

FORD CEO PRESSURED TO EXPLAIN HIS ANTI-BAILOUT ADVERTISEMENT



The congressional oversight panel Republican chairman requested that Ford Motor Company explain its decision to remove its critical television commercial of the president's automotive bailout. Chairman of the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, Darrell Issa, asked Allan Mulally, the Ford Chief Executive, whether a representative from the White House or someone from the United Auto Workers union spoke to Ford Motor Company about their recent advertisement. Ford's commercial features a new Ford F-Series pickup truck owner stating that he chose a Ford because the company did not take the federal automotive bailout, unlike all its competitors. It was the first time that the company made this reference during an national advertisement campaign. It was a part of Ford's series campaign called "Drive One". It focuses on winning loyal customers from other brands over to the Ford Motor Company. The man who made the reference about the government bailout is known as Chris in the commercial. In the commercial, Chris states, "I wasn't going to buy another car that was bailed out by our government. I was going to buy from a manufacturer that's standing on their own: win, lose, or draw." Meghan Keck, a spokeswoman for Ford, stated that the motor company did not receive any pressure from Washington D.C. to remove the advertisement from the television. However, shortly after its appearance at the beginning of this month, it stopped airing on the television. Daniel Howes, a columnist for the Detroit News, wrote a report earlier this week that stated the Obama administration expressed its unhappiness to Ford about its commercial. In his letter to Mulally, Issa stressed the importance of airing all the facts out for the American people. The nation deserves to know that Ford Motor Company did not take the federal bailout while its competitors Chrysler and General Motors did. Experts state that the federal bailout saved the industry from collapsing, and it kept nearly 1 million people in a job. Although Ford did not take advantage of the federal bailout for the auto industry, it did receive a multi-billion dollar loan from the United States Energy Department. This money went to help reduce its debt from borrowing costs. Alan Mulally has yet to respond to Issa's letter regarding their decision to remove the advertisement from its circulation. Though, as Issa stated in his letter, "The close relationship between American automobile manufacturers, workers union and the US government in the wake of a series of loans, grants and stimulus programs, accusations of White House interference in private business matters to support its own political and policy agendas are very serious issues and warrant a full airing of facts." Regardless of Ford's reasoning, the company had every right to present the nation with facts regarding its decision not to participate in the bailout.

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