

*July 30 / Administration of Barack Obama, 2010*

confidence in you. I have confidence in this economy. We are coming back.

Thank you, everybody. Thank you. God bless you, and God bless the United States of America.

## Remarks at the General Motors Detroit-Hamtramck Assembly Center in Hamtramck, Michigan

*July 30, 2010*

Hello, everybody! Hello, Detroit! Thank you. Listen, before I just make a few short remarks, I just want to acknowledge some people who are here who have been critical in helping make sure that we are putting the U.S. auto industry back on track. First of all, my Secretary of Transportation, Ray LaHood, from Peoria, Illinois, is here. The mayor of Hamtramck, Karen Majewski, is here. Give her a big round of applause. Detroit mayor and Hall of Famer Dave Bing is in the house. Two Senators who've been fighting for you each and every day, Carl Levin and Debbie Stabenow, are here. Wonderful Congresswoman Carolyn Cheeks Kilpatrick is here. UAW President Bob King is in the house. General Motors CEO Ed Whitacre is here. And I want to thank Teri Quigley and Frank Moultrie for the great tour that they gave me.

Now, I have to tell you, some of you saw me drive the Volt about 12 inches. They don't let me drive much these days. But the Cadillac that I drive in is made right here. I got to admit the Secret Service soups it up a little bit. But it's a nice ride. It's very smooth.

You know, it is great to be back here and to see this outstanding plant and to see all of you. And I want to take you down memory lane just a little bit to a year ago. At that point, we were coming out of the worst recession that we had seen since the Great Depression. The economy was shrinking. We had lost 8 million jobs. The day I was sworn in, we lost—that month, we lost 750,000 jobs, that month that I was sworn in. That's true.

The auto industry had lost hundreds of thousands of jobs. Sales had gone down by 40 percent. And two of the Big Three, GM and Chrysler, were on the brink of a liquidation bankrupt-

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:16 p.m. In his remarks, he referred to Chrysler employee Leah Soehartono; Alan Mulally, president and chief executive officer, Ford Motor Company; and Lisa Shanteau, wife of William Shanteau.

cy, which means they would have been wiped out. And if GM and Chrysler were wiped out, then suppliers would be wiped out and dealerships would have been wiped out and communities would have been even more devastated.

It's estimated that we would have lost another million jobs if we had not stepped in. Now, we basically had three options when I was confronting what was happening in the U.S. auto industry.

Option number one was to keep on doing what the previous administration had been doing, which is basically give about a billion dollars a month to the auto industry, but not really ask for any kind of change that would get it on the right track.

Option two was to do nothing, and as I said, we would have lost another million jobs. But more importantly, we would have lost what has been the heart and soul of American manufacturing, what has built a middle class not just here in Detroit, but all throughout the Midwest, what has made us proud and has been a symbol of our economic power.

So I didn't like either of those two options, and I went for a third option. The third option was, we are going to give you the help you need, but we are also going to insist that management, workers, creditors, suppliers, dealers, shareholders, everybody get together and come up with a plan so that we can start building for the future, so we're not looking backwards, but we're moving forward.

Now, that was a tough decision, and let's face it, a lot of people were skeptical. I don't know if you all remember, but I remember how last year, there were a whole bunch of folks who said, "Well, that makes no sense." There's the

“just say no” crowd in Washington—they’re still saying no—who basically said: “Well, this is a terrible investment. We should just let the market take its course, let GM, let Chrysler go bankrupt.” So there was a lot of skepticism out there.

But we made the decision to step in. And the reason I did that was because I had confidence in you. I had faith in you, because I believe that the American worker is the best worker on Earth. We’ve got the best engineers, we’ve got the best technologies, and if we could just mobilize our strengths and our talents and feel confident about the future, nothing can stop us.

And now here we are a year later. And a year later, GM and Chrysler, along with Ford, are all posting a profit. The U.S. auto industry has hired 55,000 workers, the most job growth in a decade. And not only that, but you’re producing the cars of the future right here at this plant, producing cars that are going to reduce our dependence on foreign oil. This car right here doesn’t need a sip of gasoline for 40 miles and then keeps on going after that.

And along with creating these new products, we’ve also started to say, well, why don’t we make the advanced batteries that go into the Volt right here in the United States of America? So we were making 2 percent of the advanced batteries right here in the United States. By 2015, in 5 years, we will have 40 percent of the market in advanced batteries right here in the United States of America being made by American workers.

Now, let’s be clear: We’re not out of the woods yet. The economy is now growing. It was shrinking at 6 percent. Now it’s growing at 2.4 percent. We’ve added private sector jobs for 6 months in a row. But there’s still too many folks unemployed. There are a lot of folks in the auto industry who haven’t been hired back. We’re

still going to have to do a lot of work to put folks back to work.

But we are moving in the right direction. The trend lines are good. And as people get more confident, people are going to start saying, it’s finally time for me to buy a new car. And they’re not just going to look at some foreign-made car, they’re going to say, you know what, GM is making the car of the future, and I’m going to take a look at what GM is making.

So we’ve got a lot of work to do. We’ve got some challenges out here. We’re going to have to keep on being lean and mean. We’re going to have to keep on marketing our products more effectively. We’re going to have to make sure the Government, business, everybody is working in the same direction. We’ve got to export more. We can’t just buy from other countries; we got to sell to other countries. And that means we’ve got to make sure that our trade deals are fair. But let me tell you, when I look out at this plant and I look out at all of you, it gives me hope. It confirms my conviction: Don’t bet against the American worker; don’t bet against the American people.

We are back on our feet. We are on the move. GM is on the move, the U.S. auto industry is on the move, and America is on the move. And I’m not going to rest until every single American worker who wants to get back to work is going to be back to work. You’re helping lead the way, and I’m grateful to you.

God bless you, and God bless the United States of America. Thank you, everybody.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:46 p.m. In his remarks, he referred to Teri Quigley, plant manager, Detroit-Hamtramck Assembly Center; and Frank Moultrie, chairman, UAW Local 22.

## Statement on the Detention of American Citizens in Iran *July 30, 2010*

Tomorrow marks 1 year since Sarah Shourd, Shane Bauer, and Josh Fattal were detained by the Islamic Republic of Iran. Sarah, Shane, and Josh committed absolutely no crime. When they

were arrested and detained, they were hiking in the region along the border of Iran and Iraq. Yet for a full year, they have been held in prison, causing extraordinary grief and uncertainty