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International Association of Women Police

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Mr. Jay Chung
President, KIA Canada
180 Foster Crescent
Mississauga, Ontario
L5R 4J5

19 January 2007

Dear Mr. Chung,

I am writing you on behalf of the thousands of women in various law enforcement agencies, and particularly those involved in policing within Canada, regarding a KIA television advertisement for an automobile known as a Spectra.

The commercial in question shows a provocative scene with your KIA Spectra stopped by a roadside; a police vehicle behind it. The male Spectra driver has obviously been pulled over by a female officer. The two are engaged in a passionate kissing scene. The policewoman receives a radio call, exits the Spectra, tucks her long blonde hair up under her baseball cap, and drives off in the police car. If this was an attempt at humor, it failed miserably – I doubt you would portray a male police officer in such a situation.

Based on the comments I have received regarding this advertisement, it can only be described as “disgusting”. You should be aware that women have been forced to contend with serious issues of sexual harassment since they entered policing over 90 years ago. At present, only 17% of the police officers across Canada are female and the tasteless portrayal of women officers by your company will do nothing to attract more women to this honorable occupation. In fact, as one complaining officer noted, you set women back about 25 years with such a disrespectful view of policewomen.

I cannot believe that, given all the issues relating to discrimination, harassment and diversity within society today, your company would even consider using a woman police officer in such an obviously repulsive advertisement that portrays them as nothing more than common prostitutes. I am not sure who your advertisement was intended to market cars to, but you can rest assured that you will never sell another KIA product to any of the people you have so offended with your incredibly demeaning and abhorrent commercial.

I am aware that other women’s groups are being urged to take a stand against your advertisement. I personally have never been so offended by an advertisement. I am demanding that you stop airing the commercial immediately and issue an apology to all women in law enforcement who have been offended.

Sincerely,

Amy Ramsay, PhD