



Fact Sheet

BYRON L. DORGAN
CHAIRMAN

DPC Staff Contact: Erika Moritsugu (202) 224-3232
DPC Press Contact: Barry Piatt (202) 224-2551
Available Online: dpc.senate.gov

June 16, 2009

The Recovery Act: A Report on the Path to Progress in Texas

Creating and Saving Jobs, Boosting Household Resources, Providing Assistance for the Vulnerable in Texas

On February 13, 2009, the Senate approved the final version of the *American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009* and sent the legislation to President Obama to be signed into law (P.L. 111-5). The *Recovery Act* is an extraordinary response by Democrats to an inherited economic crisis unlike any since the Great Depression. The legislation represents an unprecedented effort to jumpstart our economy, create and save millions of jobs, and put a down payment on addressing long-neglected challenges so our country can not only recover but prosper once again.

Nationwide, we have already seen companies rehiring laid-off workers, construction and renovation of facilities, and the re-starting of environmental remediation activities. And, just a few months into the two-year *Recovery Act* programs:

- **We have minimized and avoided reductions in essential services in Texas** by providing aid to help stabilize state and local budgets, protected critical safety-net programs, and saved teaching and law enforcement jobs.
- **Plans for job-creating infrastructure projects in Texas are already planned and underway** with the Department of Transportation allocation of \$998 million for highway infrastructure investments (through the Federal Highway Administration); \$102.2 million for transit modernization, repair, and other capital needs (through the Federal Transit Authority; and \$144,000 in airport grants for development projects that enhance safety, capacity and security and airport facilities and equipment upgrades (through the Federal Aviation Administration) (as of June 2, 2009). These *Recovery Act* projects deliver jobs and make important investments in the safety of our transportation systems. [DOT Allocation Report, 6/2/2009].
- **Families and communities in Texas that have been hard-hit by the recession** can access increased unemployment benefits, assistance with health insurance premiums for those who have become unemployed, and food aid. And 8.4 million households in Texas – approximately 95 percent of all families and individuals – have already begun seeing an increase in their take-home pay through the landmark Making Work Pay tax credit. The typical family will have about \$800 extra cash delivered to them in their paychecks over the next year. [The White House, 4/2/2009]

Here is a sampling of projects in Texas that have been covered by local media and press releases in the past several weeks, demonstrating the real-life impacts that the *Recovery Act* has already made for Texans, only four months after the enactment of the *Recovery Act*:

- **Workforce Solutions of Central Texas obtains unprecedented \$2.4 million from *Recovery Act* to assuage unemployment.** “Workforce Solutions of Central Texas, the regional affiliate of the Texas Workforce Commission, has received a fast shot in the arm like it has never seen before in the form of \$2.435 million in *American Recovery and Reinvestment Act* dollars that it has to spend by September 2010. ‘We’ll probably never see an infusion like this again,’ said Jerry Haisler, executive director of the five Central Texas Workforce Centers that serve the seven counties of the WSCT’s region. ‘We’re going to make the most of it.’” [*Killeen Daily Herald*, 6/15/2009]
- **The Austin School Board created 18 new jobs using *Recovery Act* funds.** [*Education Blog, The Austin American-Statesman*, 6/8/2009]
- **The Texas Workforce Commission announced that the agency has distributed more than \$100 million in *Recovery Act*-funded unemployment benefits.** The *Recovery Act* furnished an additional \$25 per week to qualified job seekers as they work to find permanent employment. Eligible Texans began receiving the benefit increase in mid-March. The increase is effective for all initial claims filed through Dec. 26, 2009.” [*Dallas Business Journal*, 6/8/2009]
- **Tarrant County will use *Recovery Act* funds for toll road project.** Project is expected to be advertised in July, with an anticipated construction start date in September. [*The Bond Buyer*, 6/9/2009]
- **Texas housing industry is seeing some improvement, partially attributed to *Recovery Act* home-buyer tax credit.** Fort Worth-based History Maker Homes rep: “Our April and May sales were up pretty dramatically from the first quarter. I think that’s attributable to a lot of things, the tax credit being one of them. We are pushing it very hard.” [*Dallas Morning News*, 6/7/2009]
- ***Recovery Act*-funded contract allowed Austin Bridge and Road to avoid 50-60 layoffs.** Company president: “These jobs were saved because of the stimulus.” [*Reuters*, 6/2/2009]
- ***Recovery Act* money will fund two highway asphalt overlay projects in the Texas panhandle.** Project covers a three-mile stretch of Interstate 27 in Amarillo and a 13.6-mile stretch of U.S. Highway 87 at Dalhart. [*Amarillo.com*, 5/30/2009]
- ***Fortune*’s “Meet the stimulus hires” – Ron Walker of Cedar Park.** “I was brought on board to work on a product for IBM called Cognos TM1. They wanted to scale it to be able to handle more data and users for projects happening with the stimulus... It’s an entirely new way of looking at data for me. I was holding my own at a previous job, but I wanted something with better growth, where I saw the future of technology going. So when I heard about this opening from a friend, I went for it.” [*Fortune*, 6/1/2009]

- **The Texas Commission on Environmental Quality received *Recovery Act* funds to help prevent water pollution.** [*San Antonio Business Journal*, 5/18/2009]
- **Plainview applying for *Recovery Act* -funded grants to upgrade cops' equipment.** [*Plainview Daily Herald*, 5/14/2009]
- **The *Recovery Act* has created 700 transportation jobs in Texas.** Officials predict that the *Recovery Act* could create 90,000 transit jobs in Texas. [*Texarkana Gazette*, 5/10/2009]
- ***Recovery Act*-funded projects at Dyess Air Force Base will keep at least 20 local workers employed and provide new jobs for 17 or 18 more.** [*Abilene Reporter-News*, 5/9/2009]
- ***Recovery Act* funding will help build recovery and transition complex for injured soldiers.** Totaling more than 185,000 square feet, the WT complex will house three separate buildings consisting of a barracks, a headquarters and administrative building and a Soldier and Family Assistance Center." [*US Army Corps of Engineers Press Release*, 5/6/2009]