

Congress of the United States  
Washington, DC 20515

May 31, 2011

Dear Chairman Rogers and Ranking Member Dicks,

We write to you today with deep concern regarding the Homeland Security Appropriations bill marked up in the Appropriations Committee last week. As we understand it, this legislation could be on the floor as early as Wednesday of this week.

The tornados and flooding in the Midwest and Southeast have taken a devastating toll on the people of those regions. The death toll due to tornados for 2011 has already reached more than 520, making this year the deadliest year for tornados since 1950. Indeed, in Missouri, there are still a number of people unaccounted for. The damage in the Southeast is equally as bad, with nearly as many fatalities. In addition, countless individuals and families have lost their homes and belongings due to flooding along the Mississippi. As a result of these tragedies, the Committee wisely provided funding to address the costs of these incidents in the Homeland Security Appropriations bill.

The devastation clearly must be addressed. In order to properly pay for the incidents in the Midwest and Southeast, which will likely cost many billions of dollars, Congress has emergency spending authority. This authority has customarily been used to pay for unforeseen events. The normal budgetary caps do not apply, thus no offset is required. We strongly urge you to proceed down this path rather than taking funding from important programs like the Advanced Technology Vehicles Manufacturing (ATVM) program.

The ATVM program was established in 2007 and consists of direct loans for vehicle and parts manufacturers to convert their factories to build the fuel efficient cars of the future. This program is critical to the competitiveness of the United States and supports the important goal of moving to clean energy in the automotive sector. The program helps to ensure that new advanced vehicles are more efficient than conventional cars and trucks. If the United States is to succeed, we cannot keep fighting for last year's technology. The ATVM program helps us get to and stay on the technological forefront. Simply put, this program is too important to be cut.

While we must deal with the unsustainable deficit, we also must take care of the American people whose lives have been nearly destroyed through no fault of their own. As such, we urge you to move forward with an emergency spending bill that takes care of the unforeseeable emergencies, keeps us on solid fiscal footing and does not harm future American competitiveness.



Henry Waxman  
Member of Congress



Sander Levin  
Member of Congress



John D. Dingell  
Member of Congress

Dennis J. Kennedy

John Kennedy

Lois Capps

George Miller

Lynn Woolsey

Oak E. Alden

Edward J. Markey

Tim Ryan

Russ Couch

By C. Petr

John D. ...

Mr. G. ...

Paul Blumenauer

J. Andee