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Obama touts 'Outsource to Detroit'

BY CHRISTINE TIERNEY THE DETROIT NEWS WASHINGTON BUREAU 11 COMMENTS



GalaxE.Solutions Inc. President Tim Bryan shakes hands with President Barack Obama after Obama spoke on "Insourcing American Jobs" in the East Room of the White House. (MANDEL NGAN/AFP/Getty Images)

Washington— President Barack Obama held up Ford Motor Co. as an example of companies contributing to the economy by bringing jobs back into the U.S. — and that should be rewarded for their efforts.

"You've heard of outsourcing.

Well, these companies are insourcing," Obama said Wednesday in a speech, surrounded by business executives, state and local officials and union leaders.

Ford plans to invest \$16 billion in the U.S. by 2015, he said. "And that includes bringing back about 2,000 jobs" into the country.

Small firms also can contribute, Obama said, citing GalaxE.Solutions, a New Jersey health care IT company headed by chairman and CEO Tim Bryan.

"They've already hired 150 workers with their 'Outsource to Detroit' program, and they plan on hiring up to 500," Obama said. "Tim was quoted as saying, 'There are some really talented people in Detroit, and we're putting them back to work.'"

In the next few weeks, the Obama administration will present tax proposals to reward companies investing in the U.S. and creating jobs. The measures also would eliminate tax breaks for companies shifting work and jobs abroad.

"I don't want America to be a nation that's primarily known for financial speculation and racking up debt buying stuff from other nations," Obama said.

The White House highlighted its efforts to create jobs at the high-profile event on the day after GOP front-runner Mitt Romney won the New Hampshire Republican primary.

Romney has targeted Obama as a foe of free enterprise, and Obama's forum aimed to counter that message.

Speaking afterward with reporters, United Steelworkers President Leo Gerard said his union had dealt with firms owned by Bain Capital when it was headed by Romney. "Obama's focused on working people and has been focused on them for quite some time," Gerard said.

Mark Fields, president of Ford's Americas region, said the automaker was glad to be "doing its part" to create American jobs.

He said Ford couldn't have succeeded without the cooperation of the United Auto Workers, represented at the event by UAW President Bob King.

Ford and the union forged a competitive labor accord that made it possible for Ford to build small cars profitably in the U.S., invest \$16 billion, and add 12,000 jobs in U.S. plants by 2015. "We are insourcing jobs from China, Japan and Mexico," Fields said.

Instead of expanding production in Mexico to make the Fusion car, Ford is bringing that work to its Flat Rock plant in Michigan, he said. That will ensure the plant's viability and add more than 1,200 jobs.

Ford also plans to bring back the production of F-650 and F-750 commercial trucks from a joint venture in Mexico to a plant in Avon Lake, Ohio, and retain nearly 2,000 jobs there.

Among the other examples praised by the White House, the Canadian company AGS Automotive Systems agreed to invest more \$20 million in Michigan to manufacture part of its bumper impact assemblies. The new business, obtained with the help of state and federal incentives, will enable AGS to retain around 50 jobs and create more than 100 new jobs in Michigan.

The White House says the president will propose \$12 million in his 2013 budget to promote business investment from overseas in the U.S., according to the Associated Press. The White House didn't provide details of the tax changes he'll propose.

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