

June 7th, 2005

TO: Keith [REDACTED]
BFS
Retail & Communication Operations, LLC
333 East Lake Street
Bloomington, IL 60108
(630) 259-9145

CC: Bridgestone Americas Holding, Inc.
Georgia Congressman, John Lewis
Better Business Bureau of Metro Atlanta
[REDACTED], Law Offices of [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] PC

Subject: Firestone Customer Satisfaction Case # [REDACTED], Danny Hong

Dear Mr. Keith [REDACTED],

Thus far, I have made all attempts to find resolution of my case over the phone, and have not received the results that I had hoped for. Please allow me to summarize the series of events, in detail that have caused me to take action in creating a case with Firestone.

On Thursday, May 5th, 2005, at around 4:00 p.m., I visited the Firestone Tire & Service Center, store # [REDACTED], in [REDACTED], Georgia. I went to have my wheels rotated, and since I have lifetime alignment through Firestone, I arranged to have that service done as well. The invoice number was # [REDACTED]. Because I had errands to perform that evening, I spoke with the service advisor, Serge, and arranged to have it so that I could pick up my car after hours, and that the store would charge the money to my Firestone account. Serge and I came to an agreement that whomever worked on my car would lock my keys inside, along with the invoice. I came back to the store at 9 p.m. that evening, and upon engaging the remote locks, discovered that the driver's door was left unlocked. Furthermore, neither my car key, nor any invoice was left inside. Had I not brought my spare set of keys, I would have had no car to use the next day. On Friday, May 6th, 2005, I returned to store # [REDACTED] to get my original car key and invoice.

It was not long afterwards that I noticed a problem with my vehicle. There was apparent vibration coming from the rear of my car, and significantly loud road noise. This problem had not occurred prior to taking my car in on May 5th, 2005. I made a point to take my car

back to store # [REDACTED], as soon as possible.

On May 12th, 2005, at around 4:30 p.m., I brought my car back to store # [REDACTED]. I explained my problem, and during the courtesy check, it was revealed that my rear driver's side wheel bearing had warped. How this had happened was something that Archie [REDACTED], Store Manager, and the employees of the store # [REDACTED] could not explain. Upon asking for the store to repair my problem, seeing as how there was never a problem prior to the May 6th service, I was informed that I would have to pay for the cost of parts and labor, which was quoted to be \$165.31. Upon pleading my case with Mr. [REDACTED], he offered to have all services done for half the cost. I accepted this, as I needed my car to perform daily duties. In the end, my cost was \$82.66. My invoice number for this service was # [REDACTED].

Later that evening, upon coming home, I had noticed that on my front passenger side wheel, and on my rear driver's side wheel, a lug nut was missing from each. I immediately called store # [REDACTED] and explained the situation. I was told to come back the next day to get them replaced, by service advisor Brian.

I unfortunately fell ill and stayed home due to sickness for a few days. So I did not go back to store # [REDACTED] until the following Thursday, May 19th. Upon arrival, when inquiring about the replacement lug nuts, the employees of the store informed me that it was Brian's day off, and he was specifically responsible for my situation. And since he was not present, no work could or would be done to my car. I was instructed to come back the next day, when Brian would be in. I felt that this was a waste of time, and that all these additional trips could have been averted had everything been done correctly on May 5th, so as soon as I returned home, I called the Firestone Customer Satisfaction line to discuss my dissatisfaction. I spoke with a representative named Lisa at 5:05 p.m., and gave her the details of the situation at the time. I was told that they would relay my complaint to the store, and with the district manager, and that either store manager, Arthur [REDACTED] or District Manager Rick [REDACTED] would call me back within two business days.

On Friday, May 20th, 2005, I called store # [REDACTED] and made sure Brian was working, and discovered that he would be there. I specifically informed Brian that I would be there between 3:00 p.m. and 4:00 p.m. I arrived within the time frame that I had promised, and was told that Brian was not there. An advisor named Serge got in contact with Brian, and was told where he had kept the lug nuts for my car. Upon retrieval of the lug nuts, it was revealed that the wrong lug nuts were acquired-despite the fact that I reminded several staff members on several occasions that the particular level of trim of my car (2001 Nissan Sentra SE) had a different set of wheels than other models, which required different lug nuts. The store offered to go acquire the replacement lug nuts, and let me know that it would be about an hour's wait, to which I agreed to wait. The lug nuts eventually were acquired, and in attempting to replace the front passenger side's missing lug nut, it was revealed that the

wheel stud was too cross-stripped to put a new lug nut on. My car was immediately taken into the garage to get the wheel stud replaced, and have the new lug nut put on it. This was an additional hour I had to wait through, to make my total time spent on the day at store # [REDACTED] at around three hours. Prior to leaving, I requested from Serge, a work order, so that I may have the day's work for my own records. I was told that no work order was submitted, since I was "accusing" the store for my missing lug nuts.

I found the lack of a work order very concerning, so upon arriving at home, I immediately called the Firestone Customer Satisfaction line again to voice my concern, adding on to my complaint case. I spoke with Christine at 6:25 p.m. and let her know that I had received no invoice for the work just done on my car. I was informed that either the store or district manager was still going to call me back sometime the following week.

By May 24th, 2005, I had still not heard back from either Arthur [REDACTED] or Rick [REDACTED]. At 4:40 p.m., I called District Manager Rick [REDACTED]. I received no answer, so I left a message on his voicemail, giving my home and cell phone numbers, case number, and reason for calling. This call was never returned.

On May 26th, 2005, two companions and myself headed to Raleigh, North Carolina. At about 11:30 p.m. that evening, just outside of Greensboro, North Carolina, the rear passenger tire of my car blew out. To my knowledge, I did not hit anything. I was able to roll my vehicle into a gas station, where I attempted to remove the flat tire, and equip the spare. Three of the lug nuts were extremely difficult to remove, as they were cross stripping. The fourth one, I could not remove at all. Regardless, my spare was discovered to be too low to safely drive on.

After midnight in Greensboro, it is extremely difficult to acquire roadside assistance. Furthermore, being travelers made it difficult to know where repairs and lodging could be found. With several cell phone directory assistance calls and help from my automotive insurance company, we were able to summon a towing service to come out to help us, at around 3:00 a.m., May 27th, 2005. The driver of this tow truck was helpful to take us to a nearby area where we could find a Days Inn for the evening. The cost of the tow truck was approximately \$80.00. One night at the Days Inn was approximately \$62.10. Seeing as how Firestone is the only company that makes the size of my car's OEM tires, I hoped to be able to take my vehicle into a Firestone location. Fortunately, where we were, was conveniently near Firestone store # [REDACTED], in Greensboro, North Carolina. Before going to the hotel, my car was left in the store's parking lot.

On May 27th, 2005, at 7:00 a.m., I called store # [REDACTED] from my hotel to inform the workers there that I would be arriving to have service done to my car. I would need a new tire, four brand new wheel studs, and six new lug nuts. I was delighted to hear that the store had all

the parts in stock and ready to install upon arriving there. The workers at store # [REDACTED] were all friendly and helpful, and even took the effort to assist me in selecting a cheaper alternative to the Firestone brand tire I required. It was not a long wait for all the work to be done, and for my car to be returned back to me in working condition. My invoice number was # [REDACTED].

However, before I was handed back the keys, I was informed by the technician that worked on my car, Steve [REDACTED], that my three other tires were over inflated. The recommended pressure for my tires is 33 psi up front and 30 psi in the back wheels. Mr. [REDACTED] informed me that the remaining three tires were all measured at 50 psi. Upon asking whether or not this could have been a factor in why my tire blew out, I was told that it could very well have been. The last party to touch my tires and wheels prior to the tire blow was store # [REDACTED]. I made a point to get in touch with the Firestone Customer Satisfaction line again as soon as I got back to Atlanta.

On Tuesday, May 31st, 2005, upon coming home from work, I planned on calling the Firestone Customer Satisfaction line to explain that I had yet to hear anything back from any store or district managers. However, there was already a message from Christine, the Customer Satisfaction line assistant I spoke with on May 20th, following up, to see if anyone had gotten in contact with me. I immediately called the Customer Satisfaction line to discuss my case, and add the events of the past weekend, as I feel that they pertained to my case as much as all the prior events. It was at 3:10 p.m., that I spoke with Melissa on the phone. I let her know of the events of the weekend, what kind of resolution I was looking for, and that nobody had called me back yet. I was informed that since no one on the district level was going to get involved, that corporate would have to get involved, and that within two business days, someone would call me back, to settle the matter.

On June 1st, 2005, at around 4:30 p.m., I received a phone call from Mr. Keith [REDACTED], from Bridgestone Firestone Retail & Communication Operations. Together, we went over the series of events that occurred, and he assessed the dollar amount I was asking for as reimbursement. Mr. [REDACTED] got in contact with store # [REDACTED] in Greensboro, and privately discussed my visit to the store on May 27th. He was informed by service advisor, David, that I had allegedly proclaimed that the tire that had blown had been leaking air prior to the blow. This was something that I had not once mentioned in my two-hour wait at store # [REDACTED] on May 27th, because nothing like that had occurred. Regardless, Mr. [REDACTED] informed me that over inflated tires do not cause tires to blow out, and that because of my ability to change my own oil, I am mechanically inclined enough to know what a wheel bearing is, and insinuated that I may have been the cause of the wheel warping prior to my service on May 12th, 2005. In the end, Mr. [REDACTED] offered to cover the \$82.66 for May 12th, and in a gesture of good will, go half-and-half with me on the \$80.00 cost for the tow truck, \$62.10 cost for the hotel room, \$7.50 cost for the six Sprint PCS cell phone directory assistance, and the \$179.32 cost of invoice #028274, bringing the total reimbursement to

\$247.12. I informed Mr. [REDACTED] that I would not be accepting this settlement, and that I would like to take some time to gather all of my documentation together and that I would get back to him as soon as I could.

I did not feel that Mr. [REDACTED] settlement was satisfactory, seeing as how in my opinion, had everything been done correctly and properly on May 5th, the only money that would have needed to change hands would have been the \$9.99 I paid to get my tires rotated. I was not happy with the level of service I received from [REDACTED] Firestone, store # [REDACTED], and I feel that I wasted a lot of time having to go back on several occasions that could have been avoided had proper time and attention been given to my vehicle. I did not appreciate the insinuations I received from Mr. [REDACTED] about my level of automotive mechanical knowledge. I was told that over inflation is not a reason why a tire could blow. However, I was also told by Mr. [REDACTED] that over inflation "just" can cause irregular wear of tires. Regardless, the term "over inflation" harbors a negative connotation, meaning inflated past necessary, which is what I believe is precisely what the technicians at store # [REDACTED] did to my car. I recently spoke with a Nissan and an Infiniti mechanic at a public event - when I asked each if over inflated tires could cause a tire to blow, both responded with "yes."

I am not asking for the \$9.99 I paid to get my tires rotated, and I am not asking to be reimbursed in any fashion for the time wasted or inconvenience. All I am asking for is reimbursement for all of my out-of-pocket costs, and nothing else. I would like to be reimbursed for the amount of \$411.58. This includes the \$82.66 cost of invoice # [REDACTED], the \$80.00 cost of the tow truck on May 27th, the \$62.10 cost of the one night's stay at Days Inn on May 27th, the \$179.32 cost of invoice # [REDACTED], and \$7.50 for the six Sprint PCS directory assistance calls made on May 27th. I have enclosed copies of all the receipts and invoices of the charges that I incurred.

I hope that this letter is received safely, and that it yields more results than all my attempts over the phone have been. Thank you for your time.

Signed,

Danny Hong