

Wheels: An e-mail from a reader wants your opinion regarding his 1995 Chevrolet Lumina. “At speeds between 35-40 mph, the transmission can’t decide whether to go into drive or overdrive and makes definite “thumps” as it is doing this. I have taken it to 2 dealers and they can’t find the problem. Any ideas?

Halderman: Thanks for writing. Your Chevrolet is equipped with a transaxle that has a torque converter clutch (TCC) and this is used to eliminate slippage at highway speeds to improve fuel economy. When it applies, it feels like another shift. I am thinking this is the “shift” you are feeling. The TCC engagement depends on inputs to the computer. If the throttle position (TP) sensor is defective, then the computer may cause the TCC to engage, then disengage.

To determine if this is the cause, try lightly depressing the brake pedal when it is malfunctioning. If the problem stops, then it is the TCC. If your Chevrolet has a lot of miles (100,000 +), then it may require a replacement TCC. Because this requires that the transaxle be removed, it is often wise to go ahead and have it overhauled. Also see www.shiftright.com for an aftermarket product that may take care of your problem.

