Telephone: (202) 514-3642   *Washington, D.C. 20530*

APR 1 5 2011

Mr. Clarence Ditlow, Executive Director
Center for Auto Safety
1825 Connecticut Avenue, NW
Suite 330
Washington, DC 20009-5725

Dear Mr. Ditlow:

This is in response to your letter dated March 31, 2011 addressed to Attorney General Eric H. Holder, Jr., regarding the actions taken by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) in response to your Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests for "Death/Injury Inquiry information," and your request that this information be proactively disclosed on NHTSA's website.

As you know, on March 19, 2009, Attorney General Holder issued new FOIA guidelines underscoring the importance of open government and effective FOIA administration. In keeping with the Attorney General's Guidelines, the Department of Justice has been working to achieve greater levels of transparency in government both here at the Department of Justice and across the Executive Branch. The Office of Information Policy (OIP), which is responsible for encouraging agency compliance with the FOIA, has provided extensive guidance and instruction to Executive Branch departments and agencies to implement practices that will shorten processing times, improve request tracking, and promote the proactive publication of information even in the absence of a FOIA request. OIP has also encouraged departments and agencies to employ new technologies to help implement these practices.

The Department of Justice is engaged in an on-going process to consider effective approaches to achieving greater levels of openness and transparency in government. As part of that process, my Office will look into the issues raised in your letter and provide any appropriate FOIA guidance to NHTSA. On behalf of the Attorney General, I want to thank you for bringing this matter to the attention of the Department of Justice. We will be back in touch with you.

Sincerely,

Melanie Ann Pustay
Director