 2001 for both ignition switch designs, the Engineering Drawing showing the change back to the safer design in 2006 and an email from Antero Cuervo of Delphi explaining when the ignition switch was changed despite having the same part number. Mr. Cuervo concluded in his email submitted to Congress:

“In summary, Engineering Change 57128 authorized, among other things, to change detent spring & plunger assy from p/n 74-175259 to p/n 74-179378 Looking at the prints of both part numbers, they are different and match with differences described below.”

Consumer Advocates Joan Claybrook and Clarence Ditlow wrote CEO Mary Barra:

“Were you briefed on these internal General Motors documents prior to your testimony before Congress? Since they were submitted to Congress before you testified, surely your engineering staff should have told you about the shocking contents of these documents. They paint a tragic picture of the cost culture and cover up at General Motors. The conclusion we draw from examining the two different designs of the ignition switches under consideration in 2001 is that General Motors picked a smaller and cheaper ignition switch that cost consumers their lives and saved General Motors money. The documents show that when General Motors changed the ignition switch in 2006, it did not have to develop a new more robust design because GM engineers had already designed the safer switch that GM previously rejected in 2001.”

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Background:

[Click here to view the letter to GM CEO Barra](#)

[Long Detent Spring and Plunger, Drawing 741-79378](#)

[Short Detent Spring and Plunger, Drawing 741-75259](#)

[Revision Information, Drawing 741-76307-T](#)

[Antero Cuervo Email](#)