

American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 / Act should not have been passed

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Position: Act should not have been passed

This position addresses the topic American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009.

For this position

“By the time a policy takes effect, it may be too late to serve the original purpose. Supporters insist there's no such danger this time, since the economic recovery has been feeble and promises to remain that way. A Bloomberg survey of economists found that most expect the unemployment rate to stay above 9 percent until 2012. But if that's true, it doesn't say much for the potency of fiscal policy in boosting short-term growth. Obama's program, after all, is the biggest stimulus package, as a share of the economy, in our history. Yet it has landed with the force of a damp sponge.”

From Stimulus to nowhere, by Steve Chapman (*Chicago Tribune*, September 22, 2010) (view)

“Last week's dismal jobs figures tell us exactly what the President Obama's stimulus did: It temporarily saved jobs in state and local government -- thereby slowing our recovery.”

From First the stimulus, now the hangover, by Nicole Gelinas (*New York Post*, October 12, 2010) (view)

“In the private sector, jobs are created based on market forces, supply and demand, the public's appetite for particular products and services. Under the stimulus program, jobs are often created based on how well trade schools can figure out the rules that turn the U.S. Treasury into their personal piggy banks. And this costly scheme is entirely paid for with borrowed money.”

From 150,000 jobs created? Uh, no, by The San Diego Union-Tribune editorial board (*The San Diego Union-Tribune*, March 3, 2010) (view)

“The stimulus legislation, a.k.a. No Social Worker Left Behind, offers financial incentives for states to enlarge their welfare rolls. This looks like the beginning of a semi-stealthy repeal of the 1996 welfare reform. So it goes, as government, with a confidence disconnected from its current performance, toils to make more and more people more and more dependent on it.”

From FDR's Sweater Fable, by George F. Will (*Newsweek*, February 28, 2009) (view)

“ "The projected effect on other parts of GDP (consumer expenditure, private investment, net exports) is minus 180, minus 120, +60, minus 330, minus 330, which adds up to minus 900. Thus, viewed over five years, the fiscal stimulus package is a way to get an extra \$600 billion of public spending at the cost of \$900 billion in private expenditure. This is a bad deal." ”

From The Stimulus Evidence One Year On, by Robert Barro (*The Wall Street Journal*, February 23, 2010) (view)

“ "The stimulus, which the Congressional Budget Office says will, over the next 10 years, reduce GDP by crowding out private investment, already is doing a lot by fostering cynicism in the service of opportunism." ”

From Drowning by Fire Hose, by George F. Will (*The Washington Post*, February 19, 2009) (view)

“ "If these radical increases in the welfare state had been proposed through ordinary congressional procedures – subcommittee hearings, witnesses from all sides, committee hearings, proposed amendments, a modicum of publicity – it is unlikely they would have stood a chance of passing. But the bill was assembled in secret and passed in haste encouraged by presidential inducement of panic, without even a pretense of due deliberation." ”

From Road to dependency, by The Orange County Register editorial board (*The Orange County Register*, February 18, 2009) (view)

“ "Meanwhile, despite assurances that the stimulus would be "timely, targeted and temporary," Americans will be paying for some of it well into 2019. Even with that vast, taxpayer-funded infusion, the economy remains stagnant, with unemployment pushing hard against 10 percent. As Bush adviser Lawrence Lindsey wrote, "the actual performance of the economy is almost exactly what Obama White House advisers said would happen if we had done nothing." ”

From Bam's spending spree, by New York Post editorial board (*New York Post*, August 30, 2010) (view)

“ "Why be scared of a government health program? After all, the president says, "Medicare is a government program that works really well," and if "we're able to get something right like Medicare," we should have more "confidence" about being able to do it for everyone. On the other hand, the president says, Medicare is "unsustainable" and "running out of money." By the way, unlike your run-of-the-mill politician's contradictory statements, these weren't made a year or even a week apart, but during the same presidential speech in Portsmouth, N.H." ”

From He's spending your future, by Mark Steyn (*The Washington Times*, August 24, 2009) (view)

Against this position

“ Two careful studies have looked at the relationship between this formulaic spending and employment. Both find that states that received more money fared substantially better. This is the strongest direct evidence that the Recovery Act contributed to employment growth. Based on the estimated size of the effect, the studies suggest that the act created more than three million jobs. ”

From *The Fiscal Stimulus, Flawed but Valuable*, by Christina Romer (*The New York Times*, October 20, 2012) ([view](#))

“ "Critics have also objected to the fiscal stimulus as a case of government overreach and ineptitude. They could not be more wrong. It is no coincidence that the recession ended when it did - about a year ago - just as the stimulus was providing its maximum economic benefit. Emergency unemployment-insurance benefits and tax cuts put cash into Americans' pockets that they have largely spent, supporting sales and employment. And without help from the federal government, state and local governments would have slashed payrolls and raised taxes at just the wrong time." ”

From *Serious mistake to believe the stimulus failed*, by Mark Zandi (*The Philadelphia Inquirer*, July 25, 2010) ([view](#))

“ "But while the legislation was deeply flawed, there was little alternative to action. The usual recession remedy -- the lowering of interest rates by the Federal Reserve to loosen up credit and spending -- is of little use when the credit system itself is broken and rates are already near zero. The president and Congress were left with one option: attempting a fiscal jolt to counter the economic cycle." ”

From *A Bad, Necessary Bill*, by Michael Gerson (*The Washington Post*, February 18, 2009) ([view](#))

“ "Republican criticism of the \$787 billion stimulus as a spending bill has been withering, but off the mark. Of course it's a spending bill. That's what stimulus is all about. Pumping money into the economy will be good for the nation and really good for New York, which will get more than initially appeared likely." ”

From *Obama signs first-step bill*, by Newsday editorial board (*Newsday*, February 17, 2009) ([view](#))

“ "While \$500 million for wildfire management may seem an odd thing to have in an economic stimulus bill, we in Colorado know that the bark beetle not only threatens trees, it threatens jobs in our vulnerable tourist and recreation economy. In Colorado, this bill supports nearly 60,000 jobs — not enough to ensure prosperity, but certainly a start." ”

From *Finding a way to salvage America*, by Mark Udall (*The Denver Post*, February 17, 2009) ([view](#))

Mixed on this position

“ "It would have been wiser and more effective for Congress to leave out of the stimulus package the billions of dollars it approved for soft social programs with a fuzzy impact on jobs, while focusing a lot more of it on projects with readily quantifiable results. Michigan, for one, could have used more than the \$800 million it received for roadwork. It's easy to count the construction jobs funded by that kind of expenditure and the bonus -- improved highways -- which are hard evidence of the benefits." ”

From Stimulus aid isn't creating jobs, by The Detroit News editorial board (*The Detroit News*, November 20, 2009) (view)

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This page was last edited on February 17, 2009, at 23:37.

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