



**CONGRESSMAN MICHAEL R. TURNER**

**THIRD DISTRICT OF OHIO**

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**Weekly Column**  
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### **Looking for Answers for Delphi Retirees**

*By Congressman Michael Turner*

In March, I along with Congressman Dan Burton (IN-5) sent a letter to Oversight and Government Reform Committee Chairman Darrell Issa requesting that the Committee convene hearings into the actions of Pension Benefit Guarantee Corporation (PBGC) relating to Delphi employee pensions. Congressman Burton and I are members of this Committee, which has the responsibility to oversee and investigate a wide range of government agencies and operations.

When the US government took over General Motors, a decision made by the PBGC in consultation with the U.S. Treasury resulted in approximately 15,000 salaried Delphi retirees from across the country taking a severe cut in their promised pension benefits that had been earned throughout their careers. This action undertaken with taxpayer funds has not been explained or justified.

The March letter requesting the hearings noted that “Unions were treated differently [in the decision making process] with the so-called ‘splinter unions’ such as the IUE, IBEW, and IAM still facing benefit reductions while the UAW retirees saw their pensions topped off and continue to receive full benefits... In fact, the IUE pensions were initially slated to take the same cuts as salaried retirees, but the A[uto] T[ask] F[orce] reversed this decision three weeks after GM emerged from bankruptcy.”

Furthermore, we wrote that “because of the substantial taxpayer investment in the auto industry, and the role of the Federal Government Agencies resulting in the reduction or elimination of these benefits, Congress has a responsibility to exercise its oversight authority in this matter and ensure that all Delphi employees receive the pensions they deserve.”

Following our letter, a hearing was scheduled by the Subcommittee on Regulatory Affairs, Stimulus Oversight and Government Spending to review the "Lasting Implications of the GM Bailout" on June 22<sup>nd</sup>. At this hearing, I and other lawmakers had the opportunity to question Ron Bloom, who served as the Senior Advisor to the Secretary of the Treasury on the President's Task Force on the Automotive Industry. This position placed him as the head of the government's auto bailout program.

However, at the hearing, Mr. Bloom claimed that he wasn't able to talk about the bailout because of pending lawsuits. I took exception with this fact, and informed Mr. Bloom that pending litigation had no effect on his ability to testify about what had occurred. Despite his evasion of my questioning, I submitted over 20 additional questions to both Mr. Bloom and the PBGC. These questions cover how the Delphi pension decision was reached, and what plans are in place to ensure that these employees receive their pensions.

Two weeks after that hearing, I am still awaiting a response to my questions. This hearing is just a step in the process of uncovering how this decision was reached, and who was responsible. My continued work on this issue is part of an effort to seek the restoration of these hard earned pension benefits. I will continue to press for answers to my questions and those of Delphi employees who have yet to be made whole on their pension losses.

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*Congressman Michael R. Turner represents Ohio's Third Congressional District.*

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