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Honorable Noreen Evans
Chair, Senate Committee on the Judiciary
California State Senate
State Capitol
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: SB 686 (Jackson) -- vehicle safety recalls -- SUPPORT

Dear Senator Evans:

As a former car dealer and current consultant to a number of Bay Area new car dealerships, I am pleased to write in support of SB 686 (Jackson), which will prohibit auto dealers in California from selling, loaning, leasing, renting, or otherwise transferring used vehicles with open safety recalls pending, to consumers, at retail.

For over 45 years, I owned and managed major new car franchised auto dealerships in Northern and Southern California, including dealerships for Chevrolet, Pontiac, Cadillac, Oldsmobile, Lincoln, Mercury, Chrysler/Jeep/Dodge, Toyota, Honda, Nissan, Mitsubishi, Hyundai, SAAB, Rolls Royce and Bentley. . During that time, I ensured that the safety of our customers was paramount. I established procedures for performing routine inspections on all the vehicles we offered for sale, including a check to identify vehicles with outstanding safety recalls and either get them fixed or sell them at wholesale, rather than putting my customer's safety at risk.

This was not a laborious process, and was built into the way we did business. I considered it to be part of the responsibility I had, as an automotive business professional, to take reasonable steps to protect my customers and also my companies reputations for selling a safe, quality product.

You may hear from other dealers that it is not possible to find out whether a vehicle has an open safety recall. I know from experience that not only is it possible, but it's simple, and not overly time-consuming or burdensome, particularly considering the stakes involved should someone be harmed by a vehicle that was being recalled by the manufacturer.

There are several ways to find out when a vehicle is under a safety recall, and whether the work has been performed. Among them:

- Checking the manufacturer's website and entering the Vehicle Identification Number (VIN)
- When the manufacturer does not offer access via its website, calling the manufacturer's toll-free number
- Contacting a local dealer of the same make (in my experience, dealers provide the information to anyone who calls, regardless who the owner is)

Thousands of dealers subscribe to Carfax, which includes safety recall information in its database, and makes the information accessible to the public for free.

The bottom line is, any dealer who truly cares about his customers would of course check a car's safety recall status before putting a customer into that car. It's the right and ethical thing to do. It's also a good business practice.

Thank you for your consideration of my views. Should you or your staff have any questions regarding my position, or like further details, please do not hesitate to contact me directly.

Respectfully yours,

Salvatore A. Cerrito