



Written by [Raven Clabough](#) on September 28, 2011

Did White House Tell Ford to Pull Its Bailout Ad?

The Ford Motor Company's greatest claim to fame as of late is the fact that it did not participate in the federal government's bailout of General Motors and Chrysler. Ford was so proud of this that it actually created a commercial touting this truth. Allegedly at the request of the Obama administration, however, the ad will no longer be run on television.



In the commercial, an actual buyer is led to a surprise news conference where he is asked impromptu questions. The buyer responds by saying, I wasn't going to buy another car that was bailed out by the government. I was going to buy from a manufacturer that's standing on their own: win, lose, or draw. That's what America is about is taking the chance to succeed and understanding when you fail that you gotta pick yourself up and go back to work.

The Detroit News [reports](#):

Ford pulled the ad after individuals inside the White House questioned whether the copy was publicly denigrating the controversial bailout policy CEO Alan Mulally repeatedly supported in the dark days of late 2008, in early 09 and again when the ad flap arose. And more.

President Obama is already facing a difficult re-election campaign, particularly as the economy remains bleak, and there is growing resentment toward his stimulus spending and the bailouts.

It may be worth mentioning, however, that Ford's commercial was not entirely honest. While it is indeed true that Ford did not participate in the same bailout program as did Chrysler and General Motors, it did in fact accept money through the Federal Reserve's Commercial Paper Funding Facility. MLive.com explains:

Set up in 2008, the CPFF helped companies obtain high-interest, short-term loans known as commercial paper during the height of the international credit crunch. Some outlets, such as Fox Business, have referred to the program as the "[commercial paper bailout](#)."

Hyde correctly points out that Ford's credit arm registered to sell the federal government around \$16 billion in commercial paper. Like the financing wing of most automakers Toyota, BMW, GMAC, and Chrysler also participated Ford found itself in need of liquidity when the lending markets dried up.

Ford did not make any efforts to keep this transaction a secret. In October of 2008, company spokeswoman Brenda Hines told Bloomberg News that Ford Credit applied for the program, and in December 2010, another Ford spokeswoman, Christin Baker, said that Ford reported its participation in the CPFF in its public SEC filings.



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Baker also declared that Ford participated in the Federal Reserves Term Asset-Backed Security Loan Facility, indicating that these two programs addressed systematic failure in the credit markets, and that neither program was designed for a particular company, or even a particular industry. She added, Ford was a fractional participant in both of these credit programs, and the federal government made healthy returns on all of these limited transactions.

Still, the Obama administration was uncomfortable with Fords commercial, believing it denigrated the bailout program at a time when Obama needs his agenda to be celebrated, not criticized.

According to the *Detroit News*, The ad, pulled in response to White House questions (and, presumably, carping from rival GM), threatened to rekindle the negative (if accurate) association just when the president wants credit for their positive results (GM and Chrysler are moving forward, making money and selling vehicles) and to distance himself from any public downside of his decision.

The Hill notes that the ad has been removed from both television and YouTube. At the time this story was first reported by the *Detroit News*, the only version of it that could be found was one that was recorded using someones cellphone. Since then, however, YouTube has reposted the video.

Remarking on this effort by the White House, Ed Morrissey of *Hot Air* [wrote](#):

[T]he fact that the White House exerted pressure on Ford to cease and desist is a rather ominous example of why we want government to stay out of the business of running auto companies at all. A free market doesnt stay free when government begins competing in it, and just the mere existence of the ability to use its regulatory power to favor its own operation will distort market behavior in significant and freedom-chilling ways. Knocking an ad critical of government policy off of television and the Internet is simply a more visible symptom of those dangers.

Both Ford and the White House are claiming that there was no pressure from the Obama administration to discontinue the advertisement.

But many analysts are unconvinced. Conservative pundit Michelle Malkin [contacted](#) representatives from both Ford and the White House, but the responses from both Ford and the Obama administration have been elusive, prompting Malkin to conclude, I think a FOIA request is in order.

Photo: Ford Motor Company headquarters in Dearborn, Michigan



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