

For Immediate Release
Tuesday, November 18, 2008

Jason Webber
City of Toledo
Public Information Officer
(419) 245 - 1016

Mayor Finkbeiner and UAW Leader Bruce Baumhower Rally For Toledo's Auto Workers in Washington, D.C.

Toledo, OH - Mayor Finkbeiner and UAW Local 12 President Bruce Baumhower spent today in Washington, D.C., lobbying for Federal financial assistance to America's beleaguered auto industry. While there, they -- along with a group of about 40 Mayors, City Managers, and Labor Leaders -- met with Congresswoman Marcy Kaptur, and Congressman John Dingell. Mayor Finkbeiner and Mr. Baumhower also met privately with Ohio Senator Sherrod Brown.

Mayor Finkbeiner was one of four Mayors from across America to speak at a press conference today, addressing the struggles of manufacturing-based cities. In addition to Mayor Finkbeiner, participants included Mayor Virg Bernero of Lansing, Michigan; Mayor Cedric Glover of Shreveport, Louisiana; and Mayor Robert Cluck of Arlington, Texas.

Mayor Finkbeiner said that the main focus of the press conference consisted of two points. The first was to address the need for a bridge loan to American automotive companies. The proposed assistance package includes a request that \$25 billion dollars out of the \$700 billion financial rescue package go to the Big 3. The other main point was to emphasize the need for a \$1 billion investment in the Economic Development Administration's "Economic Adjustment Assistance" Program, which would assist industrial cities like Toledo in brownfield cleanup that could lead to new, "green collar" jobs in the alternative energy sector.

Today from Washington, D.C., Mayor Finkbeiner released the following statement: "\$350 billion went to Wall Street bankers, and we still have not seen any evidence in Toledo that this has stimulated the economy in any way. Our request is for a modest \$25 billion that would not go to any Wall Street fat cat, but to the working class people who built this nation. The American auto worker did not bring this financial crisis upon themselves, and it is wrong to punish them at a time when 1 in 10 jobs in America are impacted by the auto industry. Even after the United Auto Workers made concessions and adjustments in their contracts, Toledo has lost two shifts at the Jeep plant, resulting in more than 1700 job losses. Additionally, 600 more supplier jobs have been lost. We cannot allow our auto industry or its hard-working men and women to continue to languish like this."

Mr. Baumhower also released a statement expressing his views on the auto crisis: "Today, there was a lot of dialogue about how this crisis is somehow the fault of the workers, the Big 3, or the UAW. Nothing could be further from the truth. Seven years ago, we opened a new Jeep plant in Toledo, and last year we built 157,000 vehicles--an all-time record since the vehicle debuted during World War II. This year, in comparison, the plants have been shut down for weeks because of the credit crunch. Additionally, both GM Powertrain and Toledo Jeep were recognized by the independent research study the Harbour Report as two of America's most productive auto plants. You can blame our workers for only one thing--and that is Toledo's continuing reputation as one of the best automotive cities in America."

Mayor Finkbeiner and Mr. Baumhower returned to Toledo early Tuesday evening.

###