

This Week in Washington



WITH CONGRESSMAN
JO BONNER

Rumors of a Second Stimulus Abound

As news spread that almost half a million jobs were lost in the month of June and the unemployment level – 9.5% - is at its highest in almost three decades, talk of Congress considering a second stimulus also began to circulate.

When President Obama signed the massive \$787 billion stimulus package in February, there were promises it would keep unemployment below 8 percent and would create jobs immediately.

Clearly, this has not happened.

Yet, they are talking about another massive stimulus bill that would call for even more spending, more debt, and higher taxes.

Last week, the USA Today reported that stimulus spending has “gone overwhelmingly to places that supported President Obama in last year’s presidential election.”

The paper found that “Counties that supported Obama last year have reaped twice as much money per person from the administration's \$787 billion economic stimulus package as those that voted for his Republican rival, Sen. John McCain. Money [that] includes aid to repair military bases, improve public housing and help students pay for college.”

When the first stimulus is not working, it is hard to understand how spending – and borrowing – even more money is going to create jobs and help our economy.

\$18 Million Spent Redesigning Stimulus Website

As Washington’s spending spree continues, my colleagues and I were outraged when the Obama Administration announced last week it is spending \$18 million on the Recovery.gov website with a staggering \$9.5 million to be spent on redesigning the website.

This is the very website tasked with giving taxpayers information about how the staggering \$787 billion in stimulus funding is spent. This new website will be revamped with the promise of providing more information than the current website currently does.

In announcing the \$18 million contract award, the General Service Administration press release stated, "Recovery.gov 2.0 will use innovative and interactive technologies to help taxpayers see where their dollars are being spent. Armed with easy access to this information, taxpayers can make government more accountable for its decisions."

At a time when we are borrowing money at record-breaking levels to fund spending – the likes of which the world has never seen – it seems this is yet another example of wasteful and foolish spending.

There are also several outside organizations that are closely monitoring spending at no cost to the taxpayer.

2009 Academy Nominations

One of my greatest privileges as a member of Congress is to nominate qualified young men and women from Alabama's First District to our United States Service Academies.

So far this year, eight have received an appointment to one of the service academies.

They are as follows:

U.S. Air Force Academy

Tommy Hamel of Wilmer

Max Manley of Roberstdale

Austin Nash of Mobile

U.S. Merchant Marine Academy

Torin Williams of Mobile

U.S. Military Academy

Haleigh Fulmer of Saraland

Tommy Hamel of Wilmer

Justin Hasley of Daphne

Gary Newton of Mobile

U.S. Naval Academy

William Dorriety of Fairhope

Haleigh Fulmer of Saraland

The education students receive at the five United States Service Academies – the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, the U.S. Naval Academy at Annapolis, the U.S. Air Force Academy at

Colorado Springs, the U.S. Coast Guard Academy at New London, and the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy at King's Point – is one of the best.

For those south Alabama students interested in attending a service academy, it is never too soon to begin the nomination process. One thing is certain – gaining admission to one of the five academies is not easy.

Interested students should contact my office to receive an application packet that includes details of the requirements for obtaining a nomination and general information about the academies.

This fall, I will host my annual Academy Night, which emphasizes the educational opportunities available and provides information on the requirements and procedures for seeking a congressional nomination. Representatives from each of the academies will also be on hand.

We look forward to working with any interested students and their families toward a nomination to one of the service academies.

For more information, please contact Brooks Chew in my Mobile office at 251-943-2073 or visit my website.

Congratulations to the students who have received appointments for the Class of 2013.

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.

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