



Press Release

## **U.S. Alfa Romeo Owners Club Embraces Marchionne's Promise of Alfa Return**

**Washington, DC, April 21, 2010** – Fiat CEO Sergio Marchionne's April 21 announcement that the Alfa Romeo brand will return in force to the United States in a little over two years is wonderful news for the 4,000 members of the Alfa Romeo Owners Club. The 52 year-old enthusiast organization has functioned as a vintage car club since Alfa Romeo, the sporting Italian marque owned by Fiat, pulled out of the U.S. market during the 1995 model year. While Alfa's flagship 8C Competizione supercar has been sold through Maserati dealers, no mainstream Alfas have been sold in the U.S. in 15 years.

The plans that Marchionne unveiled include a full range of vehicles, including the tiny MiTo hatchback, the recently introduced compact Giulietta sedan (replacing the 147 model), and a larger Giulia sedan and station wagon (replacing the 159, which like the 147 was never sold stateside). A small SUV akin to the BMW X3, and afterward a larger SUV in a class with BMW's X5, built on shared Chrysler platforms, are also promised as Alfa will introduce a total of seven new vehicles in the next five years. A new Spider in the plans for 2013 will be an updated version of the car that secured Alfa Romeo's U.S. reputation in the film *The Graduate*, in which Dustin Hoffman drove a late 1960s Spider. The new roadster is sure to reflect the glamour of the marque's heritage.

"The partnership with Chrysler opened a new door for Fiat and Alfa to reenter the American market, and our members and all Italian car enthusiasts are truly excited," said AROC President Brewster Thackeray of Arlington, Va. "While Maseratis, Ferraris and Lamborghinis, and recently the Alfa 8C, have been sold in six-figure cost territory, Americans have been denied access to affordable, real-world Italian cars for a decade and a half. Millions of Americans are of Italian descent, and millions more are fans of Italian culture. We've had to admire Alfa's beautiful products from afar, and now we believe CEO Marchionne is making a smart call to bring Alfa back to the States. Just as cars like the VW New Beetle and the Mini tapped into enduring affection for great European classics, Alfa and Fiat have a visceral appeal that should serve them well in this market."

Alfa Romeo will celebrate its 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary this June with worldwide celebrations headquartered in Milan. The American celebration will be at AROC's Annual Convention, being held in Frederick, Md. June 23-27. That event will feature competitive driving events, tours and a "concorso" where Alfas dating from the pre-war era through 1995 will be featured.

"AROC and our members, who represent this country's most committed fans of the marque and who have long served as brand ambassadors, look forward to renewed ties with Fiat and Alfa Romeo International as this re-launch approaches," Thackeray said.

For more information, please visit [www.aroc-usa.org](http://www.aroc-usa.org), or contact John Justus, [j.justus@aroc-usa.org](mailto:j.justus@aroc-usa.org) or 816/668-0399.