

4 Important Facts You Probably Don't Know About the Stimulus Package

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By the time you read these words, the United States Congress will have passed and the President will have signed the largest single spending bill in the history of Western Civilization. The total cost of World War II to all the countries combined was 1 trillion dollars. The United States spent the most on the war at \$347 billion. It is hard to imagine but this one massive spending bill, coming in at \$787 billion, is more than twice the total amount the United States spend to defeat the Axis powers.

To give this number further perspective consider these facts:

- 1) It is approximately 1.8 times the total amount spent by NASA since 1961.
- 2) It is about 1.7 times the size of the largest U.S. budget deficit in history.
- 3) It amounts to 32 percent of the total federal receipts in fiscal 2008.
- 4) If it was given directly to Americans it would mean \$2, 600 for every man, woman, and child.

But hold on to your wallets because fact one of the four important facts you haven't heard about the stimulus package is that the Congressional Budget Office estimates the real cost of the bill to be closer to \$3.27 trillion. That figures includes an interest payment of \$744 billion on the debt that is being created by the package. It also includes another \$2.5 trillion in expanded government programs (over 200 new government programs are included in the budget) that will continue for decades. It is government spending that will require confiscatory taxes collected from many yet to be born generations of Americans.

Fact number two is even more startling when you think about it from the perspective of future generations. When you add in the amount of money necessary to fulfill the promises made by the United States government to future generations through Social Security and Medicare benefits, you come up with \$65.5 trillion, which is four times the U.S. GDP and exceeds the total GDP for every country in the world combined. This is before you add in the additional TARP money that will be spent in 2009, which could total as much as another \$1 trillion. It is a number that will be virtually impossible to make up through any amount of taxation alone. It will require the combination of draconian tax increases accompanied by a massive, destabilizing decrease in government spending.

Fact number three...not one of the 535 members of Congress read the bill in its final form before the vote was taken. How do I know for sure? Because it would have been physically impossible for anyone to read 1,071 pages in the time between the final draft of the bill and its passage by both houses of Congress. There wasn't even time to type the entire bill so the final version passed with hand written notes in the margins and whole paragraphs either added or crossed out. This fact alone may be the most irresponsible act perpetrated on any civilized society in human history. Agreeing to vote on the largest spending package in history without giving time for debate or careful consideration is outrageously dangerous. For a majority of our elected leaders to vote in favor of this legislation without knowing what they were voting for is absolutely scandalous.

Finally, the stimulus package, also known as the American Economic Recovery and Reinvestment Act, abolishes the hard-fought welfare reforms of the mid-1990's and establishes new welfare spending. According to Robert Rector and Katherine Bradley of The Heritage Foundation, prior to 1996 the amount of welfare money received by the states from the Federal government was based on the number of people on the welfare rolls. The more people each state enrolled in the welfare system the more money they received from the Federal government. This system obviously motivated the states to add, not reduce the welfare rolls.

Welfare reform passed in 1996 changed this formula by giving each state a flat funding level that did not vary according to the state's welfare caseload. States were also given goals of reducing welfare dependence and requiring welfare recipients to make progress in preparing for employment. The results have been nothing short of amazing. Since 1996, the welfare rolls nationwide have been reduced by just over fifty-percent. It is one of the few success stories the federal government can point to with confidence.

But the stimulus package overturns the fiscal foundation of welfare reform by once again paying financial bonuses to states that increase their welfare caseloads. What kind of bonuses? Under the new stimulus bill the federal government will pay 80 percent of the cost for each new family the state enrolls in its welfare program. Twelve years of success in reducing the welfare rolls have been wiped out by this massive so-called "stimulus plan" which is really nothing more than a gigantic return to and expansion of the welfare state.

No country has ever spent its way out of debt and into prosperity. Debt creation simply shifts the burden of fiscal irresponsibility from the

shoulders of the current generation to the shoulders of generations yet unborn. Of course, if we continue down the current path of expanding abortion rights their just might not be a future generation to worry about.

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