

September 20, 2011

Dear Senator,

We urge Congress to find a way to provide much-needed disaster relief without removing funds that create green automotive jobs and strengthen the American manufacturing base.

The Advanced Technology Vehicle Manufacturing, or ATVM, program (signed into law by President George W. Bush as Section 136 of the Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007) has been a welcome boost for the economy as we work to close the huge jobs gap caused by the Great Recession. The ATVM program has a demonstrated record of success: creating or saving 41,000 jobs in Tennessee, California, Indiana, Michigan, Delaware, Illinois, Kentucky, Missouri, and Ohio.

However, the House proposal for a Continuing Resolution (CR) includes a provision to transfer \$1 billion from this critical program to the Corps of Engineers and the Federal Emergency Management Administration, as well as a rescission of an additional \$500 million.

Before the end of this year, as many as 11 more companies are expected to receive ATVM loans, creating or retaining another 35,000 to 40,000 green jobs in Michigan, Illinois, Ohio, Indiana, and Louisiana. An additional 12 ATVM applications now in the early stages could create another 10,000 jobs next year. This auto manufacturing growth in turn boosts economic activity in other industries and communities across the country. However, all of these jobs are jeopardized if \$1.5 billion is cut from the program's funding, as proposed in the CR being considered in the House.

By 2025, pursuant to federal regulations, the U.S. is on track to reach a new vehicle fleet-wide average fuel economy of 54.5 miles per gallon, which will save consumers billions of dollars at the pump and keep more of these hard-earned dollars here in the U.S. rather than paying for imported oil. Vehicles built with loans from this program alone are expected to save 311 million gallons of fuel annually.

Meeting domestic and global demand for more fuel-efficient vehicles will require the widespread adaptation of advanced vehicle technologies. The ATVM is a critical program to ensure this rapid innovation and advanced manufacturing happens in America – and that the fuel-saving cars of the future are made here in the US and not imported.

This successful program builds jobs in states hardest hit by the recession, strengthens America's economy and manufacturing base, and reduces our dependence on foreign oil. We urge you to pass a Fiscal Year 2012 Continuing Resolution that provides for disaster relief and preserves funding for the U.S. Department of Energy's ATVM loan program.

Sincerely,

BlueGreen Alliance
Clean Economy Network
Ecology Center
Environment America
League of Conservation Voters
Natural Resources Defense Council

Safe Climate Campaign
Sierra Club
Union of Concerned Scientists
United Auto Workers International Union
United Steelworkers