

111TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 1606

To establish a new automobile voucher program.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MARCH 19, 2009

Mr. MANZULLO introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, and in addition to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned

A BILL

To establish a new automobile voucher program.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

4 This Act may be cited as the “New Automobile
5 Voucher Act of 2009”.

6 SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

7 Congress finds the following:

8 (1) 1 out of every 10 jobs in the United States,
9 or about 13,000,000, is related to automobiles.

1 (2) The automotive sector represents the largest
2 manufacturing base in the United States and each
3 automobile assembly plant generates about 5 jobs
4 among suppliers and the surrounding community.

5 (3) Automobile parts manufacturers account for
6 4,500,000 private industry jobs, including nearly
7 2,000,000 indirect jobs in industries ranging from
8 steel and plastics to technical services.

9 (4) Automobile dealerships employ 1,100,000
10 workers and account for 18 percent of all retail sales
11 in the United States.

12 (5) In 2005, 16,900,000 new automobiles were
13 sold in the United States, but in 2008, only
14 13,200,000 new automobiles were sold.

15 (6) This loss of 3,700,000 new automobile
16 sales, at an average price of \$28,400, directly re-
17 moved \$105,000,000,000 from the economy.

18 (7) Economic multiplier effects of between 3
19 and 7 percent mean that this decline of new auto-
20 mobile sales translates into a \$315,000,000,000 to
21 \$735,000,000,000 loss to the economy of the United
22 States.

23 (8) Only 1,345,885 vehicles were sold in the
24 United States during January and February of

1 2009, representing a 39 percent decrease from Jan-
2 uary and February of 2008.

3 (9) The best way to help the United States
4 automobile industry and manufacturing base recover
5 is to set a goal of selling 15,000,000 new auto-
6 mobiles in 2009 in order to restart the United
7 States economy.

8 **SEC. 3. NEW AUTOMOBILE VOUCHER PROGRAM.**

9 (a) ESTABLISHMENT.—There is established in the
10 Department of the Treasury a program to be known as
11 the “New Automobile Voucher Program”, through which
12 the Secretary shall—

13 (1) authorize the issuance of a voucher, subject
14 to the specifications described in subsection (b), to
15 a dealer for each person or eligible fleet operator
16 who purchases an eligible new automobile from such
17 dealer, which voucher shall be applied towards such
18 purchase;

19 (2) allow any dealer to participate in the Pro-
20 gram if the dealer agrees to—

21 (A) apply a voucher towards the purchase
22 of an eligible new automobile as partial pay-
23 ment for each eligible person or eligible fleet op-
24 erator at the time of purchase; and

(B) comply with all applicable requirements under this Act and regulations promulgated by the Secretary to carry out this Act;

(3) establish a Web-based electronic system to process the vouchers at the point of sale;

6 (4) certify that the Program is operational; and

7 (5) make payments to dealers for vouchers ap-
8 plied by such dealers under paragraph (2) in accord-
9 ance with the provisions of this section.

10 (b) PROGRAM SPECIFICATIONS.—

(1) VOUCHERS PER PERSON.—Not more than 1
voucher may be issued for any person, unless such
person is an eligible fleet operator.

(3) OFFSET.—A dealer—

(B) may not offset the amount of the voucher against any other rebate or discount otherwise being offered by the dealer or manufacturer.

10 (A) PAPERLESS VOUCHER.—Any voucher
11 issued under this section shall be issued elec-
12 tronically through a Web-based electronic sys-
13 tem.

24 (6) PROMPT FULFILLMENT OF REDEMPTION
25 REQUESTS REQUIRED.—The Secretary shall provide

1 for the payment of all vouchers submitted to the
2 Secretary for redemption in accordance with the pro-
3 visions of this Act not later than 10 days after such
4 submission, or within such lesser period as the Sec-
5 retary determines to be practicable.

6 (c) RULEMAKING.—Not later than 30 days after the
7 date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall pro-
8 mulgate regulations to implement the Program, including
9 the enforcement of the penalties described in section 4.

10 (d) DISCLAIMER.—Nothing in this Act or any other
11 provision of law limits the authority of Congress or the
12 Secretary to terminate or limit the Program or the
13 issuance of vouchers under the Program.

14 **SEC. 4. PENALTIES.**

15 (a) VIOLATION.—It shall be unlawful for any person
16 to commit any fraudulent act in connection with a voucher
17 issued under the Program.

18 (b) PENALTIES.—Any person who commits a viola-
19 tion described in subsection (a) shall be liable to the
20 United States Government for a civil penalty of not more
21 than \$10,000 for each violation.

22 **SEC. 5. REPORT.**

23 The Secretary shall submit a report to the Congress
24 every 6 months that specifies, for the most recent 6-month

1 period, the number of vouchers that have been used under
2 the Program.

3 **SEC. 6. DEFINITIONS.**

4 In this Act:

5 (1) AUTOMOBILE.—The term “automobile” has
6 the meaning given such term in section 32901(a) of
7 title 49, United States Code.

8 (2) DEALER.—The term “dealer” means a per-
9 son residing in a State that is engaged in the sale
10 of new automobiles as of the date of introduction of
11 this Act to the first person or eligible fleet operator
12 that is the ultimate purchaser.

13 (3) ELIGIBLE FLEET OPERATOR.—The term
14 “eligible fleet operator” means the operator of a
15 fleet of automobiles that is owned by a partnership,
16 corporation, association, or public or private organiza-
17 tion.

18 (4) INITIAL PERIOD.—The term “initial period”
19 means the first 6 months of the Program, beginning
20 from the date the Secretary certifies the Program is
21 operational.

22 (5) NEW AUTOMOBILE.—The term “new auto-
23 mobile” means an automobile for which a manufac-
24 turer, distributor, or dealer has never transferred

1 the equitable or legal title of such automobile to an
2 ultimate purchaser.

3 (6) ELIGIBLE NEW AUTOMOBILE.—The term
4 “eligible new automobile” means a new automobile
5 whose purchase price is less than \$50,000.

6 (7) PERSON.—The term “person” has the
7 meaning given such term in section 551 of title 5,
8 United States Code.

9 (8) PROGRAM.—The term “Program” means
10 the New Automobile Voucher Program established
11 under section 3.

12 (9) SECONDARY PERIOD.—The term “secondary
13 period” means the time period beginning the day
14 after the initial period has expired and ending De-
15 cember 31, 2010.

16 (10) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary”
17 means the Secretary of the Treasury.

18 (11) STATE.—The term “State” means a State
19 of the United States, the District of Columbia, Puer-
20 to Rico, the Northern Mariana Islands, Guam,
21 American Samoa, and the Virgin Islands.

22 (12) ULTIMATE PURCHASER.—The term “ulti-
23 mate purchaser” means, with respect to a new auto-
24 mobile, the first person who purchases such auto-
25 mobile for purposes other than resale.

1 (13) VOUCHER.—The term “voucher” means a
2 voucher issued to a person who is purchasing an eli-
3 gible new automobile pursuant to the provisions of
4 this Act.

5 **SEC. 7. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**

6 There is authorized to be appropriated to the Sec-
7 retary \$75,000,000,000 to carry out this Act. Of the
8 amount appropriated under this Act, the Secretary shall
9 oblige no more than \$50,000,000 to cover administrative
10 costs for the Program.

