

Should Malaysia also have a "Lemon Law" to protect car buyers?

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Malaysia's National Consumers Complaints Centre (NCCC) has made a statement that Malaysia should impose a law to protect car buyers from defective new cars via the "lemon law". This law will allow car buyers to make claims on their defective cars within a short period of time.

To the uninitiated, the "lemon law" is a law introduced in the United States to allow consumers to be compensated, for defective products sold by the manufacturer. The compensation ranges from full replacements, refunds or discounts of products. This law applies from consumer products to cars; with the term "lemon" usually associated with defective and problematic cars. As for now, nations such as Singapore, South Korea, China, Japan and the Philippines have such laws to protect consumers.

National Consumers Complaints Centre (NCCC) director Ratna Devi Nadarajan told a local media that almost 5,000 complaints and most were related to both new national and foreign cars in 2013. The total potential monetary losses from the complaints in 2013 has cost around RM22 million. Although no car marques were mentioned, it is unsurprising that Volkswagen and Proton are among the top on the list.

Ratna added that the manufacturers in Malaysia sorted out their product defect problems via warranties, but the vague warranty clause does not give sufficient protection to Malaysian vehicle buyers. To make matters worse, consumers are on a bigger disadvantage when the warranty period is over, not good as the consumers were already burden with the high pricing of cars in Malaysia.

The NCCC has already proposed this to the Malaysian government, but no action has been made. Despite that, the NCCC will continue to push for the implementation of the law for the benefit of Malaysian consumers.

Looking from the perspective of the local automotive industry, "lemon cars" do exist in Malaysia regardless of marque and we do see a fair share of complains appearing in social media. Anyway do hit the comments section here if you agree that we should push Putrajaya to have such laws.

Source: The Malaysian Insider