

*This Week in Washington*



WITH CONGRESSMAN  
JO BONNER

### Trillion Dollar Spending Plan Passes House

Last week, the House passed H.R. 1, the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, a plan that will cost the American people upwards of \$1 trillion.

While all of us, Democrats and Republicans alike, agree that our economy – and our country – are facing unprecedented challenges, this bill is loaded with billions of dollars in projects that have nothing to do with stimulating our economy or putting people back to work.

In fact, this bill will cost each individual resident of Alabama's First District over \$2,700 – that's \$1.8 billion just for the District.

I was extremely disappointed that Speaker Pelosi and the House Democratic leaders failed to follow the leadership of President Obama and work to get a bipartisan consensus in Congress

to support the stimulus.

President Obama had asked Congress for an economic stimulus plan that would provide tax relief to families while investing in infrastructure, health Information Technology (IT), and alternative energy.

Yet, the plan advanced in Congress by Speaker Pelosi and the Democratic leadership included billions of dollars in spending unrelated to infrastructure, health IT, or alternative energy.

Many House Republicans would have supported something more targeted at creating jobs and not so filled with the lard and backlog of big government programs and wasteful spending.

Sadly, the Democratic House leadership insisted certain projects be included, projects that have nothing to do with stimulating the economy.

For instance, this bill calls for the American people to spend \$600 million to buy new cars for

government workers – even though the government already has a fleet of about 642,000 trucks, passenger cars, and other vehicles.

Yet another provision called for \$150 million for repairs to Smithsonian Institution facilities, the same institution that recently spent \$31,000 for designer Berkeley striped upholstery, \$2,535 to clean a chandelier, and \$4,000 for a heater for the lap pool of its most recent director.

Additionally, the Democratic majority called for the taxpayers to spend \$462 million for equipment, construction, and renovation of facilities at the Centers for Disease Control, an agency that could not locate \$22 million worth of its equipment in 2007.

While some of this spending may be worthwhile, it does not belong in an economic stimulus package.

Friends, the American people are hurting, and our economy needs immediate help. We cannot borrow and spend our way out of a recession.

President Obama came to the U.S. Capitol last week to meet with House Republicans to try and find common ground. Sadly, the House Democratic leadership ignored his call and forced yet another waste-laden spending bill through Congress

### Influential Player Sees Region's Key Defense Projects

On a note of true bipartisanship, Congressman Artur Davis and I welcomed Congressman John Murtha of Pennsylvania, chairman of the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Defense, to Mobile last Thursday.

Chairman Murtha is widely recognized as a pivotal decision-maker on defense issues in Congress.

The visit enabled Chairman Murtha to see Mobile's history of building ships and our desire to build tankers. He was also able to spend time with many of south Alabama's business, community, and elected leaders, including Governor Bob Riley and Mobile Mayor Sam Jones.

While in Mobile, Chairman Murtha saw firsthand Brookley Field, the future site of tanker production. He also saw the progress that is being made on the Littoral Combat Ship (LCS), and was briefed by Alabama business, community, and elected officials on the tanker.

I was so pleased that our colleague took the time to travel to Mobile where we have a dedicated workforce that puts their best effort forward everyday showing the world that people from Alabama are leading the way in new technology and proud of what they do.

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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