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The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 *Creating Jobs, Investing in Our Country's Future, and Cutting Taxes For the People of Vermont*

Today, the Senate approved the *American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009*, as amended, emergency legislation requested by President Obama that will create millions of jobs for American workers and begin to put the nation's economy back on track. We are confronting the most severe economic problems in generations as millions of Americans are struggling. That's why the *American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009* will **create good-paying jobs; make investments in America's future; and cut taxes** for working families. Our plan also delivers transparency and accountability to guarantee that all taxpayer money is invested responsibly.

What does this mean for Vermont?

According to the Senate Committee on Appropriations, the *American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009* is estimated to provide approximately **\$374.9 million** in the following benefits:*

Vermont's Infrastructure and Science

In order to rebuild our weakening economy, these investments in our physical and cyber infrastructure will put Vermonters immediately to work rebuilding our crumbling roads and bridges, and will also enable the creation of a stronger and more efficient infrastructure for the 21st century economy.

- **\$19.7 million** through the **Drinking Water State Revolving Fund** to address the backlog of drinking water infrastructure needs
- **\$19.5 million** through the **Clean Water State Revolving Fund** to address the backlog of clean water infrastructure needs
- **\$132.4 million** in **Highway Funding** to be used on activities eligible under the Federal-aid Highway Program's Surface Transportation Program and could also include rail and port infrastructure activities at the discretion of the states
- **\$7.5 million** in **Transit Formula Funding** for investments in mass transit
- **\$3.4 million** through the **Public Housing Capital Fund** to enable local public housing agencies to address a national \$32 billion backlog in capital needs – especially those improving energy efficiency in aging developments – in this critical element of the nation's affordable housing infrastructure

- **\$5.5 million** in **HOME Funding** to enable state and local government, in partnership with community-based organizations, to acquire, construct, and rehabilitate affordable housing and provide rental assistance to poor families
- **\$3.4 million** through the **Homelessness Prevention Fund** to be used for prevention activities, which include: short or medium-term rental assistance, first and last month's rental payment, or utility payments. As such, most of this funding will go directly into the economy of local communities, as the funds will be used to pay housing and other associated costs in the private market

Education and Training in Vermont

In order to compete in the 21st Century, we must have a well-educated workforce, capable of adapting to an ever-changing economic environment. Investing in education now will ensure that the next generation of Vermont's workers is ready and able to meet the challenge of global competition. In the near-term, millions of workers have seen their jobs disappear, and find themselves unable to match their skill sets with existing opportunities. Providing job training in new and expanding fields will help to lower the unemployment rate and help today's workers better compete against foreign competition.

- **\$62.2 million** through the **State Fiscal Stabilization Fund** to local school districts and public colleges and universities in addition to incentive grants as a reward for meeting key education performance measures and additional funding for other high-priority needs such as public safety and other critical services, which may include education
- **\$26.1 million** for **Special Education Part B State Grants** to help improve educational outcomes for individuals with disabilities, raising the federal contribution to nearly 40 percent, the level established when the law was authorized more than 30 years ago
- **\$4.8 million** in **education technology** funds to purchase up-to-date computers and software and provide professional development to ensure the technology is used effectively in the classroom
- **\$32.2 million** for **Title I Education for the Disadvantaged** to help close the achievement gap and enable disadvantaged students to reach their potential
- **\$1.3 million** in **State Employment Service Grants** to match unemployed individuals to job openings through state employment service agencies and allow Vermont to provide customized reemployment services
- **\$1.2 million** in **Dislocated Workers State Grants**, particularly for grants that support immediate strategies for regions and communities to meet their need for skilled workers, as well as longer-term plans to build targeted industry clusters with better training and a more productive workforce
- **\$1.2 million** for Department of Labor's **Adult State Grants**
- **\$2.9 million** for Department of Labor's **Youth State Grants**
- **\$1.6 million** for **Vocational Rehabilitation** to help individuals with disabilities prepare for and sustain gainful employment

Vermont's Energy

The *American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009* would provide investments in areas critical to the development of clean, efficient, American energy, including modernizing energy

transmission, research and development of renewable energy technologies, and modernizing and upgrading government buildings and vehicles.

- **\$3.5 million** through the **State Energy Program**
- **\$10.2 million** through the **Weatherization Assistance Program**

Protecting the Vulnerable in Vermont

The current economic crisis has affected all Vermonters, but none more so than the most vulnerable among us. The spending proposed here will serve to lessen the blow of the current recession, providing immediate relief for children, the poor, and others who may find themselves struggling to put food on the table or a roof over their head. It will also address the urgent need to provide safe and secure places to live, even in neighborhoods that are struggling with high unemployment and surging foreclosure rates.

- **\$159,013** for **National School Lunch Program Equipment Assistance**
- **\$186,890** through the **Emergency Food Assistance Program**
- **\$25.7 million** in **Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program** benefits (formerly Food Stamps)
- **\$163,399** for the **Emergency Food and Shelter Program**, which provides grants to nonprofit and faith-based organizations at the local level to supplement their programs for emergency food and shelter to provide for the immediate needs of the homeless
- **\$2.8 million** in **Child Care and Development Block Grants** to provide quality child care services for in low-income families who increasingly are unable to afford the high cost of day care
- **\$601,891** for **Head Start** to allow additional children to participate in this program, which provides development, educational, health, nutritional, social and other activities that prepare children to succeed in school
- **\$1 million** in **Community Services Block Grants** to local community action agencies for services to the growing numbers of low-income families hurt by the economic crisis, such as housing and mortgage counseling, jobs skills training, food pantry assistance, as well as benefits outreach and enrollment
- **\$500,000** for **Senior Meals Programs** to help senior meals programs cope with steep increases in food and fuel costs. Many programs are reducing meal deliveries to seniors or closing meal sites

Law Enforcement in Vermont

- **\$3 million** in **Byrne/JAG grants** to support law enforcement efforts
- **\$348,998** for **crime victims compensation and assistance**
- **\$403,670** in **Internet Crimes Against Children Grants** to help law enforcement agencies enhance their investigative response to offenders who use the Internet, online communication systems, or other computer technology to sexually exploit children
- **\$1.1 million** in **Violence Against Women Grants** for victim services programs to improve the criminal justice system's response to violent crimes against women and to assist victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault and stalking who are in need of transitional housing, short-term housing assistance, and related support services

Additional Benefits for Vermont

Unemployment Benefits in Vermont. According to the Department of Labor, Vermont could receive **\$14 million** in new funding if Vermont fully enacts the UI modernization incentives that the legislation would provide.

Tax Relief for Vermont Families and Businesses. According to the Senate Committee on Finance, the following are examples of tax provisions in the *American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009* that will help Vermont businesses and families, create jobs and get Vermont's economy moving:

- Up to **\$500** for individuals and **\$1,000** for married couples for the **Making Work Pay Tax Credit**
- **\$300** to Social Security beneficiaries, SSI recipients, and disabled veterans
- **\$2,500** for the **American Opportunity Tax Credit** (an increase in the tax credit for higher education and allowing the credit for four full years)
- **Extended and increased Homebuyer Tax Credit** to both help aspiring homeowners and stabilize plummeting home prices
- **Extended Bonus Depreciation and Small Business Expensing** through 2009, allowing businesses that make capital investments to immediately deduct one-half the cost. Small businesses can immediately deduct 100 percent of the cost of these investments
- **\$1.6 billion** for **grants to schools and hospitals** for energy efficiency and combined heat and power system projects

The *American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009* would protect over 26 million working families across the nation from the **Alternative Minimum Tax**, representing thousands of dollars in additional income taxes. According to the Congressional Research Service, **51,000 Vermonters** would be protected from the Alternative Minimum Tax in 2009.

** The benefits described in this fact sheet represent estimates of highlights of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009. It is not a complete listing of all the programs included in the legislation. Due to rounding, the sum of the programs may not equal the estimated total.*