

Last week President Obama's chief economic adviser, Christina Romer, released a report on the \$787 billion economic stimulus that the Democrat-led Congress passed and the president signed into law in February 2009. The verdict: Romer says the stimulus "saved or created" approximately 3.5 million jobs. But many in Washington are asking Ms. Romer, where are these millions of new jobs?

Ms. Romer's rosy projection doesn't match reality on Main Street where a record number of Americans are jobless and businesses are not spending or hiring due to fear of the future under an increasingly anti-business Obama administration.

A Washington Post-ABC news poll released last week indicated that 60 percent of Americans have lost confidence in the president. Much of this loss of faith in the White House is the result of the continually troubled economy, despite a year of promises from the administration that its record government spending would jumpstart job growth.

After the passage of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (the stimulus) 18 months ago, we were told by the president that unemployment would not rise above 8 percent nationally and that more than 3 million new jobs would be created from the positive effects of the stimulus on our economy.

While the administration has been spending this nation into unprecedented debt, unemployment has risen from 8 percent to 10 percent. In recent weeks the official unemployment rate has dipped slightly to 9.5 percent. However, when you include jobless Americans who have given up looking for work, and those who are forced to work part-time, the jobless rate is over 16 percent.

The administration's stimulus report, which claims that millions of jobs were saved or created over the last year and a half, apparently doesn't rely on actual head counts of those who've benefitted. For starters, it's difficult to prove that jobs have been saved since such connections to spending are not easily tracked. Instead, the report bases its conclusions on projections that up to 2.5 dollars in economic growth will result from every dollar in government spending.

In the real world, projections don't mean much. Just ask the folks in Clarke, Escambia, Monroe or Washington counties who continue to experience unemployment rates much higher than the state or national averages. According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2.3 million jobs have been lost since the stimulus became law. No matter how much the administration wants to spin it, they cannot convince the 14.6 million currently unemployed Americans that the administration's strategy is working.

A July 14, 2010 National Review article notes that nearly \$2 trillion in capital is not being spent right now because the nation's businesses continue to be concerned about the government's overspending and over-regulating. And, a June 23, 2010 story in the Washington Post put it more bluntly: "The chairman of the Business Roundtable, an association of top corporate executives that has been President Obama's closest ally in the business community, accused the president and Democratic lawmakers Tuesday of creating an 'increasingly hostile environment for investment and job creation.'"

As long as businesses sit it out, economic growth will remain stagnant and job rolls will not grow.

I voted against the president's \$787 billion stimulus last year, and I also voted against the \$150 billion second stimulus in December. I have also opposed efforts to expand the reach of government, including the costly Cap and Trade energy bill and the government take-over of health care.

At a time when our nation needs reassurance from Washington that government will not interfere with businesses or further burden struggling middle class taxpayers, we've witnessed just the opposite from this administration and Congress. The Obama White House and Congressional leaders are currently reviewing whether or not to allow tax relief enacted in 2001 and 2003 to expire, thus imposing major tax increases on small businesses and working Americans.

If that's not enough, the administration has also been flirting with the idea of imposing a national value added tax (VAT) on goods and services on top of the current national income tax.

Given all this, it's no wonder that business has little confidence to invest in the kind of expansion necessary to boost our stalled economy and generate real job growth.

I support keeping in place the tax relief of 2001 and 2003, halting government expansion into our economy, and passing a federal budget that focuses on deficit reduction. These principles will restore faith in our economy and lead to real job creation.

My staff and I work for you. If we can ever be of service, do not hesitate to call my office toll free at 1-800-288-8721.