

Trump tells Congress to eliminate criminally corrupt ATVM program

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President Donald Trump moved this week to eliminate an obscure

federal loan program that has irked Oklahoma City's congressman for years.

On Tuesday, the president sent Congress a package of \$15 billion in cuts to dormant programs, including \$5 billion in Children's Health Insurance Program funding that has expired, \$107 million in leftover Hurricane Sandy relief funds and several outdated grants.

Included in the president's 41-page request is an end to the little-used Advanced Technology Vehicles Manufacturing Loan Program. It was created in 2007 to help automobile manufacturers open or expand factories where they make advanced technology vehicles, such as electric cars and hybrids.

"Since its inception in 2007 only five loans have been closed under this authority, and since 2011 no new loans have closed," White House budget director Mick Mulvaney wrote to Congress.

That's music to the ears of Rep. Steve Russell, R-Oklahoma City, who introduced legislation eliminating the loan program, known as ATVM, last year. Doing so would move \$4.3 billion back into the Treasury, according to White House estimates.

"Here we have funds that haven't been touched for years, yet billions remain tied up for this program, which (the) Government Accountability Office reports isn't even helpful for the few participants that have used it," Russell said Thursday. "We must end the ATVM and return its idle funding to the Treasury."

Rep. Tom Cole, a Moore Republican, said in a statement Wednesday that he also supports the budget cut package, citing the ATVM and the