

Solar-panel company lays off 40 employees

BY KRIS TURNER
BLADE BUSINESS WRITER

Willard & Kelsey Solar Group LLC laid off about 40 people indefinitely at the beginning of January until changes to its production line are completed, a company official said Monday.

Michael Cicak, the company's chief executive officer and chairman of the board, would not say when the changes would be completed or when the laid-off employees could return to work.

"We have some technical people in here improving the efficiency of the assembly line," Mr. Cicak said, adding that the Perrysburg-based facility still has about 30 employees.

He said Willard & Kelsey has a little more than 80 employees when it's fully functional.

The start-up company has been plagued by a series of production and staffing delays since it was formed in 2008. It has received millions of dollars in government loans and tax breaks and has been toured by high-profile officials such as Vice President Joe Biden, U.S. Secretary of Labor Hilda Solis, and former Ohio Gov. Ted Strickland.

Mr. Cicak said last week that the facility was to reopen Monday after a period of adjusting its inventory. A voice mail message on the company's main phone line said the same thing.

Only 15 cars were in the parking lot at 1:30 p.m. Monday. The office was devoid of activity, and the rows of desks were empty.

A tour of the production line and the changes being made to it were not made available to The Blade.

Mr. Cicak said the assembly line changes will improve the output of the cadmium telluride thin-film solar panels produced at Willard & Kelsey. The value of those panels, which usually are less expensive than other models, will increase if they can produce more energy, he added.

Ideally, the solar panels will increase from a 10 percent output to about 15 percent, Mr. Cicak said.

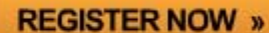
"We will be the lowest-cost producer of solar panels in the world," he said.

The cost of changing the assembly line was not released. Willard & Kelsey also does not release its quarterly earnings or its profit margin because it's a privately held company, Mr. Cicak said.

As of early 2011, the company had received a \$5 million research and development loan from the Ohio Department of Development, a \$10 million loan from the Ohio Air Quality Development Authority, a \$3.3 million job creation tax credit, and a \$701,000 grant to provide training for 50 current and 250 new workers.








Energy stimulus money mired in investigations, bad management, IG says

By Amy Harder *National Journal* November 2, 2011

More than 100 investigations and overall poor management of almost \$40 billion have mired the federal government's efforts to jump-start the clean-energy economy, a top government watchdog testified to Congress on Wednesday.

"A combination of massive funding, high expectations, and inadequate infrastructure resulted, at times, in less than optimal performance," Gregory Friedman, the Energy Department's inspector general, said at a House oversight hearing Wednesday morning.

On top of that, Friedman said his office has launched more than 100 investigations into Energy's handling of the \$35.2 billion in Recovery Act funding it received. "These involve various schemes, including the submission of false information, claims for unallowable or unauthorized expenses, and other improper uses of Recovery Act funds," he said.

Friedman's testimony comes as the Obama administration is taking heat for awarding \$535 million in stimulus money to Solyndra, a solar-energy company that filed for bankruptcy in September. The IG was critical of the loan-guarantee program in a March 2011 report, and he didn't have kind words for the program on Wednesday, either.

"The loan-guarantee program had not properly documented, and as such could not always readily demonstrate, how it resolved or mitigated relevant risks prior to granting loan guarantees," Friedman said.

Of the \$35.2 billion, only 45 percent had been spent as of October 22. "The expeditious creation of jobs was a prime goal of the program," Friedman said. "The delay in expenditures was not helpful in this regard." Overall, the administration poured \$90 billion into clean-energy projects throughout the federal government, according to White House fact sheets.

Friedman's probes into DOE's management of the money have resulted in five criminal prosecutions and have returned more than \$2.3 million to the government. "This includes a series of cases involving fictitious claims for travel per diem resulting in the recovery of \$1 million alone in Recovery Act funds," he said.

Friedman said he could not comment on Solyndra's loan guarantee specifically because of ongoing investigations by the FBI and others.



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U.S. General Services Administration

The Mercury News

MercuryNews.com

Fremont solar tech firm Solyndra to shut down, lay off hundreds of workers

By George Avalos
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Posted: 08/31/2011 08:48:12 AM PDT

Updated: 08/31/2011 12:21:08 PM PDT

Solyndra, a Fremont-based solar panel manufacturer that flared, then sputtered, abruptly ceased operations on Wednesday and immediately laid off all 1,100 of its workers.

The shutdown marks a high-profile collapse of a company that received more than \$1.6 billion in federal and private funding in recent years.

"This was an unexpected outcome and is most unfortunate," Brian Harrison, Solyndra's president and chief executive, said.

The company received \$535 million in taxpayer money from the U.S. Department of Energy and \$1.1 billion in private venture capital funding.

"We have always recognized that not every one of the innovative companies

supported by our loans and loan guarantees would succeed," the Department of Energy said in a posting on its blog. "But we can't stop investing in game-changing technologies that are key to America's leadership in the global economy."

Solyndra workers who were laid off on Wednesday were dismissed without layoff packages.

"They are getting no severance," said Dave Miller, a Solyndra spokesman. "They are getting nothing."

The company had just finished construction of a new solar equipment factory. The federal loan was used to build and equip that plant.

"We had just installed the new tools," Miller said "We

were starting to ramp up production."

Solyndra intends to file a Chapter 11 bankruptcy in a federal court in Delaware next week, said Dave Miller, a company spokesman.

"We will try to sell the company or reorganize its finances," Miller said.

Solyndra was founded in 2005 by Chris Gronet, an Applied Materials veteran who earned his Ph.D. at Stanford University.

President Barack Obama held it up as a poster child for clean energy, saying during a 2010 visit to its headquarters that "companies like Solyndra are leading the way toward a brighter and more prosperous future."

Despite having raised more than \$1 billion in venture capital and receiving a \$535 million loan guarantee from the Department of Energy, Solyndra struggled. One reason for its woes is that low-cost Chinese manufacturers that receive substantial subsidies from the government are building massive factories that have rapidly driven down the price of solar panels and shifted more than 50 percent of production to China.

"This is really disappointing," said Christina Briggs, Fremont's economic development manager. "It's clear that manufacturing is still struggling in this economy, especially in the face of strong global competition."

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Solyndra to Declare Bankruptcy

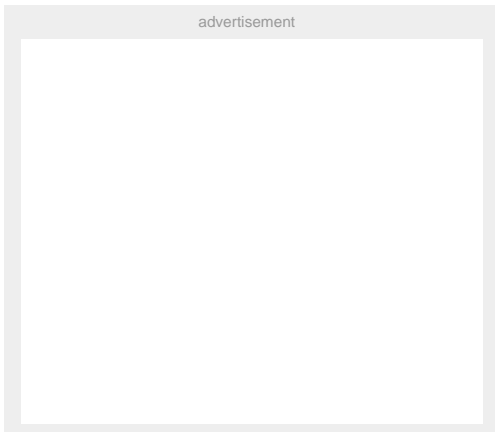
President Obama touted the facility only a year ago.

By Scott McGrew | Wednesday, Aug 31, 2011 | Updated 10:10 AM PDT

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Solyndra -- recently touted as an innovator by President Obama -- is reportedly shutting its doors. Employees are being turned away this morning.



Update: Solyndra announces it plans to file Chapter 11 bankruptcy, is suspending operations and seeks a reorganization. [Click here for the company's full statement.](#)

Solyndra, a major manufacturer of solar technology in Fremont, has shut its doors, according to employees at the campus.

"I was told by a security guard to get my [stuff] and leave," one employee said. The company employs a little more than 1,000 employees worldwide, according to its website.

[Analysis: Solyndra Bankruptcy a Disaster for President Obama]

MULTIMEDIA

Shortly after it opened a massive \$700 million facility, it canceled plans for a public stock

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offering earlier this year and warned it would be in significant trouble if federal loan guarantees did not go through.

The company has said it will make a statement at 9am California time, though it's not clear what that statement will be. An NBC Bay Area photographer on the scene reports security guards are not letting visitors on campus. He says "people are standing around in disbelief." The employees have been given yellow

envelopes with instructions on how to get their last checks.

Solyndra was touted by the Obama administration as a prime example of how green technology could deliver jobs. The President visited the facility in May of last year and said "it is just a testament to American ingenuity and dynamism and the fact that we continue to have the best universities in the world, the best technology in the world, and most importantly the best workers in the world. And you guys all represent that. "

The federal government offered \$535 million in low cost loan guarantees from the Department of Energy. NBC Bay Area has contacted the White House asking for a statement.

Some Republicans have been very critical of the loans. "I am concerned that the DOE is providing loans and loan guarantees to firms that aren't capable of competing in the global market, even with government subsidies" Florida Congressman Cliff Stearns told the New York Times.

Posted Wednesday, Aug 31, 2011 - 8:00 AM PDT

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The Federal Government gave them 535million dollars in low cost loans, will they pay them back? I am a tax paying U.S. citizen and I want my half billion dollars back.

114 · Like · Reply · 4 hours ago



Tina Raddigan Welch · Top Commenter

Good luck Dave! I hope you weren't one of the "hope and change" people? If so, your getting what you voted for. Don't vote party vote based on their principles and beliefs. You'll be very surprised.

37 · Like · Reply · 3 hours ago



Kyle Phillips · Clemson

Dave, it's acutally much worse. Now that they won't be able to repay their loans, the federal government gets to repay the money for them!!! Looks like me, you, and all the other tax paying Americans will get to chip in!!

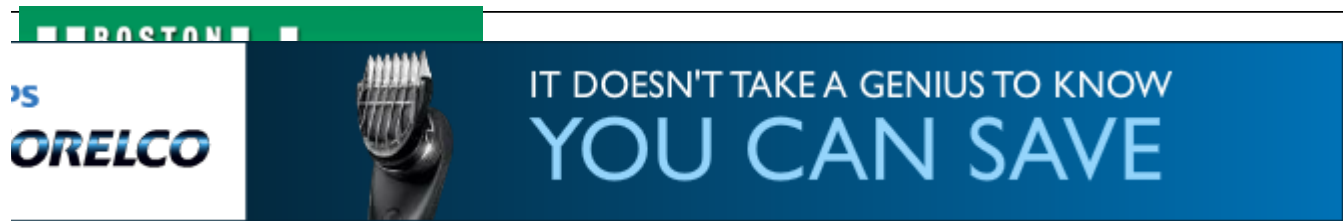
21 · Like · Reply · 3 hours ago



illogicbusters (signed in using Yahoo)

So, when they go belly up, THEN the taxpayer gets to pay back the bank. Not different in outcome...

4



Evergreen Solar files for bankruptcy, plans asset sale

By Greg Turner And Jerry Kronenberg | Monday, August 15, 2011 | <http://www.bostonherald.com> | **Technology Coverage**

Evergreen Solar Inc., the Massachusetts clean-energy company that received millions in state subsidies from the Patrick administration for an ill-fated Bay State factory, has filed for bankruptcy, listing \$485.6 million in debt.

Evergreen, which closed its taxpayer-supported Devens factory in March and cut 800 jobs, has been trying to rework its debt for months. The cash-strapped company announced today has sought a reorganization in U.S. Bankruptcy Court in Delaware and reached a deal with certain note holders to restructure its debt and auction off assets.

The Massachusetts Republican Party called the Patrick administration's \$58 million financial aid package, which supported Evergreen's \$450 million factory, a "waste" of money.

"The bankruptcy of Evergreen Solar is another sad event for the Massachusetts company and highlights the folly of the Patrick-Murray Administration which has put government subsidies into their pet projects instead of offering broad based relief to all Bay State employers," said Jennifer Nassour, head of the state GOP.

Also in today's Herald:

» **Democratic Senate hopefuls undeterred by Elizabeth Warren**

» **Warren Buffett: Mega-rich don't need to be protected like 'spotted owls'**

Greg Bialecki, Patrick's economic development czar, defended the administration's support for the once-promising Evergreen. The state is still trying to recoup about \$4 million in cash from the Marlboro-based company.

"Not every company is going to be successful ... but we still believe the approach of providing business incentives to create and maintain manufacturing jobs in Massachusetts is an important strategy," he said.

Evergreen — hurt by lower-cost competition in China and plummeting prices for solar panels — also said it will cut more jobs — 65 layoffs in the United States and Europe, mostly through the shutdown of its Midland, Mich., manufacturing facility. That would leave Evergreen with about 68 workers according to a head count listed in the bankruptcy filing.

To cut costs, Evergreen shifted some of its production to Wuhan, China, last year. That joint venture will remain operating subject to financing talks with Chinese investors.

In January, after Evergreen announced it would close the Devens factory, Patrick told the Herald he was disappointed in the job losses but did not regret making the investment.

"I think we did what we could have and should have," he told the Herald.



Photo by Ted Fitzgerald (File)

In March, during a state Senate hearing that explored the value of tax incentives for Bay State businesses, Evergreen CEO Michael El-Hillow said the company had “earned” 85 percent of the taxpayer benefits it received because of the jobs it originally created.

Evergreen warned investors back in April that it was burning through cash because of slow sales, falling solar-panel prices and weak proceeds from the sale of Devens factory assets.

“Chapter 11 will provide Evergreen Solar with the ability to maximize returns for our stakeholders through the proposed sale process,” El-Hillow said in a statement. “Importantly, we expect to continue our technology development without interruption during Chapter 11 and the sale process.”

But Evergreen shareholders are expected to receive “no distributions” from the asset sales after creditors are repaid.

Shares of Evergreen, which are in danger of delisting from the Nasdaq Stock Market, plunged 57 percent today to 18 cents. The company launched in 1994 and went public in 2000.

The list of top creditors in today’s bankruptcy filing lists a \$1.5 million debt to MassDevelopment, the quasi-public state economic development agency.

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Massachusetts

To: Interested Parties

Fr: White House Communications

Da: April 22, 2009

Re: The Obama-Biden economic plan: creating jobs, strengthening the economy for Massachusetts families

Facing the worst economic crisis since the Great Depression, President Obama started his Presidency with decisive action -- proposing and quickly passing the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA). Since the bill went into effect, the ARRA has already helped put money back in the pockets of 95 percent of working Americans, created and saved jobs across the country and made key investments in our community to help kickstart the economy. To ensure that the funds are spent efficiently and effectively, President Obama tasked Vice President Biden with overseeing the implementation of ARRA, and projects have already begun to come in under budget across the country. As the President prepares to introduce the details of his budget and further plans to revitalize the economy, here's a look at how his policies have impacted Massachusetts in the first three months of his administration.

IMPACT OF PRESIDENT OBAMA'S ECONOMIC POLICIES ON MASSACHUSETTS

Working Families:

- Making Work Pay: The President's tax-cut -- which covers more Americans than any in history -- is putting more than \$1.2 billion back in the pockets of more than 2.4 million hard-working Massachusetts families.
- \$23,966,942 to support child care for working families.

Energy:

- \$42,230,600 in block grants to foster energy efficiency in building, transportation, and a wide range of other improvements.
- \$122,077,457 to support the weatherization of homes, including adding more insulation, sealing leaks and modernizing heating and air conditioning equipment.
- \$54,911,000 to the State Energy Program, available for rebates to consumers for energy saving improvements; development of renewable energy projects; promotion of Energy Star products; efficiency upgrades for state and local government buildings; and other innovative state efforts to help save families money on their energy bills.

Education:

- \$1,535,042,259 potentially available to Massachusetts to lay the foundation for a generation of education reform and help save thousands of teaching jobs at risk due to state and local budget cuts.

Health Care:

- \$1,300,000 to fund 1 new Community Health Center, which will serve an

estimated 7,060 patients and create a projected 50 jobs.

- \$8,618,594 to expand services at 36 existing Community Health Centers, which will expand service to an additional 61,787 patients and create or save a projected 245 jobs.
- \$2,094,570 to provide meals to low-income seniors.
- \$302,502,000 made available in Federal Medical Assistance Percentage (FMAP) to protect health care for the families hit hard by the economic crisis and some of the nation's most vulnerable citizens.
- \$4,266,874 in vaccines and grants to ensure more underserved Americans receive the vaccines they need.

Transportation:

- \$425,065,255 in highway funds to help build and repair roads and bridges.
- \$319,718,084 to repair and build public transportation infrastructure.
- \$5.4 million to address airport safety and security, infrastructure, runway safety, increased capacity, and mitigation of environmental impacts.

Law Enforcement:

- More than \$40.7 million for state and local law enforcement assistance available through the Edward Byrne Justice Assistance Grant (JAG) Program. The JAG Program supports a variety of efforts such as hiring and support for law enforcement officers; multijurisdictional drug and gang task forces; crime prevention and domestic violence programs; and courts, corrections, treatment, and justice information sharing initiatives.

REAL RESULTS IN MASSACHUSETTS

Thanks to the Obama Administration's American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, real impact is already being felt across the state.

Because of the Stimulus Bill and New Contracts, Green Energy Companies Are Looking to Hire Many New Employees. "The clean-tech and green industries in Massachusetts are hiring. Companies looking to add employees include Aeronautica Windpower in Plymouth, lithium-ion battery maker Boston-Power Inc. in Westborough, and Conservation Services Group, also in Westborough... The workforce expansions are being partly spurred by the federal economic stimulus package, which includes billions for home energy-efficiency upgrades and an extension of a tax credit for renewable energy technologies such as wind power... Because of the stimulus bill as well as several new contracts, Cowell plans to add 200 more jobs this year. The company currently employs about 400 and does business in 22 states. At least 30 to 40 of the new jobs will be in Massachusetts, he said. 'We're sort of the tip of the iceberg,' Cowell said. 'A couple of hundred people will be hired here, but that means that 2,000 people will be hired at the local level to do the work that we spec out and help facilitate.' ... At Boston-Power, which makes the Sonata battery used in Hewlett-Packard's notebook computers, vice president of marketing Sally Bament said she is looking to hire about two dozen people in marketing, sales, and other areas. Evergreen Solar, the Marlborough-based maker of solar panels, also is hoping to hire 90 to 100 people at a manufacturing plant in Devens, said Gary Pollard, vice president of human resources. Aeronautica Windpower, meanwhile, hopes to bring on between 50 and 100 employees to begin producing midscale wind turbines at a facility that the company hopes to open somewhere in the state this spring." [[The Boston Globe](#), 3/6/09]

Clean-Tech and Green Industries in Massachusetts Are Hiring, Partly Spurred by Stimulus Package. "The clean-tech and green industries in Massachusetts are hiring. Companies looking to add employees include Aeronautica Windpower in Plymouth, lithium-ion battery maker Boston-Power Inc. in Westborough, and Conservation Services Group, also in Westborough. Eco-friendly experience is a plus, but not required. The workforce expansions are being partly spurred by the federal economic stimulus package, which includes billions for home energy-efficiency upgrades and an extension of a tax credit for renewable energy technologies such as wind power."

Boston-Power Was About to Hire Two Dozen People in Marketing, Sales

and Other Areas. "At Boston-Power, which makes the Sonata battery used in Hewlett-Packard's notebook computers, vice president of marketing Sally Bament said she is looking to hire about two dozen people in marketing, sales, and other areas." [Boston Globe, 3/6/09]

Evergreen Solar Was Hoping to Hire 90 to 100 People for Its Manufacturing Plant. "Evergreen Solar, the Marlborough-based maker of solar panels, also is hoping to hire 90 to 100 people at a manufacturing plant in Devens, said Gary Pollard, vice president of human resources. The plant, which opened last summer, is expected to employ more than 800 when it reaches full capacity." [Boston Globe, 3/6/09]

Aeronautica Windpower Planned to Add 50 to 100 Employees to Produce Wind Turbines. "Aeronautica Windpower, meanwhile, hopes to bring on between 50 and 100 employees to begin producing midscale wind turbines at a facility that the company hopes to open somewhere in the state this spring. Potential jobs include technical positions that mechanics, assembly line workers, and others might fit into, as well as positions in business development and customer relations. The company currently has a 10-person staff refurbishing wind turbines." Boston Globe, 3/6/09]

GreatPoint Energy Inc. Is Teaming Up With a University to Start a Paid Internship Program, Hopes to Hire Trained Program Graduates as Full-Time Employees. "And at GreatPoint Energy Inc. in Cambridge, executive vice president Daniel Goldman, said his company wants to hire more people, and also is teaming with the University of Massachusetts at Dartmouth to start a paid internship program that will give students an on-the-job opportunity to learn how to turn materials like coal, wood chips, and even trash into natural gas. 'What we'd probably like to do is train the people,' Goldman said, 'and then as they graduate, make them full-time analysts.'" [Boston Globe, 3/6/09]

Conservation Services Group Planned to Hire 200 People Because of the Stimulus, Expected 2,000 More Would Be Hired to Execute Work Facilitated By Firm's Work. "Soon after Congress passed the nearly \$800 billion bill last month, Stephen Cowell, chief executive of Conservation Services Group, said he told his staff, 'Get the resumes together.' In the last six months, the energy-efficiency company has hired about 50 employees in its main office. Because of the stimulus bill as well as several new contracts, Cowell plans to add 200 more jobs this year. The company currently employs about 400 and does business in 22 states. At least 30 to 40 of the new jobs will be in Massachusetts, he said. 'We're sort of the tip of the iceberg,' Cowell said. 'A couple of hundred people will be hired here, but that means that 2,000 people will be hired at the local level to do the work that we spec out and help facilitate.'" [Boston Globe, 3/6/09]

Massachusetts Will Receive \$21.1 Million For Work Force Development, Which Will Create An Estimated 10,000 Jobs Statewide. Stimulus funding for summer jobs was initially announced March 27 by Gov. Deval Patrick, though specific allocations were not provided. According to a release from Patrick's office, \$6.67 million from the state's YouthWorks summer jobs program is being combined with \$3.1 million in public safety funds and \$21.1 million in work force development funds provided American Recovery and Reinvestment Act to increase options. The money is expected to result in 10,000 jobs statewide." [The Herald News, 4/5/09]

More than 500 Workers Built New Green Macallen Building in Boston's Southie Neighborhood. "The traditionally tough, blue-collar neighborhood of Southie in south Boston is on the forefront of a 'green' revolution and serves as an example of a blooming work force. Steel-toed construction workers helped erect the city's first green building and now the Macallen building stands as a revolutionary, eco-friendly structure. It also represents a bridge to a greener future -- one in which the president said is essential to America's economic success in the 21st century...More than 500 men and women built the Macallen building and many of those jobs ran the entire length of construction." ["Good Morning America," ABC News, 4/15/09 (WITH VIDEO)]

Unions Are Retraining Members for Green Jobs & Approximately 1,200 Community Colleges are Offering Courses at Reasonable Prices. "The good news is that the retraining is already starting to happen, Ellis said. With

construction workers, their unions are showing them new green ways to build and how to use recycled steel and new materials. At the same time, there are about 1,200 community colleges around the country offering courses in green retraining at prices that most people can afford, he added. Some workers are being retrained right now on the job site for such tasks as sorting material for recycling, but other more complicated jobs such as wiring solar arrays and welding on a wind turbine 200 feet up can take up to a couple of years of community college training, he said. For unemployed workers who already have the basic skills -- plumbers, electricians and welders -- they just need to gain extra knowledge like working with low-flow toilets or a new, efficient electrical system, Cheney said." [["Good Morning America," ABC News, 4/15/09 \(WITH VIDEO\)\]](#)

Two "Massive" Repaving Projects In Western MA Funded With Recovery Act Dollars Are Expected To Begin Soon; "These Job-Creating Projects, Which Get Underway in the Spring, Will Help Jumpstart the Economy and Make Our Roads Safer," Said MA Transportation Secretary. "Work is expected to start soon on two massive repaving projects in Western Massachusetts that are funded with federal stimulus money. The two projects were advertised for bid on Saturday. One project includes \$5 million for resurfacing 14.3 miles of Route 9 in Belchertown and Ware, according to the Patrick administration. A separate \$4 million project calls for repaving three sections of Routes 5 and 10 in Westfield, Greenfield, Southampton, Easthampton and Northampton. 'These job creating projects, which get under way in the spring, will help jump-start the economy and make our roads safer,' said Transportation Secretary James Aloisi Jr." [[The Republican \(Springfield, MA\), 4/8/09\]](#)

Governor Patrick and Mayor Menino Announced Plans to Use Stimulus Funds to Create 10,000 Summer Jobs for Young People, Targeting the 60 Neediest Communities. "Boston Latin School senior Meghan Sutherby, 18, is struggling to find a job to help pay for college this fall... But help may be coming soon for thousands of Massachusetts teenagers like Meghan from the federal economic stimulus bill. Governor Deval L. Patrick and Mayor Thomas M. Menino of Boston have plans to use \$30 million dollars from economic stimulus funds to create 10,000 jobs, targeting the 60 neediest communities around Massachusetts. In Boston, a \$9 million combination of American Recovery and Reinvestment Act and state and local funding sources will allow the city to expand the summer jobs program to hire people as old as age 24, instead of just 14-18 as in previous years, officials said. Menino said his goal is to create jobs for 10,000 youth this summer, including 3,500 to 4,500 in private-sector positions." [[NECN.com, 3/26/09\]](#)

Stimulus Funds Will Clean Up Sites Contaminated By Chemical Wood Treatment Plants. "Foxboro and Mansfield's redevelopment plans for the former Hatheway-Patterson Superfund site got a huge boost Wednesday when the cleanup got \$10 to \$25 million in federal stimulus funds. This final cleanup funding should facilitate Foxboro's plans for a 120-space, Foxboro-only parking lot for the Mansfield MBTA commuter rail station and restore at least five acres to Mansfield's tax rolls, said state Rep. Jay Barrows, R-Mansfield...Foxboro Finance Director Randy Scollins called the parking lot project 'shovel ready.' 'I'm thrilled for the Foxboro commuters that use the commuter rail service,' he said. 'We're thrilled that we're actually going to be able to bring that to fruition, because parking is at a premium down there.' The cleanup started during the mid-1990s, [EPA Remedial Project Manager David] Lederer said. Mansfield officials have spent years trying to get the contaminated former chemical wood treatment plant cleaned up. Mansfield owns about 38 acres of the site. Foxboro officials took 1.77 acres in their town in the summer of 2007. Both towns took the sites for nonpayment of taxes. 'I didn't think I would see it in my lifetime,' Mansfield Town Manager John D'Agostino said of the final cleanup." [[Foxboro Reporter, 4/16/09\]](#)

Southwick-Tolland School Superintendent: District Employees Will Keep Their Jobs Thanks To Federal Stimulus Money. "Southwick-Tolland Regional School District employees will keep their jobs thanks to federal stimulus money, Superintendent John D. Barry said Tuesday. District officials don't know yet exactly how much money they will receive, but the district's proposed fiscal 2010 budget puts the stimulus line number at \$363,692, although the district could receive a little bit more... 'Basically, it's been the same budgeting process that we had had in the past, but this time we have three basic components, instead of just two,' Barry said, referring to the district's share of the federal stimulus money.

Those funds, along with the towns' contributions and the state Chapter 70 money, will make up the bulk of the system's revenue next year. Thanks to the money, Barry said the system, which was considering layoffs and program cuts, would be able to save several positions. 'We do what we can to save jobs and we are saving jobs with this money,' Barry said. 'We are fortunate to be one of 160 school districts that are getting this financial help.' At some point in the process, five full-time job cuts were considered." [[The Republican \(Springfield, MA\), 4/8/09](#)]

Massachusetts Will Use \$764 Million in Stimulus Funding to Prevent Further Cuts at Hospitals That Serve the Poor – Gov. Said Recovery Funds "Softened Some of the Blow." "Massachusetts will use \$764 million from the federal stimulus package to shore up healthcare services and prevent further job and program cuts at hospitals that serve large numbers of poor patients, Governor Deval Patrick said yesterday. The money, which is coming to the state through the Medicaid program, will also enable the state to preserve current benefits and eligibility levels for MassHealth recipients, and for residents who get subsidized health insurance under the 2006 law mandating insurance coverage. A reserve fund will be set up to meet anticipated increases in demand for the programs driven by the economic downturn... 'We've had to make cuts, that's true. But thanks to the recovery funds, we have softened some of the blow,' Patrick told an overflow crowd yesterday afternoon at Cambridge Hospital. 'We can't avoid every tough decision in health and human services . . . but we are doing everything we can to minimize the impact on the populations that depend on you and your government more in times like these.'" [[Boston Globe, 3/26/09](#)]

Braintree, Mass. School Department In Line For Nearly \$3 Million In Stimulus Money That Will Help Offset Looming Layoffs. "The school department could be getting some financial relief with the help of nearly \$2.9 million from the federal stimulus package. Democratic state Sens. Brian A. Joyce of Milton and Michael Morrissey of Quincy, whose districts include parts of Braintree, and state Rep. Joseph Driscoll, D-Braintree, reported Friday that Gov. Deval Patrick has earmarked \$168 million Massachusetts will receive for education. Braintree is in line for the additional money for the fiscal year beginning July 1 because it is among 166 school districts that are below funding levels. The state's historic 1993 education reform law established foundation budgets for communities, setting a minimum funding threshold districts must meet so students receive a 'fair and adequate' education. The Legislature would still have to approve the measure before Braintree gets any money. 'This is obviously very good news for us if these figures are finalized,' school Superintendent Peter Kurzberg said Friday in a telephone interview. Kurzberg said he wants to know if there is a restriction on how the money can be used. 'We are hopeful that we will see a portion or all of the money coming to Braintree,' he said. 'It certainly makes our picture look much brighter.' Only recently, school officials said layoffs were looming to help offset hikes for special education and step increases for teachers. The proposed \$47.3 million school budget for the next fiscal year reflects a 4.75 percent increase from current spending. Meanwhile, the town is looking at a likely reduction of \$2.1 million in state aid during the next fiscal year. A public hearing on the school budget is set for 7 p.m. Monday at town hall. 'I am very encouraged by this proposal,' Joyce said. 'It means the world to our families, students and teachers in Braintree that we can maintain a high level of academics.' Joyce, a member of the state's Committee on Federal Stimulus Oversight, said he looked forward to working with the governor and other lawmakers as they strive to help communities during difficult financial times. Joyce, who also represents Canton, said the town's school department would receive an additional \$237,322 in funding under the same proposal." [[Patriot Ledger, 3/21/09](#)]

Boston Mayor: A Plan To Spend \$3.3 Million on Long-Planned Improvements to Public Housing Will Create About 700 Jobs Over the Next Few Years. "The city plans to put its first millions in federal stimulus cash to work as early as next month as part of the redevelopment of the Washington-Beech housing development in Roslindale, Mayor Thomas M. Menino said yesterday. The Boston Housing Authority outlined plans yesterday to spend \$33.3 million of the funds flowing to the city from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act over the next year on long-planned improvements to public housing and on the energy efficiency of some residences. The mayor's office said yesterday that the spending plan will create about 700 jobs over the next few years..." [[The Boston Globe, 3/12/09](#)]

Fall River Will Open A Career Center Using Stimulus Funds. "Federal stimulus funds are once again funneling into the city, this time to help create jobs for the city's young people. Mayor Robert Correia and Jim Calkins, director of the Bristol County Training Consortium, will announce the opening of a career center aimed directly at young people looking for summer jobs...The Youth Connection will be opened in the historic building and serve as a place where youths aged 14 to 24 can find information on employment opportunities specific to them...Calkins said supplying youths with employment takes on additional significance when considering the current economic climate. It [sic] think we'll find this is more significant than ever in our area," Calkins said. "Many youth's parents are experiencing layoffs and family incomes are substantially decreased, so this may be the only type of income coming into the family." [[The Herald News](#), 4/5/09]

Stimulus Will Help Brockton Keep or Rehire At Least a Dozen Police Jobs. "Federal stimulus money is starting to flow into the region, giving communities hope there may be some relief from the budget crisis that cities and towns are facing. Brockton learned this week that \$5.5 million is headed to the city for various programs, and Mayor James E. Harrington said there's more to come. 'The money is starting to trickle down,' Harrington said Friday. 'We're hoping this is the tip of the iceberg. They've been talking about this for weeks, now we're starting to see some details.' Of the \$5.5 million announced this week, \$675,256 is headed to the Police Department and will ease layoffs, the mayor said. Other funds are earmarked as Community Development Block Grants to be used at the mayor's discretion on roads and other public projects. Additional money is coming to Brockton for homeless prevention and for the Housing Authority...The \$675,256 in law enforcement funding will save 12 to 15 police jobs or if it comes after the layoffs, allow for rehiring, he said." [[Wicked Local Brockton](#), 3/6/09]

Stimulus Funds To Aid Local Massachusetts Road Construction and Transit Projects. "Gov. Deval Patrick announced Friday that Massachusetts can spend \$437.9 million on transportation projects that will include three local projects...The local projects include a new Route 24 interchange with an exit between exits 8 and 9 off Route 24 in Freetown, and resurfacing Route 6 in Swansea and Westport. The Route 24 interchange already includes a \$4.7 million earmark from Congress and \$1.2 million in state funding. The remaining cost of the project, \$66.9 million, will be funded by the federal highway stimulus package. The Westport repaving costs \$5.4 million and the Swansea resurfacing costs \$4.1 million. Federal officials have also announced an additional \$319 million in recovery funds will go toward regional transit authorities and the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority. Southeastern Regional Transit Authority will receive about \$4.5 million to replace seven buses, six vans, fareboxes and support equipment, New Bedford terminal improvements, facility and office building, security gates and transit enhancements." [[Herald News](#), 3/6/09]

Laid Off Software Engineer Found a New Job in the Green Tech Sector, Looked There Because He Expected the Stimulus to Help the Industry. "Some, like Del Sian, are already benefiting from the expected injection of cash. Sian, a software development manager, lost his job of three years at Fidelity in November and didn't know where he'd find work. His previous employer, a company in the medical field, had just gone through a round of layoffs. So, he called a recruiter, who had previously helped him find work, and also posted his resume online. He was hoping for an energy-related job, he said, because he knew it was a 'hot industry.' Then the recruiter called him about Conservation Services Group. He's been on the job about five weeks, working again in software development. 'I'm very happy,' Sian said. When he first researched the company, he recalled, 'I said, 'Wow, this has a lot of potential - especially with the stimulus package coming down the road.'"' [[Boston Globe](#), 3/6/09]

South Shore And Cape Cod Will Receive \$674,794 To Expand Services At Community Health Centers. "U.S. Rep. Bill Delahunt today announced the release of \$674,793 to expand services offered at community health centers on the South Shore and Cape Cod. 'These grants will aid health centers on the South Shore and Cape Cod in their efforts to provide care to an increasing number of patients during the current economic downturn,' said Delahunt. The grants will be distributed to a number of health centers on the South Shore and

Cape Cod, including: \$203,851 to Manet Community Health Center in Quincy, \$128,237 to Duffy Health Center in Hyannis, \$197,295 to Outer Cape Health Services of Orleans and \$145,410 to the Cape Cod Community Health Center in Mashpee." [US Fed News, 4/10/09]

Stimulus Funding Will Help Support Students In Low-Income Districts While Updating School Technology And Curriculum. "Millions in federal stimulus dollars are expected to flow to high-poverty school districts under a plan announced Thursday by Gov. Deval L. Patrick to prop up local schools. The grants will come from the federal Title I program, designed for schools and districts with a high concentration of low-income students. The money will go to 258 school districts, regional, technical and vocational schools and charter schools. Massachusetts stands to receive an additional \$163 million from the Title I program. Pittsfield would benefit the most in the Berkshires from the stimulus dollars, with \$481,279 in new Title I funding heading back to the city courtesy of President Obama's federal stimulus package. Pittsfield Superintendent Howard 'Jake' Eberwein III said the extra money will help preserve programs in schools that serve the city's neediest students while allowing the district to invest in lasting advances, like better technology, up-to-date curricula, and personnel. 'We are looking at the stimulus money and thinking very carefully about how we can use it to protect programs but also build programs that we can sustain beyond the stimulus,' Eberwein said. 'That's the challenge. We know we have to protect what we have, but we also have to develop and invest in new programs.'" [Berkshire Eagle Online, 4/10/09]



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Federal Stimulus Funds for Nevada's Green-Industry Grows Trees, But Few Jobs

By Pete Griffin

Published August 22, 2011 | FoxNews.com

A federal stimulus grant of nearly \$500,000 to grow trees and stimulate the economy in Nevada yielded a whopping 1.72 jobs, according to government statistics.

In 2009, the U.S. Forest Service awarded \$490,000 of stimulus money to Nevada's Clark County Urban Forestry Revitalization Project, aimed at revitalizing urban neighborhoods in the county with trees, plants, and green-industry training.

According to Recovery.gov, the U.S. government's official website related to Recovery Act spending, the project created 1.72 permanent jobs. In addition, the Nevada state Division of Forestry reported the federal grant generated one full-time temporary job and 11 short-term project-oriented jobs.

It also resulted in the planting of hundreds of trees -- which critics say is about the only good thing that came out of this stimulus project.

"Looking at the failure of the stimulus to live up to its promises, not just in Nevada, but throughout America, I think the question becomes 'is there any good use of stimulus money?'" said Douglas Kellogg, communications manager for National Taxpayers Union, in an email to FoxNews.com.

A Nevada state official has a simple explanation for the low job growth.

"If the question is 'was this a job-creating project?' the answer is 'no, it wasn't,'" said Bob Conrad, public information officer for the Nevada Department of Conservation and Natural Resources. "It was one of a number of projects that we do believe helped improve natural resources in the state."

Conrad said the \$490,000 is being used for a number of projects. Those projects include tree inventories, salaries for staff at the nurseries through the Nevada Division of Forestry, plant material and plant supplies.

"The goal obviously was to make trees available to local government entities, parks, schools, things like that, at our state nursery," said Conrad. "We basically grew and provided about 2,000 trees to these local entities."

The grant also funds Spanish-language training for Hispanics in the landscaping and tree care industry to "develop employability skills and increase job retention."

Conrad could not say how many, if any, jobs were created by that training.

"We had to put together projects within very specific parameters. If the particular project you're referring to didn't create jobs necessarily, that's really something that's beyond the parameters of the program and it's really something you'd have to ask the federal government, the U.S. Forest Service."

Repeated calls by FoxNews.com to the U.S. Forest Service were not returned.

A project summary provided by Conrad showed an even lower amount of full-time jobs, with 1.37 full-time employees at the Las Vegas Nursery.

Conrad explained that the number of full-time jobs is low because most of the tasks, such as planting trees or driving plants from the nursery to participating schools or parks, are given to individuals on a short-term basis via a temp agency. For example, 11 people were hired temporarily for different aspects of the project, such as planters, trainers, drivers, and individuals to develop programs.

"You're not going to hire a driver full-time for this entire project if the driver is only needed for a limited number of hours," said Conrad. "It wouldn't make good business sense to hire a full-time person to do something that's really just a short-term need for the project."

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Nevada has the highest unemployment rate in the nation, which, according to latest U.S. Department of Labor statistics, stood at 12.9 percent in July.

Kellogg said that the low job growth from this project could rub taxpayers the wrong way.

"Job-killing taxes, or more debt for a downgraded nation, are not likely to bring relief to our unemployment crisis," said Kellogg.

Conrad said that only 60 percent of the stimulus money has been used so far and of that amount, 90 to 95 percent of it is already allocated to salaries, sub grants, and other projects.

"The project isn't done," said Conrad.

But Kellogg believes it's a bad use of taxpayer money during these tough economic times.

"The president may well propose new stimulus efforts when Congress returns from recess," said Kellogg, "and those who learn from past stimulus debacles will not be fooled again."

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Seattle's 'green jobs' program a bust

Originally printed at <http://www.komonews.com/news/local/127844048.html>

By Vanessa Ho, [Seattlepi.com](http://seattlepi.com) August 16, 2011

Last year, Seattle Mayor Mike McGinn announced the city had won a coveted \$20 million federal grant to invest in weatherization. The unglamorous work of insulating crawl spaces and attics had emerged as a silver bullet in a bleak economy – able to create jobs and shrink carbon footprint – and the announcement came with great fanfare.

McGinn had joined Vice President Joe Biden in the White House to make it. It came on the eve of Earth Day. It had heady goals: creating 2,000 living-wage jobs in Seattle and retrofitting 2,000 homes in poorer neighborhoods.

But more than a year later, Seattle's numbers are lackluster. As of last week, only three homes had been retrofitted and just 14 new jobs have emerged from the program. Many of the jobs are administrative, and not the entry-level pathways once dreamed of for low-income workers. Some people wonder if the original goals are now achievable.

"The jobs haven't surfaced yet," said Michael Woo, director of Got Green, a Seattle community organizing group focused on the environment and social justice.

"It's been a very slow and tedious process. It's almost painful, the number of meetings people have gone to. Those are the people who got jobs. There's been no real investment for the broader public."

'Who's got the money'

The buildings that have gotten financing so far include the Washington Athletic Club and a handful of hospitals, a trend that concerns community advocates who worry the program isn't helping lower-income homeowners.

"Who's benefitting from this program right now – it doesn't square with what the aspiration was," said Howard Greenwich, the policy director of Puget Sound Sage, an

economic-justice group. He urged the city to revisit its social-equity goals.

"I think what it boils down to is who's got the money."

Organizers and policy experts blame the economy, bureaucracy and bad timing for the program's mediocre results. Called Community Power Works, the program funds low-interest loans and incentives for buildings to do energy-efficient upgrades. They include hospitals, municipal buildings, big commercial structures and homes.

Half the funds are reserved for financing and engaging homeowners in Central and Southeast Seattle, a historically underserved area. Most of the jobs are expected to come from this sector.

But the timing of the award has led to hurdles in enticing homeowners to bite on retrofits. The city had applied for the grant at a time of eco-giddiness, when former Seattle Mayor Greg Nickels was out-greening all other politicians except for Al Gore. Retrofits glowed with promise to boost the economy, reduce consumer bills and lower greenhouse gas emissions.

"A triple win," is how Biden characterized it.

By the time Seattle won the award, homeowners were battered by unemployment and foreclosures. The long-term benefits of energy upgrades lacked the tangible punch of a new countertop. And the high number of unemployed construction workers edged out new weatherization installers for the paltry number of jobs.

"Really, we couldn't have rolled out this program at a worse time," said Greenwich, who had helped write the city's grant proposal.

"The outcomes are very disappointing. I think the city has worked really hard, but no one anticipated just how bad this recession was going to be, and the effect it was going to have on this program."

City feels 'cautiously optimistic'

As of last week, 337 homeowners had applied for the program. Fourteen had gotten a loan, or were in the process of getting one.

"Yes, we're not seeing as many completed retrofits as we wanted to," said Joshua Curtis, the city's manager for Community Power Works. "While everyone would like to see more upgrades, I think we're feeling cautiously optimistic."

He said the residential portion of program didn't launch until April. He said there was a normal summertime lull in work and that he expected things to pick up in the fall. He was confident that the city's marketing campaign and loan partner held promise.

Curtis said there were factors outside the city's control, such as the economy. And he attributed frustration among job-seekers to a "mismatch" in the timing of two federal grants.

Before the city got the \$20 million, some local agencies, including Got Green, had received funds in a government push to train workers in weatherization. But the anticipation of landing career-path jobs evaporated as months went by with no work.

"People are frustrated and rightly so," Curtis said. "There's been sort of a lag time when people graduated from those programs."

They include Long Duong, 32, who got a certificate in sealing air leaks and insulating walls after he was laid off from a job handling bags at the airport. But he soon found that other men had more qualifications than him, and he took part-time gigs - installing light bulbs and canvassing doors - while waiting for work.

A year later, he's still looking.

"I haven't given up yet," said Duong, of South Seattle. "Weatherization is another opportunity for me."

Curtis said the money that financed the Washington Athletic Club and hospitals doesn't draw from funds reserved for single-family homeowners. He said the program's standards will ensure that people targeted by the program - low-income workers - will get good jobs. And he said the WAC project will create some new work in September.

"We're not where we want to be, but we have a path forward," he said.

City needs to 'step up its game'

But will the city hit its goals? Curtis was hopeful Seattle would make it by 2013, when the funding ends. Greenwich, of Puget Sound Sage, said the city needs to retrofit 100 to 200 homes a month to create 2,000 jobs. Woo, of Got Green, thinks the city needs to throw more money on incentives.

Greenwich said the energy retrofit market has turned out to be extremely complicated, with required hammering out of job standards, hiring practices, wages and how best to

measure energy benefits.

"The city is really going to have to step up its game to get the 2,000 retrofits," Greenwich said.

"But if this would have been easy, it would have been done already."

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SUZANNE GOLDENBERG'S BLOG

ENVIRONMENTAL NEWS AND ANALYSIS FROM THE US



Barack Obama: 'no' to solar panels on the White House roof

Campaigner Bill McKibben says solar panels would demonstrate presidential leadership on climate change

- [Bill McKibben: Why has extreme weather failed to heat up climate debate?](#)
- [Spain overtakes US with world's biggest solar power station](#)

Suzanne Goldenberg, US environment correspondent
guardian.co.uk, Friday 10 September 2010 18.46 BST

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The White House: Barack Obama says 'no' to solar panels on the roof: Karen Bleier/AFP/Getty Images

[A quest to get Barack Obama to shout his commitment to solar power](#) from the roof tops - by re-installing vintage solar panels at the White House - ended in disappointment for environmental campaigners today.

[Bill McKibben](#), the founder of [350.org](#), had led a group of environmental activists to Washington in a bio-diesel van [hoping to persuade Obama](#) to re-install a set of solar panels originally put up by Jimmy Carter.

The actual Carter-era solar panels - which weigh in at 55 kilograms and are nearly 2 metres long - are out-dated now. But campaigners had hoped that the White House would embrace at least the symbolism of going solar - much like [Michelle Obama](#) [kicked off her healthy food movement](#) by planting a vegetable garden.

"Clearly, a solar panel on the White House roof won't solve climate change - and we'd rather have strong presidential leadership on energy transformation. But given the political scene, this may be as good as we'll get for the moment," McKibben said in a [Washington Post comment](#) this morning.

A California company [Sungevity](#) had offered to equip the White House with the latest technology.

But the White House declined - twitchy perhaps about inviting any comparison to one-term Democratic president Carter in the run-up to the very difficult mid-term elections in November. The White House did send three staffers to meet the campaigners.

McKibben told reporters after the meeting:

"They refused to take the Carter-era panel that we brought with us and said they would continue their deliberative process to figure out what is appropriate for the White House someday. I told them it would be nice to deliberate as fast as possible, since that is the rate at which the planet's climate is deteriorating."

The White House offered up its own version of the meeting in a statement:

"Representatives from the White House met with the group to discuss President Obama's unprecedented commitment to [renewable energy](#) including more than \$80 billion in the generation of renewable energy sources, expanding manufacturing capacity for clean energy technology, advancing vehicle and fuel technologies, and building a bigger, better, smarter electric grid, all while creating new, sustainable jobs...They concluded by reiterating our continued commitment to promoting renewable energy development."

Carter held a rooftop press conference in 1979 to show off the 32 solar panels and drive home a message to Congress that it was time to get America off imported oil. The panels were used to heat water for the White House staff mess.

The message did not take though, and the panels themselves did not even survive Ronald Reagan. The panels were removed in 1986 during roof repairs. They eventually ended up at [Unity College in Maine](#) where they were used to heat water in the student cafeteria until 2005 when they were retired.

The van carrying the solar panels is now parked a few blocks away from the White House and will be [rolling again on 10th October](#) as part of the [10:10:10 international day of action](#) on climate change.

The Washington Times

'Green' jobs no longer golden in stimulus

Environmental projects fail to live up to hype

By [Patrice Hill](#)

The Washington Times

8:43 p.m., Thursday, September 9, 2010

Noticeably absent from President [Obama\(/topics/barack-obama/\)](#)'s latest economic-stimulus package are any further attempts to create jobs through "green" energy projects, reflecting a year in which the administration's original, loudly trumpeted efforts proved largely unfruitful.



The long delays typical with environmentally friendly projects - combined with reports of green stimulus funds being used to create jobs in [China\(/topics/china/\)](#) and other countries, rather than in the [U.S.\(/topics/united-states-of-america/\)](#) - appear to have killed the administration's appetite for pushing green projects as an economic cure.

After months of hype about the potential for green energy to stimulate job growth and lead the economy out of a recession, the results turned out to be disappointing, if not dismal. About \$92 billion - more than 11 percent - of [Mr. Obama\(/topics/barack-obama/\)](#)'s original \$814 billion of stimulus funds were targeted for renewable energy projects when the measure was pushed through [Congress\(/topics/congress/\)](#) in early 2009.

Even some of the administration's liberal allies have expressed skepticism over the original stimulus package's use of green investments as a way to spur quick employment growth at home.

"Spending on renewables is slow to get out of the door. Leaks to foreign companies is an inadequate driver of jobs and growth and may not create a strong exporting industry," said [Samuel Sherraden\(/topics/samuel-sherraden/\)](#), an economic analyst at the [New America Foundation\(/topics/new-america-foundation/\)](#), a Washington-based progressive think tank.

Only about \$20 billion of the allotted funds have been spent - the slowest disbursement rate for any category of stimulus spending. Private analysts are skeptical of [White House\(/topics/white-house/\)](#) estimates that the green funding created 190,700 jobs.

The [Department of Energy\(/topics/united-states-department-of-energy/\)](#) estimated that 82,000 jobs have been created and has acknowledged that as much as 80 percent of some green programs, including \$2.3 billion of manufacturing tax credits, went to foreign firms that employed workers primarily in countries including [China\(/topics/china/\)](#), [South Korea\(/topics/south-korea/\)](#) and [Spain\(/topics/spain/\)](#), rather than in the [United States\(/topics/united-states-of-america/\)](#).

[Peter Morici\(/topics/peter-morici/\)](#), a business professor at the [University of Maryland\(/topics/university-of-maryland-college-park/\)](#), said much of the green stimulus funding was "squandered."

"Large grants to build green buildings don't generate many new jobs, except for a few architects," he said. "Subsidies for windmills and solar panels created lots of jobs in [China\(/topics/china/\)](#)," but few at home.

In one of several embarrassing disclosures for the administration, a report last fall by [American University \(/topics/american-university/\)](#)'s Investigative Reporting Workshop found that 11 [U.S. \(/topics/united-states-of-america/\)](#) wind farms used their grants to purchase 695 out of 982 wind turbines from overseas suppliers.

That report raised alarms in [Congress \(/topics/congress/\)](#). Leading Democrats insisted that the money be spent at home, but restrictions on the funds proved impossible without the specter of a trade war.

While lawmakers fumed, economists were not surprised that green energy companies used the funds to purchase inexpensive Chinese wind turbines. Renewable-technology firms are under the gun to bring down costs so they can compete with cheaper traditional fuels, such as gas and coal, for electricity customers.

But without restrictions that prohibit the funds from being diverted overseas, [Mr. Morici \(/topics/peter-morici/\)](#) said, any further spending on green energy would only continue to enrich foreign producers. Chinese manufacturers in particular have taken the lead in making renewable-energy components, just as they have come to dominate many other industries because of advantages derived from state subsidies and the country's abundant pool of cheap labor.

In a trade complaint against [China \(/topics/china/\)](#) on Thursday, the United Steelworkers union charged that Beijing is trying to corner the market on green jobs by showering billions of dollars of subsidies on domestic producers and discriminating against foreign firms and goods.

With growing proof that green jobs are heading overseas, even administration sympathizers and environmental advocates have largely abandoned the idea of pushing green funding as a way to stimulate the economy.

While he requested no additional stimulus funding for renewable-energy projects this week, [Mr. Obama \(/topics/barack-obama/\)](#) now portrays his green-energy agenda as good for the economy and jobs in the long term, as the government assists the private sector in evolving away from dependence on oil and coal.

"We see a future," he said in a speech Wednesday in Cleveland, "where we build a homegrown clean-energy industry, because I don't want to see new solar panels or electric cars or advanced batteries manufactured in Europe or in Asia. I want to see them made right here in the [U.S. \(/topics/united-states-of-america/\)](#) of A. by [American \(/topics/american-university/\)](#) workers."

Time magazine recently reported that the [White House \(/topics/white-house/\)](#) last year saw the stimulus bill as a vehicle for enacting the president's ambitious, long-term environmental program, knowing that most of the economic effect would be felt years from now rather than immediately when the economy needed it.

The [New America Foundation \(/topics/new-america-foundation/\)](#)'s [Mr. Sherraden \(/topics/samuel-sherraden/\)](#) said it was "unwise" of the administration and congressional Democrats "to rely so heavily on the renewable-energy sector to drive the recovery."

The progressive think tank and other allies urged the administration to refocus its efforts on traditional road and transit projects, which economists say are more likely to provide quick jolts to the jobs market. The administration appears to have followed that advice in advancing a \$50 billion program for building roads, transit and rail as the centerpiece of its latest stimulus plan.

"Green-energy projects in the [United States \(/topics/united-states-of-america/\)](#) are unusually slow to roll out because the industry is small and rife with political and market uncertainty," [Mr. Sherraden \(/topics/samuel-sherraden/\)](#) said.

Despite the massive infusion of government funding in recent years, renewable technologies have captured only a tiny share of the energy market and remain heavily dependent on government funding to be viable. Because of the need to constantly renew government funding, private investors remain skittish about committing to new projects.

[Mr. Sherraden \(/topics/samuel-sherraden/\)](#) said the problem with job leakage overseas promised only to get worse, because governments in Europe and Japan - which in years past spent lavishly on renewable energy - now are drastically cutting back their green subsidies as they try to pare enormous budget deficits.

With the [United States\(/topics/united-states-of-america/\)](#) left as the only major developed country still flooding the market with government funding, competition from overseas suppliers promised to be more fierce than ever, [Mr. Sherraden\(/topics/samuel-sherraden/\)](#) said.

"It is impossible to guarantee that clean-energy stimulus is not leaked abroad," he said. "We have to recognize that we are funding job-creation programs in Germany, [Spain\(/topics/spain/\)](#), Japan and [China\(/topics/china/\)](#)."

Even if the green-energy funding is viewed as a long-term investment to replace dwindling reserves of oil rather than as pure economic stimulus, advocates have greatly exaggerated the benefits, said Kerry Lynch, senior fellow at the American Institute for Economic Research.

"For all the hype over wind and solar, the reality is that they contribute very little to our energy supply," she said, saying that wind accounts for less than 1 percent of total [U.S.\(/topics/united-states-of-america/\)](#) energy production and solar power for just one-tenth of 1 percent. "Together, they could power the country for all of three days a year."

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Delays plague Energy's Recovery Act spending

By Katherine McIntire Peters | kpeters@govexec.com | March 5, 2010

At the end of February, a year after receiving \$36.7 billion under the [Recovery Act](#) to fund renewable energy and efficiency projects, the Energy Department had spent just 7 percent of the money, the [Government Accountability Office](#) found.

Department officials had pledged to expedite stimulus spending as a means to put people to work quickly on shovel-ready projects. And while 70 percent of the funds have been obligated, red tape -- much of it related to compliance with environmental and labor laws -- is stalling spending, witnesses told lawmakers on the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee on Thursday.

Patricia Dalton, managing director of natural resources and environment at [GAO](#), said spending had been most hampered by requirements associated with the 1931 Davis-Bacon Act and the 1969 National Environmental Policy Act. Davis-Bacon requires contractors and subcontractors to pay workers locally prevailing wages on construction projects, and the second law requires agencies to consider environmental consequences before green-lighting projects.




For example, the Energy Department's Weatherization Assistance Program previously had been exempt from Davis-Bacon, but under the Recovery Act it became subject to the requirements for the first time. That meant the Labor Department had to determine the prevailing wage rates for weatherization activities in each county in the United States.

To prevent this requirement from delaying program starts, Energy and Labor in July 2009 issued a joint memo authorizing work under the program so long as recipients paid workers Labor's prevailing wage rates for residential construction and agreed to compensate them for the difference later, if Labor established a higher rate for weatherization activities.

But many states refused to spend the money until Labor determined the county-by-county wage rates for weatherization activities.

"Many states did not proceed with awarding grants out of fear of future liability," said Michele Nellenbach, director of the Natural Resources Committee for the National Governors Association. "States were concerned they would have to later divert funds from one project to retroactively pay workers on another project that were unintentionally paid less than the prevailing wage, or would have to take money away from workers who were paid more than the contractually mandated prevailing wage."

According to Energy data GAO reviewed, "as of Dec. 31, 2009, 30,252 homes had been weatherized with Recovery Act funds, or about 5 percent of the approximately 593,000 total homes that DOE originally

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planned to weatherize using Recovery Act funds," Dalton said.

Other factors were problems as well, Dalton said, including staffing shortages at all levels of government.

Nellenbach said even though the Recovery Act authorized recipients to use of 10 percent of funds to cover administrative functions associated with the spending, many states have across-the-board hiring freezes, "making it extremely difficult for states and local government to rapidly increase capacity to the level proportionate with the amount of funding provided."

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Being involved with these grants, I can attest to the Environmental and Davis-Bacon issues. Lets also not forget issues involving Historic Building retrofits and all the paperwork that is required to process grants (thousands upon thousands of grants). Other issues involve the technical issues grantees deal with accessing FederalReporting.gov, etc.

DOE Employee | Posted March 8, 2010 | 8:12 PM

Imagine that the dems initiate bureaucratic laws to impeded progress by the private sector and then lament when the shoe is on the other foot..

dan ketter | Posted March 8, 2010 | 6:33 PM

So is this written by the folks that do Home Extreme Makeover? Looks good on paper and from far away but the details show glaring problems. If a project is shovel ready, shouldn't all the red tape have been dealt with already? More great leadership from the FDR school of recovery.

Mark | Posted March 8, 2010 | 10:54 AM

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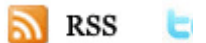
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Obama's federal government can weatherize your home for only \$57,362 each

February 18, 2010 | 2:26 am

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Who could forget the \$5 billion in Obama administration stimulus money that was going to rapidly create nearly 90,000 green jobs across the country in these tough economic times and make so many thousands of homes all snuggly and warm and energy-efficient these very snowy days?

Well, a new report due out this morning will show the \$5-billion program is so riddled with drafts that so far it's weatherized only about 9,000 homes.

Based on the initial Obama-Biden program promise that it would create 87,000 new jobs its first year, that would be about 10 jobs for each home weatherized so far. Makes for pretty crowded doorways.

[ABC News reports](#) that the General Accountability Office will declare today that the Energy Department has fallen woefully behind -- about 98.5% behind -- the 593,000 homes it initially predicted would be weatherized in the Recovery Act's very first, very chilly year.

(UPDATE 12:22 p.m. An Energy spokeswoman disputes the independent GAO numbers as outdated and conclusions as inaccurate. Full statement below.)

The Energy Department is run by **Steven Chu**, like President Obama a Nobel Prize winner. You'll never guess what the federal government blames for the lack of significant progress.

RED tape.

Not duct tape. Not weatherstripping. But that infamous **RED** tape. In the form of, well, forms.

It seems that the Pelosi-Reid stimulus plan that was so quickly cobbled together and....

...was supposed to immediately pump so much money into the sagging economy last year included an 80-year-old legal provision requiring all federally funded projects to pay a prevailing wage to workers.

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But what's a prevailing wage for weatherization, you ask?

Who knows?

So the Energy Department asked the Labor Department, which set out to calculate what a prevailing weatherization wage is in every single one of the more than 3,000 counties across these United States.

There were some other things to figure out. It seems the law also requires some kind of National Trust for Historic Preservation review for most homes before any contracts could be estimated to be negotiated to be signed to be let to be begun. And states like Michigan have two people assigned to such tasks.

So, good luck speeding up that work.

The Energy folks did tell ABC they've so far spent 522-million Recovery Act dollars on the program. So, let's see, about 9,100 homes divided into that chunk of stimulation change to believe in is -- *gee!* -- about \$57,362 worth of very expensive weatherstripping for each home fixed up so far.

Seems believable for a federal program.

(Energy GAO reaction: "The GAO report cites figures from September 2009 -- almost five months out of date. Since then, we have resolved Davis-Bacon wage issues in all 50 states, clarified how states should handle historic preservation and worked with states to resolve any remaining barriers. As a result, by the end of 2009, our programs had weatherized about 124,000 homes in total, and we are on track to weatherize more than 250,000 this year. In fact, since September 2009, we have tripled the pace of Recovery Act funded home weatherization. The report also erroneously implies that our goal was to weatherize 593,000 homes in 2009. That is wrong. The goal has been to weatherize that number by March 2012, and we are on track to meet that goal.")

-- Andrew Malcolm

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'Poster Child' for Obama hypocrisy on green jobs?

By: [Mark Tapscott](#)

Editorial Page Editor

01/15/10 7:43 AM EST

In a city full of conflicts of interest, this one ranks near the top of the "Most Blatant Ever." Robin Roy is a senior executive of Serious Materials, a California-based windows maker that was virtually unknown within its industry until last year when President Obama and Vice President Joe Biden began praising it as, in the latter's words, the "poster child of green industry."

Actually, Serious Materials is at the center of a grubby new conflicts of interest scandal in the White House because Assistant Secretary of Energy Cathy Zoi, Roy's wife, just happens to be the Obama appointee in charge of the government's crash weatherization program.

The [Freedom Foundation of Minnesota](#) and its investigative reporter Tom Steward has been looking into the Zoi-Roy connection for several months. Here's what they found:

"Last year Congress passed the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA or the so-called Stimulus Bill). The U.S. Department of Energy's office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy (EERE) received \$16.8 billion of those ARRA funds to be used to promote green energy and conservation programs including the popular \$1,500 tax credit for homeowners who install energy-efficient windows. The Assistant Secretary of Energy, Cathy Zoi, is responsible for oversight in disbursing these stimulus funds.

"Ms. Zoi is married to Robin Roy, a top executive at Serious Materials, a privately held manufacturer of 'sustainable green building materials' located in California. On the Executive Branch Personnel Public Financial Disclosure submitted by Ms. Zoi to the White House Ethics office as part of her confirmation, Ms. Zoi disclosed ownership with her spouse of 120,000 vested and unvested stock options in Serious Materials, a company her office regulates and that she may profit from."

In other words, Zoi complied with the letter of the law by disclosing her interest in her husband's employer. But has she observed the spirit of the government's ethics laws, which are intended to prevent conflicts of interest, real and apparent? Well, the White House has specifically praised Serious Materials in an official news release, and the company chairman has participated in a 22-minute news conference with Obama. The company is also the recipient of a special tax break and the government has ordered so much of its products that the firm can't keep up with demand.

John Stossel of Fox Business News, whose nationally syndicated column begins in *The Washington Examiner* in February, calls Serious Materials and its relationship with the Obama administration an illustration of "crony capitalism." Stossel's [report](#) aired last night.

The Freedom Foundation's explanatory video, which demonstrates the close relationship between Serious and this White House, is below:



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