

**63. Residents Dismissed as Tilting at Windmill (Union Beach, NJ) - \$5.8 million**

Obnoxious and scary<sup>404</sup> are just a few of the ways local residents of Union Beach have described a proposed 380-foot tall, stimulus-funded,<sup>405</sup> industrial wind turbine just 1,080 feet away from their homes.<sup>406</sup> The 1.5 megawatt turbine is to go up by January 2011, pending impact studies on various species of local birds and bats.<sup>407</sup> Residents raised numerous concerns at the June 21, 2010 Bayshore Regional Sewage Authority (BSRA) meeting including: environmental impact, lower property values, noise effects, flickering shadows, and other public health risks such as the 100 decibel low frequency sounds the wind turbine will emit.<sup>408</sup> Wind Turbine Syndrome seems to have particularly strong effects on those with pre-existing migraine disorders, motion sensitivity, or inner ear damage.<sup>409</sup> Residents have also started a website at [www.noturbine.com](http://www.noturbine.com) to document their objections, which include that upon completion, the turbine blades will each be 75 feet taller than the Statue of Liberty.<sup>410</sup> At a July 8, 2010 meeting, the Monmouth County Board of Freeholders passed a resolution opposing the construction of the turbine and asking the BRSA to cease all activity on the project until residents' concerns have been adequately addressed.<sup>411</sup> While BRSA executives insist that the mill will allow them to bring down the cost of power in the region, residents continue to oppose the project. Bill Shewan, of neighboring Hazlet, put it thus: "Sometimes governments are wrong, and the people have to rise up."<sup>412</sup>

**64. Are Viewers Primed by Prime-Time Politics? (Princeton, NJ & Ann Arbor, MI) - \$317,216**

By changing the criteria voters use to evaluate their political candidates and politics, the media undoubtedly affect mass preferences. Now scholars at the University of Michigan<sup>413</sup> and Princeton University<sup>414</sup> will use stimulus funds to study the ways that the "media priming effect" can be measured. "In particular, results will bear on how, when, and why campaigns affect candidate evaluations and policy opinion."<sup>415</sup> While quantifying the effects of media priming might be valuable to politicians trying to get elected or those trying to manipulate media consumers, most Americans would probably just rather change the channel.

**65. DTV "Experts" Plug Boxes Into a Wall (Buffalo, NY) - \$350,000**

The Federal Communication Commission (FCC) spent \$350,000 to hire "experts" to help people hook up digital converter boxes made necessary by the federal government's recent digital switch.<sup>416</sup> Most of those jobs were short-term jobs, lasting only during the DTV transition.<sup>417</sup> Most DTV converter boxes are no more difficult to hook up than connecting the "antenna-in" cable, the "TV-out" cable, and the power cord into an outlet,<sup>418</sup> raising questions about the need for "experts." The installation guide provided by the FCC is only four easy steps, including instructions to plug the power cords "into a power outlet."<sup>419</sup>

**66. Learn How Life Works on a Smartphone (Cambridge, MA) - \$435,271**

Does your 14-year-old need to learn biology on the go? There's an app for that . . . or will be, thanks to the U.S. taxpayer. Scientists at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) have been awarded \$435,271 to develop iPod Touch or smartphone apps to teach introductory biology to high school students, and to study the games' utility.<sup>420</sup> The project, which has created two jobs,<sup>421</sup> will develop a series of simulation games to help 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> graders "understand important biology concepts with which they often struggle."<sup>422</sup> Each game takes one to two weeks to play.<sup>423</sup> According to the MIT researchers, the games "will both help prepare future scientists in this area as well as inform the general public about the science behind advances of interest."<sup>424</sup>

67. If Government Builds it, They Will Come . . . We Hope (Lakewood, IL) - \$18 million

Local officials in Lakewood Village (pop. 3,050) recently approved plans for a \$40 million sports complex by a unanimous vote in the hopes of bringing in up to \$500,000 in annual tax revenue from hosting local, national, and even international sports events.<sup>425</sup> The complex, spanning over 165 acres will feature 17 lighted baseball fields, seven soccer fields, an indoor soccer dome, an arena for basketball, an extreme sports park for skating and BMX competitions, a gas station, and a 125,000 square foot building for a restaurant and retail facilities – all of this using \$18 million of bonding authority granted to McHenry County from the stimulus bill.<sup>426</sup> That portion of the money has been described as both “only a start-up mechanism” and a “bridge loan.”<sup>427</sup>



Not so fast, say the neighboring residents whose lives will be affected by the proposed facility. The most recent public meeting of the Lakewood Village trustees drew enough attendees to fill the room, the standing-room behind the chairs, and standing room into the hallway.<sup>428</sup> A local blogger who attended observed that “besides the consultants, village officials and staff, most in attendance were people objecting from the neighborhood.”<sup>429</sup>

Concerns raised included traffic, light pollution, noise, water quality, and utility bills. Following the meeting, Village Trustee Ken Santowski wrote an e-mail to residents justifying his vote, arguing that “...the village would only lose face if the project fails...”<sup>430</sup> He went on to say “This project is far from a done deal.”<sup>431</sup> Perhaps Mr. Santowski is the only one who sees it that way - the Continental Amateur Baseball Association (which calls itself “the greatest show on dirt”) is already trying to attract teams with a video “flyover” of the planned facility, calling it the “new CABA complex.”<sup>432</sup>

Several residents came away from the recent meeting frustrated. Tom Balboney of a nearby subdivision said “we feel all of this was done behind our backs,”<sup>433</sup> and Larry Larson, long time resident, summed it up for the local newspaper: “It stinks...if they had to use their own money, they wouldn’t do it.”<sup>434</sup>

68. Museum With 44 Annual Visitors Gets Funding for Bug Storage (Raleigh, NC) -\$253,123

What is the best way to simultaneously preserve an insect collection, promote a haiku contest and produce bug baseball cards? Simple. A grant to the North Carolina State University Insect Museum. The museum boasts being an “internationally recognized resource for the study of insects and mites in North Carolina, the Southeastern United States, and, in several insect groups, the world.”<sup>435</sup> The Museum, which has “virtually no public presence” (it gets about 44 visitors a year), will also use the money for outreach efforts.<sup>436</sup> It also hosts the annual Hexapod Haiku Challenge every March on its blog.<sup>437</sup> In 2008, the Insect Museum submitted a proposal for a National Science Foundation (NSF) Biological Research Collections grant, which the NSF declined.<sup>438</sup> Based on that same proposal, last year the NSF awarded the Insect Museum \$253,123<sup>439</sup> in stimulus funds to purchase new cabinets, drawers, and units for its specimens and a new computer server and software.<sup>440</sup> Using stimulus funds, the Museum has started an “Insect of the Week” series on its website<sup>441</sup> and plans a physical presence at the Yates Mill Pond County Park.<sup>442</sup> In addition, for the yearly BugFest festival, the Museum will design and distribute “packs of baseball-style cards featuring North Carolina’s native and fascinating insects (quote attached) [sic]. An image of the insect will be printed on the front, with statistics and information on the

back. This effort will help raise awareness of how insects contribute to our lives (focusing on positive contributions) and why natural history collections are critical to understanding and documenting biodiversity trends.”<sup>443</sup>

**69. Addiction Studies Program for Journalists (Winston-Salem, NC) - \$266,505**

Wake Forest University is using \$266,505 in stimulus funds to continue its annual science education workshops for reporters.<sup>444</sup> “These workshops employ an interactive, problem-based format that engages the skills and knowledge of working journalists. Participants will have ample time to interact with program faculty — internationally known scientists, teachers of journalism, award-winning journalists from the print and broadcast media, and others who have made important contributions to the drug-abuse field.”<sup>445</sup>

**70. The American Museum of Ceramic Art (Pomona, CA) - \$50,000**

A museum in Pomona, California received \$50,000 in stimulus money for an Administrative & Membership Manager and Assistant Curator.<sup>446</sup> “Exhibitions and programming at the American Museum of Ceramic Art will embrace a wide number of topics - all relating to clay. Within this broadly diverse community, it is their goal to increase the aesthetic appreciation of clay as an art form and to assist their audience in unraveling the creative thinking behind the making of ceramic objects. At the same time, AMOCA aims to provide confirmed clay enthusiasts with encouragement, camaraderie and exhibition opportunity.”<sup>447</sup>

**71. Bus Station Art (Los Angeles, CA) - \$1 million**

If you want to experience art in Los Angeles, look no further than the local bus stop. That’s because transit agencies have been purchasing art for bus stops and train stations and for construction fences to “create [ ] a sense of place and engage [ ] transit riders.”<sup>448</sup> Now the transit authority will use a portion of the just over \$ 1 million of stimulus funds to purchase art for 19 bus stations along the Harbor and El Monte transit way “to enhance the customer experience,” and to incorporate “unique artworks...designed to make transit a more attractive alternative.”<sup>449</sup>

**72. Studying Whether a Soda Tax Will Stimulate Health (Chicago, IL) - \$521,005**

The current administration has previously discussed taxing soda and other sugary drinks as “an idea we should be exploring.”<sup>450</sup> While it is hard to disagree that soda and other sugary drinks are contributing factors to the national obesity epidemic, it is easy to disagree whether federal dollars should be used to study the relationship between taxes and obesity.<sup>451</sup> All the same, the University of Illinois received more than half a million dollars to do just that.<sup>452</sup>

**73. Big Bang – Little Stimulus (Tucson, AZ) - \$314,964**

Researchers at the University of Arizona received over \$300,000 in stimulus grant money to examine computer simulations to follow the formation of galaxies through the period 1-2 billion years after the Big Bang.<sup>453</sup> The grant will also help the principal investigator develop a course in astronomy for non-astronomy majors to be presented at the University of Cape Coast in Ghana.<sup>454</sup> So far, the project has created one-quarter of a job, according to reporting by the school.<sup>455</sup>

**74. There's an App for That: Stimulus Funds for iPods (Salt Lake City, UT) - \$1 million**

“About 1,600 students at Kearns High School in Utah will get iPod touches next school year, thanks to a federal stimulus Enhancing Education Through Technology grant.”<sup>456</sup> They will use the devices during class, take them home after school, and according to one student, get to keep them if they graduate on-time.<sup>457</sup> “I think that will be the coolest thing ever,” said a student. “I think that might be a little initiative for those who are thinking of not graduating to graduate, kind of a going-away present.”<sup>458</sup> “[T]eachers will be trained to use the iPods to engage students so their attention doesn't wander.”<sup>459</sup>

**75. The Meteorite Hunters of Antarctica (Cleveland, OH) - \$600,001**

In some parts of the country you have a better chance of seeing a meteor shower than getting a job. Case Western Reserve University received economic stimulus money to search Antarctica for space rocks through its Antarctic Search for Meteorites Program (ANSMET).<sup>460</sup> Since 1976, “ANSMET has recovered over 17,500 meteorite specimens from locations along the Transantarctic Mountains.”<sup>461</sup> “But after more than 30 years of scouring Antarctica for meteorites, the easiest spots to reach have been picked over, requiring the ANSMET teams to go farther afield for specimens,” according to the principal investigator.<sup>462</sup>



**76. Field Trip to Study Dinosaur Eggs...in China (Bozeman, MT) - \$141,002<sup>463</sup>**

This past spring, nine students from Montana State University (MSU) were given a six-week, all-expense paid trip to China, funded by the National Science Foundation.<sup>464</sup> MSU received a grant to send students to work with researchers at the Natural History Museum in Hangzhou studying various dinosaur eggs and other fossils.<sup>465</sup> In a conversation with a local resident of Wuzhen, one of the students said “I told him that I was here to study dinosaur eggs. He replied with, ‘Bloody hell! That’s the sort of

thing you just can't make up!"<sup>466</sup> While there, the students spent six weeks examining and cataloguing the eggs. As recorded on the group's blog, however, they were still able to take plenty of time to let their hair down hiking on the Great Wall, spending a day at the Xixi National Wetland Park, exploring several small towns, visiting the opera, and touring the Tiatai temples.<sup>467</sup> Not to worry though, according to one student blogger, "Believe it or not from previous blog posts, we have been hard at work doing research."<sup>468</sup>

### 77. Ice Skating Rinks Just Getting Warmed Up (Woodbury & Eagan, MN) - \$1.8 million

When it comes to keeping the local ice rink up to date, Woodbury, Minnesota does not plan to just skate by. Woodbury has allocated more than \$2.3 million<sup>469</sup> to upgrade its heating systems at a local ice rink, using \$503,900 in stimulus funding.<sup>470</sup> Funding was provided by the Department of Energy through the energy efficiency block grant program to help install a geothermal heating and cooling system that would, among other things, "prevent heat from the roof from warming the ice surface," and "provide heat for the west rink spectators."<sup>471</sup> The City of Woodbury hired Harris Mechanical Services to study possible avenues for moving forward with the project.<sup>472</sup> Not surprisingly, the company came forward with a recommendation that it be hired to perform a \$2.4 million retrofit for the Bielenberg Sports Center.<sup>473</sup> Harris was ultimately hired, but not before City Administrator Clinton Gridley noted that the project carried certain downsides, including that it "does not utilize the competitive bidding process" and "replaces equipment that has not reached its useful life span."<sup>474</sup> Harris was also able to land a similar deal in Eagan, Minnesota to install a geothermal heat pump for the ice rink in Eagan Civic Arena.<sup>475</sup> For this project, the Department of Energy contributed more than \$1.3 million,<sup>476</sup> covering about a third of the project's overall cost.<sup>477</sup>

### 78. Helping Drinkers Control Their Alcohol Consumption With Creative Labeling (San Diego, CA) - \$497,117<sup>478</sup>

Can people at bars be persuaded of the benefits of moderate drinking?<sup>479</sup> Researchers at San Diego State University think so, as they plan to spend almost half a million dollars to research whether better nutritional and alcohol content labeling will affect consumption of alcoholic beverages.<sup>480</sup> The research includes field experiments to test the "effectiveness of different disclosure strategies under various levels of natural drunkenness."<sup>481</sup> Indeed, according to one local columnist, "most of the research, not surprisingly, will be done in and around the university campus and the bars and nightclubs of Pacific Beach."<sup>482</sup>



Photo courtesy of San Diego Shooter

**79. High-End Boutique Hotel Built Where None is Needed (Buffalo, NY) - \$6 million**

Visiting Manhattanites will feel right at home in Buffalo at a new chic downtown boutique hotel being built with the help of a \$6 million tax-exempt bond backed by federal stimulus funds.<sup>483</sup> Local restaurateur Mark Croce is building a “true boutique hotel experience...as high-end as they come.”<sup>484</sup>

Unfortunately Buffalo’s hotels have a history of dependence on subsidies and an even longer history of struggling financially. According to one local newspaper, “practically every hotel in and around downtown Buffalo was built with public subsidies, and most of them are treading water – at best.”<sup>485</sup> The *Buffalo News* reported last year that, “For nearly 30 years, politicians have poured more than \$65 million into downtown Buffalo hotels - an average of more than \$50,000 per room. The strategy produced five hotels - and a lot of red ink.”<sup>486</sup> There are plenty of folks who think downtown Buffalo has enough hotels. The former president of the local conventions bureau stated in 2008 that “based on the current market demand, [Buffalo has] a sufficient number of rooms in the downtown core.”<sup>487</sup>



**80. Wildlife Refuge Gets Fancy New Visitors Center (Bismarck, ND) - \$6.1 million<sup>488</sup>**

The almost 15,000-acre<sup>489</sup> Audubon National Wildlife Refuge, located about an hour north of Bismarck, North Dakota is visited by fewer than 80 people a day on average.<sup>490</sup> However, that hasn’t prevented the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service from spending over \$6 million to build a new administration and visitor center for the refuge.<sup>491</sup> While the old building was over 50 years old, the new building will be built to special energy efficient specifications and will include a 1,038–square-foot multipurpose room and 884-square-foot exhibit hall.<sup>492</sup>

**81. “Hot Glass—Cool Art” (Tacoma, WA) - \$50,000**

The Museum of Glass in Tacoma,<sup>493</sup> Washington received \$50,000 in stimulus money to retain two part-time educational interpreters who will entertain visitors by explaining how glass is made in the museum’s “hot shop.”<sup>494</sup> One hot shop interpreter says of the job, “I get to watch glass get blown all day. It’s a pretty sweet gig.”<sup>495</sup> However, the Museum website notes that it may not be experiencing an economic hardship after all. “In this time of economic uncertainty, our attendance is on the rise, among both adults and school groups. There is increased traffic on our website and live stream of the Hot Shop.”<sup>496</sup> The website also lists its current membership at 3,800 households<sup>497</sup> who pay anywhere between \$50 and over \$1000 in annual fees.<sup>498</sup> The Museum’s fiscal year 2008 net assets are listed at approximately \$29.6 million.<sup>499</sup>

**82. False Start on Head Start (New Haven, CT) - \$381,313**

Perhaps the pre-schoolers were the ones in charge of accounting for tax dollars at the New Haven Head Start office. The New Haven Board of Education improperly allocated \$510,000 and failed to comply with federal Head Start and Early Head Start performance standards, including one on health screenings of children, according to a recent report from the Office of Inspector General for the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.<sup>500</sup> The report further found that the board met only three of the six performance standards reviewed, and that the deficiencies were largely due to inadequate procedures and accounting systems.<sup>501</sup>

**83. Bureaucracy Gives Low-Income Housing Luxury Costs (Rochester, NY) - \$3.3 million**



One of north Rochester's poorest and most crime-riddled neighborhoods is getting an expensive facelift, with 23 new homes built with stimulus money. In the El Camino Estates development along Conkey Avenue, the median value of existing houses are less than \$50,000.<sup>502</sup> The new stimulus funded neighboring houses will cost six times that to build. At an average cost of \$300,000, the 23 new houses being built for rental to low-income families range from 1,200 to 1,700 square feet, a mere fraction of the space the same dollar amount would buy in some of Rochester's wealthiest suburbs.<sup>503</sup> Why the high cost for low-income rental properties in such a rough part of town? According to the developers and the non-profit community development corporation they are working with, it is

the red tape that comes from the combination of tax credits, state and local money, federal stimulus dollars and a large bureaucratic mess.<sup>504</sup>

**84. Stimulus Funds Going to the Dogs (Ithaca, NY)<sup>505</sup> - \$296,385**

Cornell University scientists have received \$296,385 in stimulus funds to study “dog domestication.”<sup>506</sup> Researchers believe that there is common understanding of where dogs descended from, but the progression from there to Lassie “is poorly understood.”<sup>507</sup> They point out that much of the research “has focused on breed dogs, but the diverse populations of semi-feral ‘village’ dogs are likely an important key for understanding dog domestication.”<sup>508</sup> A previous Cornell study found that North Africa was probably the origin of dog domestication.<sup>509</sup> In that study, the scientists examined the genetic markers of 318 African dogs and then performed the same test on mixed breed American dogs and street dogs in Puerto Rico.<sup>510</sup> The new study “will likely to [sic] challenge current theories of dog origins and develop village dogs into a useful system for the study of domestication, speciation, behavior and morphology.”<sup>511</sup>



**85. Let's Polka at the International Accordion Festival! (San Antonio, TX) - \$25,000**

The 2009 International Accordion Festival in San Antonio, Texas received a \$25,000 grant<sup>512</sup> for an event it promised would be “simply amazing” and a “celebration of all things squeezebox.”<sup>513</sup>

Visitors got to experience the “hippest and most happening accordion music from around the world . . . [and] [e]njoy performances, workshops, open mics and jam sessions on multiple stages with the finest accordionists in the planet.”<sup>514</sup> While the Festival has grown in popularity over the years, it has fallen under some criticism for getting tax dollars in a time of tight budgets. Defending the Festival, organizer Pat Jasper shot back at what she perceived to be a wrongheaded anti-accordion bias, “The expression of disdain for accordions pins [critics] for what they are, which is cultural elites.”<sup>515</sup>

**86. Preserve and Rehabilitate FDR’s Home (Hyde Park, NY) - \$4.6 million**

The National Park Service has awarded \$4,572,000 for repairs on Franklin D. Roosevelt’s Hyde Park, New York residence and carriage house.<sup>516</sup> According to the National Park Service, repairs will include painting the shutters the home’s original shade of hunter green and removing trees to be “replaced with historic varieties.”<sup>517</sup> FDR’s home, however, has in recent years received over \$19 million in additional funding for renovations,<sup>518</sup> surely making it one of the most expensive home projects in history.

**87. Study: Does Retirement Help or Hurt Marriage? (Los Angeles, CA) - \$174,661**

Is it better to retire and spend more time with your spouse, or just keep working? Researchers at UCLA are pursuing the answer to this question with a \$174,661 grant from the National Institute on Aging.<sup>519</sup> They plan to study the correlation between couples transitioning into retirement, the health of their marriage, and the resulting effect on their physiological health. Participants will be subject to two laboratory assessments once before and after retirement that will examine their marital and physical health including “discussions about retirement and problems in the relationship.”<sup>520</sup> Sixty couples over the age of 60 who are expecting to retire in the near term will participate in the study.<sup>521</sup>



**88. Army Corps of Engineers Cleaning Up Their Act in West Virginia (Burnsville, WV) - \$650,000**

At Burnsville Dam in West Virginia, the Army Corps of Engineers is spending stimulus funds for a company to clean its bathrooms, offices and the campgrounds.<sup>522</sup> Air Maids LLC out of Troy, Ohio was awarded a contract for up to \$650,000 for restroom cleaning and other grounds services.<sup>523</sup> Work is taking place at the Bulltown Campground and Corps offices at the Burnsville Dam in West Virginia.<sup>524</sup> So far, almost \$50,000 in invoices for this work have been paid for with stimulus funds out of the Corps’ Civil Works program.<sup>525</sup> Across the nation, the Corps of Engineers has been funding much more substantial repairs and equipment upgrade priorities through its Civil Work program.<sup>526</sup>

**89. Coordinating Traffic Lights (Sebring, FL) - \$1.1 million**

Nothing is more annoying than hitting every red light. The Florida Energy and Climate Commission, created by the governor of Florida in 2008,<sup>527</sup> has given the Highlands County Commission more than a million dollar grant to do something about just that problem.<sup>528</sup> The Commission is installing a fiber-optic cable so that 14 traffic lights are better coordinated, thus reducing fuel emissions from vehicles on the road.<sup>529</sup> The county engineer told a reporter that the lights are “already hard-wired, but [this] will make [them] better.”<sup>530</sup>



**90. Agency Fails to Target Counties with Highest Unemployment - \$145 million**

The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), an agency of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), misdirected much of a \$145 million allotment it received for watershed operations and flood protection projects, according to the Agency's Inspector General.<sup>531</sup> Under the *American Recovery and Reinvestment Act*, all federal agencies were supposed to prioritize funding for counties that were the most financially distressed and "to assist those most impacted by the recession."<sup>532</sup> Despite saying that regional unemployment was a factor in choosing projects, NRCS allocated about \$59 million for 75 projects to counties with unemployment below the national average.<sup>533</sup> For example, a flood control project for Mush Creek for Dallas County in Alabama, an area with 18 percent unemployment, was dropped, while other counties with employment well below the national average got their projects, the USDA Inspector General reported.<sup>534</sup>

**91. Health Insurance Grants go Unused (Washington, DC) - \$142 million**

The *Recovery Act* designated \$150 million for use by the Department of Labor's Health Coverage Tax Credit (HCTC) National Emergency Grants (NEG) program,<sup>535</sup> though much of it may not have had the intended effect. The program pays for up to 80 percent of health insurance coverage for eligible Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) participants<sup>536</sup> and Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation (PBGC) recipients until they are able to get their coverage through the IRS' HCTC program.<sup>537</sup> The Employment and Training Administration (ETA) is responsible for administering the program. As the number of TAA eligible Americans ballooned to 201,000 and eligible PBGC retirees at 744,000 in 2009, only six states took advantage of the HCTC program through three grants for just \$8 million.<sup>538</sup> Why were so few eligible individuals being served by the program? Because as the Department of Labor's Office of Inspector General reported in March, over thirty percent of states were never aware of the program.<sup>539</sup> While the ETA did make some outreach efforts to the states, they were largely ineffective and as a result funds were not spent quickly, as intended by the *Recovery Act*. At the end of the day, the American taxpayers were on the hook for \$142 million of duplicative efforts that those eligible to receive were never even told about.

**92. Whistleblower Alleges Fraud at Company Administering Child Care Funds (Kilgore, TX) - \$215 million**

A whistleblower has alleged that a large government contractor may have fraudulently used stimulus money to evade federal rules in a program to help working parents pay for child care.<sup>540</sup> The *Recovery Act* included over \$2 billion for Child Care and Development Funds (CCDF), which allows states to provide free or subsidized child care to working parents.<sup>541</sup> By accepting stimulus grant awards, however, the states are prohibited from supplanting state child care funds.<sup>542</sup> In Texas, which received \$214,900,000, the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC)<sup>543</sup> partnered with both local governments and outside organizations. In Smith County, it worked with the East Texas Council of Governments (ETCOG) and Arbor Res-Care, which the whistleblower alleged misused stimulus funding. The lawsuit filed in Smith County alleges that caseworkers at Arbor Res-Care were instructed to wrongfully use ARRA funds to supplant CCDF funds. According to the suit, within a month of beginning the ARRA-funded program, caseworkers realized that parents did not want to participate in the program if federal rules were followed—and so the rules were not followed. Caseworkers also allegedly realized that and Arbor Res-Care and the ETCOG would not be able to spend the money they had been allocated in time, so caseworkers were told to use stimulus money for all applicants, which was strictly prohibited.<sup>544</sup> Tyler Kioko, an accountant for Res Care, took a decidedly negative view of the situation as well, noting, "They were moving funds – they were using ARRA money to pay for things they were not supposed to pay for ... They were trying to play with numbers to keep units to meet their budget targets."<sup>545</sup>

**93. NIH Spends Stimulus Money to Promote the Impact of Its Stimulus Projects (Silver Spring, MD) - \$363,760<sup>546</sup>**

When does a federal project cross the line from simple self-promotion into propaganda? Palladian Partners Inc. of Silver Spring, Maryland was awarded \$363,760 to promote the good things being done with stimulus money by the National Institutes of Health (NIH).<sup>547</sup> The project requires Palladian to develop “web-based real life stories that underscore job and infrastructure creation and accelerated ARRA research findings.”<sup>548</sup> Indeed, interested citizens can go to the NIH *Recovery Act* website and learn about the \$12.2 million stimulus grant NIH is spending on “Facebook for Scientists”<sup>549</sup> and another story on how “Researchers Pull in Big Bucks Under Recovery Act.”<sup>550</sup>

**94. Restored Lighthouse Gets More Funding for More Restoration (Jupiter, FL) - \$442,950<sup>551</sup>**

While the Jupiter Inlet National Historic Lighthouse is 150 years old, at least one local preservationist may have an exaggerated sense of its importance. James D. Snyder, Board Chairman of the Loxahatchee River Historical Society said about a recent sesquicentennial event for the lighthouse, it “celebrates our unique 5,000-year-old history.”<sup>552</sup> The lighthouse in Florida was recently designated an outstanding natural area.<sup>553</sup> Local officials complained that, despite this new designation, there was no funding to go along with it.<sup>554</sup> That is, until the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) awarded the Loxahatchee River Historical Society two stimulus grants for building and habitat restoration.<sup>555</sup> But according to the BLM, the lighthouse went through a complete \$858,000 restoration beginning in 1999.<sup>556</sup> According to the Historical Society, the stimulus funds for building restoration will be split between interior painting and restoration of a small building next door to the lighthouse that was formerly used as a workshop and Coast Guard housing.<sup>557</sup>



Photo courtesy of Larry Myhre

**95. A Better Way to Freeze Rat DNA (Columbia, MO) - \$180,935**

For many years, scientists have found laboratory rats to be good test subjects for studying human disease. One problem, however, is that once you deep-freeze rat sperm, it apparently becomes less useful when unfrozen. Solution: study the freezing process for rat sperm. Calling it an “urgent need,”<sup>558</sup> scientists at the University of Missouri received stimulus funds “to develop freezing protocols for epididymal rat sperm which would allow reconstitution of genetics by using standard artificial insemination and in-

vitro fertilization methods.”<sup>559</sup> The scientists note that “[o]ver the last few years, our laboratory has generated ample amount of data related with optimal sperm handling.”<sup>560</sup>

**96. Money for Healthy Homes and Lead Hazard Control to Ineligible Recipients - \$2.8 million**

A January 2010 audit by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Inspector General revealed that more than \$5.7 million in stimulus funds were improperly awarded by the Office of Healthy Homes and Lead Hazard Control (OHHLHC).<sup>561</sup> For example, the City of Greenville, North Carolina and Healthy Homes Resources received \$1.9 million and \$874,821, respectively, even though they did not meet the required application thresholds to receive funding.<sup>562</sup> The audit determined that the “OHHLHC did not have adequate controls to ensure that only qualified applicants were selected to receive grant funds.”<sup>563</sup> One of the HUD Inspector General’s recommendations was for the Director of OHHLHC to rescind the money and award the funds to qualified applicants.<sup>564</sup> The Director of OHHLHC did not concur with this recommendation for the City of Greenville, but agreed to rescind the remaining unobligated balance on the Healthy Homes Resources grant.<sup>565</sup>

**97. The Wheels on the Stimulus Go Round and Round (Clearfield, PA) - \$1.4 million**

Fullington Auto Bus Company provides luxury tours to destinations such as Penn State football games, and has recently been the recipient of more than a million dollars in stimulus funding.<sup>566</sup> The company plans to purchase a brand new 57-passenger luxury bus to add to its 50 luxury motorcoach fleet;<sup>567</sup> the new luxury bus is expected to transport passengers from Harrisburg to a handful of small towns across the state of Pennsylvania.<sup>568</sup> Carrying a \$500,000 price tag, the bus local officials touted as the “future of intercity transportation” has seatbelts, electrical outlets, Wi-Fi, personally controlled airvents, and closing overhead storage bins available for use.<sup>569</sup> Approximately 80 percent of the funds used for the bus came from stimulus dollars awarded to the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation.<sup>570</sup> Fullington Trailways also received a \$1 million stimulus award from the Department of Transportation of neighboring state New York.<sup>571</sup> In recent years, the company has been on the receiving end of anti-terrorism grants from the Department of Homeland Security in excess of \$200,000<sup>572</sup> to install GPS tracking systems in all of the buses.<sup>573</sup>



**98. Artists Get New Digs (Wilton, CT and Philadelphia, PA) - \$184,650**

The National Park Service (NPS) and the City of Philadelphia love their artists. So much so, they combined to spend over half a million dollars to provide them with artistic space. At the Weir Farm in Wilton, \$184,650 is going to turn what local media describe as “an old garage” into an Art Studio to be used for personal or professional work by artists participating in the Weir Farm’s “Artist-in-Residence” program.<sup>574</sup> Despite public



funding, the NPS superintendant at the facility said the issue of visitor access to the studio had not yet been decided.<sup>575</sup> Less than 150 miles away just down Interstate-95, Philadelphia Mayor Michael Nutter awarded over \$500,000 through the Creative Industry Workforce Grants program.<sup>576</sup> Eight Philadelphia arts-related organizations received various amounts of the money, with over half of it going toward “artist workspace.”<sup>577</sup>

#### 99. What’s With the Lights? (Eules, TX) – \$454,200

The sport of softball recently celebrated its 122<sup>nd</sup> anniversary,<sup>578</sup> but playing in the glow of stimulus funded lights – now that’s something completely new. The City of Eules, Texas earmarked almost half a million dollars in federal stimulus funds received from an Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant<sup>579</sup> for the replacement of ball field lighting at its Softball World facility.<sup>580</sup> The facility hosts games and tournaments most nights and charges teams entry fees.<sup>581</sup> One would think that the teams using the fields should just pay higher fees for the light renovations instead of the American taxpayer, most of whom will never see Eules, Texas, no matter how bright the new lights are.



#### 100. Alcohol Studies Summer School for High School and College Students (New York, NY) - \$112,437

In a time when jobs are hard to come by, several high school and college students have gotten federal funding to inspire their scientific curiosity. Columbia University received \$112,437 to provide summer research experiences in the field of alcohol epidemiology for three high school students and three college students.<sup>582</sup> One of the goals of the program is to “inspire the students’ scientific curiosity by allowing them to visit cutting-edge laboratories and hospital operating rooms.”<sup>583</sup>

<sup>1</sup> FedBizOpps.gov, “Cold Water Ridge Visitor Center Window Replacement,” Contract Award Number AG-0489-C-10-0270, <https://www.fbo.gov/index?s=opportunity&mode=form&id=bd7e47b5fd9f72e054cbb12cd325eef&tab=core&cvie w=1>.

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