

CASH FOR “ASSEMBLED IN THE USA” PROGRAM

Yesterday, I showed that the only "made in America" car (including engine and transmission) that would get someone trading in an Explorer the full \$4500 Cash for Clunker benefit was a Ford Focus (though I shortchanged the Chevy Malibu and Saturn Aura, which are assembled in the US though may have an engine or transmission made in Canada or the US).

The point being that manufacturers don't make many efficient cars in the US.

That said, if we look at whether the cars bought in the Cash for Clunkers are assembled in the US, then the story is more positive. Here's the list of the top 10 vehicles bought with a Cash for Clunkers credit:

1. Ford Focus
2. Toyota Corolla
3. Honda Civic
4. Toyota Prius
5. Toyota Camry
6. Ford Escape FWD
7. Hyundai Elantra
8. Dodge Caliber
9. Honda Fit
10. Chevrolet Cobalt

All but the Caliber and Camry would have qualified for a full rebate under my scenario (if I used a 4WD Ford Explorer, which was the most traded-in vehicle, rather than a 2WD, then the Camry would get you the full benefit, and note the Escape qualifies for the small truck benefit, which is less stringent).

Here's the list again, with the assembly location:

1. Ford Focus, Wayne, MI
2. Toyota Corolla, Fremont, CA
3. Honda Civic, Greensburg, IN and Canada
4. Toyota Prius, Japan

5. Toyota Camry, Georgetown, KY and Lafayette, IN
6. Ford Escape FWD, Claycomo, MO
7. Hyundai Elantra, South Korea
8. Dodge Caliber, Belvidere, IL
9. Honda Fit, Japan
10. Chevrolet Cobalt, Lordstown, OH

So in addition to all the local jobs based out of dealers, this program is supporting jobs in MI, CA, IN, KY, IN, MO, IL, and OH (as well as Korea and Japan). Claire McCaskill, you still hate Cars for Clunkers?