

State Leaders Move To Save Auto Industry

As the leading auto companies continue to teeter on the brink of bankruptcy, and auto parts companies proceed to shed hundreds of jobs, legislative leaders in a number of states are moving ahead with the approach proposed by Democratic leader Lyndon LaRouche one year ago: Demand that Congress take emergency action to save the auto industry, and retool for production of desperately needed national infrastructure.

In June of 2005, resolutions modelled on LaRouche's approach began to be introduced in city councils and state legislatures, especially in the Midwest. Calls for Federal action were passed by the Wayne County Commission (the county including Detroit); and the city councils of: Detroit, Flint, and Pontiac, Michigan; Cleveland and Columbus, Ohio; Louisville, Kentucky; St. Louis, Missouri; and Buffalo, New York. But for the most part, those resolutions introduced into state legislatures were stalled. These included bills in Michigan, Ohio, Missouri, Tennessee, Alabama, Mississippi, and Kentucky. All these bills remain stalled except for the one in Alabama, which passed the House, but failed to get the necessary vote in the Senate.

The latest developments in this battle are the following:

Kentucky: On March 16, newly elected State Sen. Perry Clark of Louisville filed a resolution modelled on that of the other states. Entitled Senate Concurrent Resolution 283, it was formally put into committee during the week of March 20, and may receive consideration before the conclusion of the legislative session. The United Auto Workers are now circulating a petition in favor of the resolution, and the Ken-

tucky State AFL-CIO is actively promoting the measure among their members.

Clark has ten cosponsors on the bill, one of whom is a Republican.

New Jersey: State Assemblyman Gordon Johnson has recruited a co-sponsor for his resolution, AR 305, which is now being heard in the New Jersey General Assembly. A Senate version, SR 35, was introduced into the State Senate on March 6.

Ohio: State Rep. Catherine Barrett, chief sponsor of the Ohio House Resolution to save the auto industry, held a second public hearing on HCR 22 in Cincinnati on March 11, at the Laborers Union hall. A previous hearing had been held in the Columbus State Capitol on Feb. 16.

The meeting, held amidst a heavy rainstorm, drew 30 participants, including many prominent union officials. A dozen people testified including: two members of the LaRouche Youth Movement; John Morris, representing the LaRouche PAC; Mark Sweazy, president of UAW local 696 of Columbus, Ohio; UAW CAP representative and political director Rick Tincher of local 969, representing the Dayton Delphi plant; Fred Hubbard, president of the Bricklayers local of Cincinnati; Jesse Jenkins, longtime UAW Community Action Program representative in Cincinnati; Carol Smith, representing the Ford UAW local in Louisville, Ky.; and representatives from AFSCME and the United Food and Commercial Workers.

Representative Barrett has declared her intention to hold another public hearing on the resolution in April, in order to build up further support.

Rhode Island: On March 14, State Rep. Peter Ginaitt (D-Warwick), chair of the Committee on the Environment and Natural Resources, convened a hearing in Providence to hear, among other pending legislation, a resolution to save the auto industry, HR 7319. Three witnesses appeared before the six-member committee to support the resolution, two of whom represented the LaRouche Youth Movement local based in Boston, Massachusetts.



EIRNS/Stuart Lewis

Newly elected State Sen. Perry Clark of Kentucky has filed a resolution calling on Congress to take emergency action to retool the auto industry for production of desperately needed national infrastructure.



Rhode Island State Rep. Peter Ginaitt convened a hearing to hear a resolution to save the auto industry.