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Manny Martinez, President of Honda of Pasadena



Basilio Cruz, Sales Manager



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Juanito Enrera, Sales and Leasing

of Pasadena offers to its customers available at a justified price range. You'll be surprised on how convenient car-buying can be with Honda of Pasadena.

Among their current special offers are the Civic LX 2 Door, Civic Hybrid, Accord LX 4CYL, Odyssey EX and PILOT EX 4WD, all at reasonable prices. A wide range of pre-owned vehicles are also available.

All the vehicles that Honda of Pasadena can also be found

at their website www.HONDAOFPASADENA.com with all the information you may need about the cars. Their Internet department can be reached at (626) 683-5888.

Honda of Pasadena is located at 1965 E. Foothill Blvd., Pasadena CA. For immediate assistance, please feel free to contact Manny Martinez, President of Honda of Pasadena, at (626) 683-5888 or your Filipino Sales Manager, Basilio Cruz. You can

also ask for one of the Filipino salespeople who are always ready to lend a hand to their *kababayans*: Juanito Enrera and Edwin Punsal.

Honda of Pasadena's Sales Department hours is open from 9am-10pm, Mondays to Saturdays; and 10am-8pm on Sundays. The Service and Parts office is open from 7am-2am, Mondays to Fridays; and 7am-5pm on Saturdays.

(Advertising Supplement)

Congress eyes incentives for car shoppers

WASHINGTON—Car shoppers may have a good reason to trade in their old jalopy for something that gets better gas mileage. Congress is developing “cash for clunkers” legislation that would provide vouchers to consumers who trade in their gas guzzlers and buy more fuel-efficient vehicles. Modeled after successful programs in Europe, the bills are designed to get more gas-sipping cars on the road and boost auto sales, which dropped more than 40 percent among the Big Three carmakers in March.

Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid, D-Nev., and House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif., have signaled support for some type of car scrappage program and lawmakers are trying to develop a compromise that could win approval in both chambers. “It will jump-start the demand for new cars, helping our auto industries,” said Sen. Charles Schumer, D-N.Y. “And most importantly help families trade in expensive, low miles per gallon vehicles for cheaper fuel efficient vehicles.”

With General Motors Corp. and Chrysler

LLC surviving on billions in government aid and few takers at car dealerships, lawmakers have been trying to develop incentives to help the auto industry and respond to environmental groups that want better fuel efficiency in the vehicle fleet.

President Barack Obama gave momentum to a “cash-for-clunker” program on Monday, urging Congress to use part of the economic stimulus package to give consumers a “generous credit” when they trade in their older car for something more fuel-efficient. (AP)

Mass. wants to dip into funds, delay toll hikes

by GLEN JOHNSON
Associated Press

BOSTON—Gov. Deval Patrick reversed course Thursday, April 2 and asked the board of the Massachusetts Turnpike Authority—which he controls—to delay a pair of toll increases slated to take effect this year.

Patrick, Senate President Therese Murray and House Speaker Robert DeLeo asked the authority in a rare joint statement to instead dip into a \$54 million reserve fund to tide it over until the Legislature can act on a sweeping transportation overhaul.

The delay risks a downgrade in a Pike's bond rating, potentially increasing its interest costs, but Murray pledged to debate her own overhaul legislation next week, and DeLeo said his chamber would debate the matter the following week.

The leaders have yet to agree on whether the state will increase its gasoline tax, though Patrick said there was consensus on the need for “new revenue.” Patrick has proposed a 19-cent gas tax hike, generat-

ing legislative opposition.

“There are costs and risks associated with that postponement, but we believe that those costs and risks are worth it because of the genuine prospect of a long-term solution,” Patrick told reporters.

They said their goal is to enact the resulting bill by July 1.

Mary Connaughton, the only Turnpike board member to vote last month against the toll increase, said she was surprised by the change in approach. At the time, the board's chairman, Trans-

portation Secretary James Aloisi, and fellow member Michael Angelini said the increase was needed to preserve the authority's bond rating.

The governor has appointed a majority of the five-member board, and it approved the increase by a 4-1 vote.

“It was the governor's team that supported this massive toll hike, and this is a step in the opposite direction,” Connaughton said. “The governor realized that the politics of such an enormous toll hike would not play out well for him.”

Under the plan, tolls would have been raised in two stages this month and in July at the Boston Harbor tunnels and the Weston and Allston-Brighton booths near and in Boston.

The board's initial approval of the plan in November prompted a wave of public opposition. It triggered discussion of a gasoline tax increase as an alternative way to raise money for the Turnpike and to spread other transportation costs more evenly among the motoring public.

Patrick ended up proposing a 19-cent increase,

along with proposals aimed at streamlining the transportation bureaucracy and stabilizing debt payments at the Turnpike and the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority.

The Pike has about \$2.2 billion in debt, most of it after being saddled with repaying the state's share of the \$15 billion Big Dig project, while the T has about \$8 billion in debt from various subway, bus and commuter rail projects.

Lawmakers have balked at Patrick's proposal, which would give the state the nation's highest gasoline tax at 42.5 cents per gallon, and have suggested they will support nothing more than 9 cents per gallon.

Patrick and Boston business leaders in particular have argued that sum will not generate enough revenue to address myriad transportation issues and instead leave drivers with a higher gas tax and higher tolls and commuter fares in the near future.

Separately, the Turnpike announced Thursday that it was extending the bid process for a contract to lease the Pike's 11 service station plazas to April 24. (AP)

Glimmer of hope in March's steep auto sales drop

by TOM KRISHER
Associated Press

DETROIT—Talk of government loans and bankruptcy and a 37 percent drop in March sales isn't good news, but despite it all, there seems to be a little optimism returning to the U.S. auto industry.

Carmakers' March sales were dismal compared with last year, but consumers lured by record incentives pushed the February-to-March increase above the normal rise that comes at the end of winter.

“Maybe we'll get—imagine that—some momentum going,” said Mike DiGiovanni, executive director of global market and industry analysis for General Motors Corp., whose 45 percent sales decline last month was the worst among the major automakers.

Americans bought 857,735 new vehicles in March, compared with 1.36 million in the same month a year ago, Autodata Corp. said Wednesday. But sales jumped nearly 25 percent from February, beating the typical increase of about 20 percent and increasing optimism that the worst may be over for an industry battered by the global recession and bad publicity about GM and Chrysler's financial woes.

The carmakers are counting on more people like Richard Bolton, a Houston police officer who lives in suburban Livingston, Texas. Discounts amounting to \$8,500 lured him into signing papers to buy a four-door Jeep Wrangler on Tuesday from River Oaks Chrysler-Jeep.

“I know they're not selling too many cars, and I've got a stable job,” said the 26-year veteran patrol officer. He bought the Jeep, with a sticker price of \$29,990, “probably to get more discounts and rebates and the employee price.”

The average incentive on vehicles sold last month was \$3,169, up 30 percent from a year earlier and a record high for the industry, according to the auto Web site Edmunds.com.

A good deal also reeled in Catherine Crawford of Newton, Mass., who on Wednesday bought her first car in about 12 years, a Toyota RAV4 small crossover vehicle.

Like many buyers, the researcher for a private federal contractor held off on her purchase for as long as she could.

“We are very careful with our money, and we've been saving for a while, so we sort of knew that we have to buy a car in the next couple of years,” she said. “Basically now seemed like the right time to do it.”

the big factor—only \$3,000 more for a new vehicle compared with a used one, she said.

On a conference call with reporters and industry analysts, GM's DiGiovanni said most automakers finished March stronger than expected, and he believes the market is “bouncing around the bottom here.”

Tight credit, which some automakers said cost them 20 percent of their sales, started to loosen during the month. GM's financial arm, GMAC Financial Services, said Wednesday it would lower minimum credit score requirements for auto loans.

Bob Carter, head of the Toyota brand for Toyota Motor Sales USA, said the industry is in a “bottoming process.” While Toyota's sales fell 39 percent compared with a year ago, the daily selling rate increased from February, he said.

There is “a very early indication that we have flooded, and there's some optimism starting to return to the market,” he said.

Dearborn-based Ford Motor Co.'s sales dropped 41 percent, but its economist, Emily Kolinski Morris, also saw signs that the economic decline was moderating in March. February was the worst sales month in 27 years.

Housing industry metrics improved in February, and consumer confidence has started to stabilize, she said.

“Based on past performance, these indicators would point to some improvement in the vehicle sales pace in roughly three months' time,” she said. “We recognize that changes in economic indicators are likely to be ambiguous in the early stage of a recovery and mixed signals may still be a precursor to more consistently positive ones.”

Chrysler LLC saw sales fall 39 percent for the month, and it's facing a 30-day government deadline to partner with Fiat Group SpA or go out of business. But its executives were optimistic because the Auburn Hills, Mich., company sold more than 100,000 vehicles for the first time since last fall.

Honda Motor Co., which on Tuesday cut North American production and offered buyouts to workers, saw a 36 percent sales drop in March, while Nissan Motor Co.'s sales dropped 38 percent.

Bankruptcy talk and rejection of restructuring plans by the government have hurt GM's image, DiGiovanni conceded. But GM research shows individual brands, he said, have not been tarnished by the parent company's troubles.

“The GM brand gets dinged big-time in terms of considering a GM vehicle when you use the

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