

Germany's cash-for-clunkers plan big hit

by UPI

BERLIN -- U.S. lawmakers are again discussing an American version of Germany's car-scraping subsidy program, though the plan has its critics.

The cash-for-clunkers program has been a hit generally in Germany where for some it's a dream scheme come true. One simply drops off the old rust heap at a junk yard and gets 2,500 euros from the state to buy a shiny, new car, Deutsche Welle reports.

German Transport Minister Wolfgang Tiefensee says the unexpected popularity is good news for the nation's ailing economy, especially in the auto industry.

Eleven other European countries are trying their own plan. And U.S. officials, who had an earlier plan shot down by Congress, are thinking about trying it again, the report said.

One U.S. plan under consideration would pay up to \$5,000 if the trade involves trade-ins of models from 2001 or earlier and purchase of a new vehicle assembled in the United States, Canada or Mexico.

The second proposal, would involve payments of \$2,500 to \$4,000 linked to tight efficiency controls with no discrimination against foreign cars.

Most criticism deals with questions about the environment and possible discrimination of various cars.

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