

United States Senate
OFFICE OF THE REPUBLICAN LEADER

March 11, 2009

The Honorable Gene L. Dodaro, Acting Comptroller General
U.S. Government Accountability Office
441 G Street, NW
Washington, D.C. 20548

Dear Mr. Dodaro:

I am writing to request that the Government Accountability Office (GAO) conduct periodic reviews of spending provisions in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA). Given the unprecedented size of this legislation, I believe it is critical that GAO conduct regular audits to ensure that tax dollars are well spent.

I am deeply concerned by reports that oversight will stop at the state-level once a governor designates the federal money to be spent at the local or municipal level. The American taxpayer will benefit from full transparency at each step of the process as these funds are disbursed. Furthermore, taxpayers need to know how these entities are spending stimulus funds at the project level. Tracking money only to the state level is insufficient, as it fails to measure the actual expenditure of taxpayer dollars and the projects for which these funds are being spent. Therefore, I request that GAO track expenditures to the project level and report on a bimonthly basis, as part of the 13 mandates included in ARRA.

I also ask that GAO answer the following questions:

- Given the limitations within ARRA that funds be used to supplement and not supplant state and local support for particular programs or activities, to what extent are Governors assuring that Federal spending does not supplant state spending?
- How is the Administration measuring the effectiveness of the stimulus in job creation?
- To what extent is the Recovery Act Accountability and Transparency Board tracking how much of the contract spending is resulting in sole-source contracts, and how much of it circumvents contracting laws and regulations?
- To what extent do the Davis-Bacon requirements in the legislation increase the cost of each project?
- What are some of the key Federal regulations that may delay project starts and therefore delay job creation?

American taxpayers need to know how their tax dollars are being spent and that they are being spent wisely. GAO is well-positioned to conduct oversight and review to ensure that they are protected.

Thank you for your attention.

Sincerely,


MITCH McCONNELL
REPUBLICAN LEADER

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