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Perlmutter's auto talk shifts gears to health reform, economy

By ADAM GOLDSTEIN
The Aurora Sentinel

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AURORA | Rep. Ed Perlmutter's dialogue during a visit to a local car dealership on Aug. 3 encompassed much more than the automotive industry.

While the forum, which took place at Budget Car and Truck Sales on South Havana Street, offered the Congressman the opportunity to specifically address the federal "cash for clunkers" program, it also offered attendees the opportunity to ask questions about health care reform, taxes and the larger state of the economy.

Perlmutter's appearance drew a wide range of attendees, including representatives from the local business community and state and city representatives. Perlmutter addressed the state of the larger economy during opening statements, addressing specific programs aimed at ramping up economic activity.

Perlmutter offered praise for the "cash for clunkers" program, an initiative that offered up to \$4,500 to trade older, gas-guzzler vehicles in for new, fuel-efficient models. Last week, the House voted to approve \$2 billion in additional funding for the program, a sum taken from American Reinvestment and Recovery Act monies.

"It's not new money," Perlmutter said. "Hopefully, the Senate will agree with what we did," he added, referring to the vote in the Senate on the new funding scheduled for later this week.

In regards to the program, attendees specifically asked Perlmutter about the possibility of extending the program to used car dealers.

"We'd have to start with a new piece of legislation," Perlmutter said. "We are already getting a push back."

In response to additional questions from the attendants regarding health care, Perlmutter stressed the need for reform of a system he characterized as "broken" and "wrong."

"Personally, I just think (our current system) is wrong. I think it's a crazy system; I think it's unconstitutional under the 14th Amendment, which insures equal protection to people," Perlmutter said. "I think we have a broken system in that it discriminates against most people."



PERLMUTTER IN AURORA U.S. Rep. Ed Perlmutter talks during a discussion of the automotive industry, the economy and other issues on Monday, Aug. 3, at Budget Auto Sales in Aurora. (Heather A. Longway/The Aurora Sentinel)



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