

City Councils Say: Save Auto Industry!

On June 14, the City Council of Buffalo, N.Y., became the third City Council, and the fourth local legislative body, to pass a resolution demanding that the U.S. Congress take emergency action to save the nation's automotive industry. These actions by local governmental bodies reflect a growing politicization of the population of the U.S. Midwest, often known as the "rust belt," in the face of the ongoing dramatic collapse of General Motors and Ford, toward outright bankruptcy.

The passage of the resolutions has occurred in the context of an intensive mobilization by the LaRouche Youth Movement nationally, which has included the mass circulation of Lyndon LaRouche's proposals for the U.S. Senate to save the auto industry by putting it into receivership, and ensuring the employment of the highly skilled auto workforce in new infrastructure projects, such as high-speed rail. LaRouche has underlined that the auto sector is a vital repository of machine-tool capability, which must be preserved—not to build more cars, which we don't need, but to be retooled for other, vital projects.

The jurisdictions which have passed the resolutions, in addition to Buffalo, are the Cleveland City Council, the Wayne County Commission (the county in which Detroit is located), and the Detroit City Council. State legislators have also submitted resolutions for consideration in Kentucky, Missouri, and Michigan. A state representative from Wisconsin has issued a personal statement proposing emergency action.

Although the Kentucky and Missouri legislatures are in recess, the fight for the Michigan resolution is active. There are more than 19 cosponsors already on the measure, which was introduced by Rep. LaMar Lemmons III.

The first resolution, which was introduced by Kevin Conwell, was passed in Cleveland, on May 12. The Wayne County Commission resolution, introduced by Commissioner Philip Cavanagh, was passed on June 1, and was followed by the Detroit City Council resolution, which passed June 8. Pursuant to the passage, all of these resolutions have been delivered to the Congressmen and Senators of the relevant states, as well as to the White House.

The Buffalo Resolution

The Buffalo resolution, introduced by Councilman Brian C. Davis, calls for "Federal Intervention to Rescue the Automobile

Industry and Save Jobs." Modelled on the Wayne County and Cleveland resolutions, it reads as follows:

Whereas: The City of Buffalo Common Council is concerned that a growing number of experts are warning that the decline of the U.S.-based automobile manufacture poses the danger of a severe overall economic depression for the nation, with tens of thousands of jobs lost in auto, machine, steel, and other related industries, and

Whereas: Certain stop-gap measures should be adopted and implemented by Congress to forestall the presently threatened, irreparable damage to our nation's physical economy, which is typified by the presently accelerating crisis in the U.S. automobile industry, and

Whereas: The U.S. automobile industry is billions of dollars in debt and recently has had its bond ratings lowered drastically, unbelievably posing the threat of bankruptcies; and

Whereas: It is conceivable that the automobile industry's leading manufacturers could close most, if not all of their factories in the United States; and

Whereas: The closing down of even some of the automobile factories, including the Stamping Plant and the Power-train Plant in the Buffalo Region, would mean both the end of the United States as a leading physical economic power and cause chain reaction damage to the other economies, especially in the Western New York Region; and

Whereas: Congress has the capability and duty to avert national economic disaster by intervening on behalf of the automobile industry to ensure that the continued employment of the industry's labor force remain functioning in each and every present locality of employment; Congress must intervene on behalf of national and related interests and security, to ensure that the productive potential of the automobile industry, with its featured high technology and machine tool capability, be maintained; and

Whereas: The impact of Congressional intervention may be to create thousands of new jobs repairing infrastructure, maintenance of automobile production jobs, restoration of the tax base and ultimately an increase in the standard of living in the Western New York Region elsewhere; and

Whereas: This resolution constitutes an emergency measure for the immediate preservation of public peace, property, health, welfare, and safety,

Now therefore be it resolved:

That the City of Buffalo Common Council joins the Wayne County Commission, Cleveland City Council, and other government bodies, and urges the Congress and Federal government to take every action necessary to promote and preserve the automobile and machine tool sectors of our national economy, and

Be it finally resolved:

That a copy of this resolution be sent to the Congressional and Senatorial delegation and President George W. Bush.