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Letters: Probe Toyota's safety issues?

No pro-GM conspiracy

The Cato Institute's Dan Ikenson contends that the Obama administration is critical of Toyota's safety issues to tip the field in General Motors' direction since the federal government is now a majority stakeholder in GM, and that the government cannot fairly regulate an industry that it subsidizes. I guess that would explain the not-so-profitable farming business. Perhaps Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood's criticism had something to do with the fact that Toyota has denied that a safety problem exists. While LaHood's advice to stop driving your Toyota was stupid, my experience as an engineer is that when there is a contest between stupidity and conspiracy, stupidity almost always wins. The truth is that in its drive to become No. 1, Toyota took its eye off the ball -- just like GM did back in the 1970s and '80s -- and the chickens have come home to roost.

Bob Bedford, Drayton Plains, MI

Don't play safety politics

How can the Senate's lead Toyota investigator, Jay Rockefeller, lead a fair investigation on Toyota's safety recall when he credits himself with lobbying Toyota to build a factory in his state and has known Toyota's founding family since the 1960s? Nineteen people have been killed, others injured, and we let politicians play the game of politics. I have read sudden acceleration is caused by floor mats, gas pedals and electronics. Is the real root cause known?

Steven E. Adams, South Lyon

Ky. should feel Mich.'s pain

I'm sorry, but somehow I cannot sympathize with residents in this Kentucky town of Georgetown or, for that matter, the rest of Americans who buy Japanese vehicles and would rather support Japan than their own country ("Kentucky town feels automaker's pain," Dec. 10). Let them suffer like the thousands of people in Michigan have been doing. For that matter, don't tell me or Michigan workers about the Japanese companies helping us so much by building their factories here. The profits are sent back to Japan.

John Dawe, Wolverine Lake

Feds' pressure pays off

Ten years ago I worked for a Japanese auto supplier, so I feel compelled to translate the recent Toyota television commercials. "In recent days we have let you down" translates to: We knew about this since 2005 but nobody was watching us and the percentages were low so we did nothing about it. "We stopped production to insure safety" translates to: The U.S. government sent high-level government representatives to Japan to find out what was going on. The result: Toyota's complete embarrassment and pressure from both the Japanese and U.S. governments for Toyota to cease and desist operations until the problem is resolved.

Jim Fox, Shelby Township

Toyota has safety incentive

Congress is questioning Toyota's fix of the gas pedal problem and has two committees working on the issue. That members of Congress would suggest that Toyota has failed to fix the problem for some unstated reason is one more attempt to bash anyone or anything to get press for themselves. Toyota is aware that the vultures of the plaintiff lawyers' bar are circling. This alone will cause Toyota to make sure that they do the right thing.

Frank Mannino, Warren

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