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Cash for clunkers runs out of money ... after one week; **Update:** Feds scramble to save program

posted at 9:56 pm on July 30, 2009 by Allahpundit

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Unlike pretty much every other Hopenchange economic policy, not only did this one work, it worked [better than expected](#). And yet, I can't help thinking there's a lesson in the fact that a centrally planned program budgeted to run through the end of October went bust in, er, seven days. That's some miscalculation — not unlike the miscalculation that promised unemployment no higher than eight percent once we pinched that \$787 billion loaf known as the stimulus. And naturally, the program came buried in so much [bureaucracy and paperwork](#) that some dealers gave up on it despite the amazing business it drummed up.

Ah well. I'm sure none of that will happen with national health care.

The program — aimed at giving a boost to the U.S. auto industry — was supposed to expire at the end of October. But in the one week since it took effect, it appears to have run dry of the \$1 billion allocated to it, aides said Thursday.

The White House will need to decide whether to push for more money at a time when it's also pushing an ambitious and expensive domestic agenda — or let the program fade after it was touted as a way to help Detroit while improving the environment.

One Michigan Republican, Congresswoman Candice Miller, has already come out in favor of extending the program, saying in a statement that “There can be no doubt that the Cash for Clunkers program is a complete success given the fact that the entire \$1 billion allocated to the program was expended in less than a week.”

She called the program “simply the most stimulative \$1 billion the federal government has spent during the entire economic downturn.”

Imagine how stimulative it would be if it wasn't limited to fuel-efficient cars, per the left's green agenda, but to any current model. Actually, though, it really isn't limited: Via [the boss](#), check out Cato's [easy peasy scheme](#) to turn C4C into free money which you can use to buy the clunker or muscle car of your dreams. If they end up extending the program, I'm totally getting that 'Vette I've always wanted. Thanks, Barry!

Update: Looks like I might be [getting that 'Vette](#) after all: “Although key members of Congress were notified by the Secretary of Transportation Thursday that the program would run out of money at midnight, sources said ‘Administration and Congressional officials are working to keep it up and running.’”

Blowback

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Let me try that one!

Progressive = socialist bordering on, if not full fledged, Communist!

dhunter on July 31, 2009 at [12:53 PM](#)

Wait, I see the problem. When I said, “You’re lying.”

I didn’t mean....YOU’RE LYING. I mean, that’s what they say too.

Sorry, if I offended anyone.

My point is that they fall back on that argument. What I always think is they don’t recognize opinion versus fact.

Nobody is lying. It’s just opinion as to what will work and what won’t. What will promote our country and what will hurt.

I didn’t mean anyone here was actually lying. (Although, sometimes, that is the case.)

AnninCA on July 31, 2009 at [12:55 PM](#)

Why didn’t the great and wonderful Oz and his lollipop kids institute cash for clunkers *before* two of three American car makers went bankrupt?

[Speakup](#) on July 31, 2009 at [12:55 PM](#)

oh great, they suspend at 8pm last night and restart again at noon the following day.
Do they have any idea the they could not look less competent?

ORconservative on July 31, 2009 at [12:56 PM](#)

Obamas Lying!

dhunter on July 31, 2009 at [12:56 PM](#)

The problems arising from this program are validating me. I wanted a truly pragmatic president, with experience. I felt strongly that Hillary had learned the hard way about trying to govern from big ideas. She found out. The devil is in the details and how smoothly programs are introduced.

I felt strongly that Obama was a charming, affable guy, without that experience, who met the unspoken inner need of Americans to give the black guy a shot. I agreed with Ferraro totally. This was the year of the black man.

It was a huge stretch for him. We’re seeing that’s the case.

Several programs have simply bombed. He’s proven to be Carteresque. But I still think American will evaluate this based on healing race relations, too, and come out saying, “It was worth the risk.”