

## Why our recovery will be slow to non-existent

Written by Barthélemy Barbancourt  
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[Obama poured \\$5 billion into weatherization as part of last year's stimulus and wanted to spend billions more in a second stimulus. The Department of Energy managed to get the money to the states, where it has swelled the coffers for weatherization and done little else.](#)

According to a Department of Energy inspector general report last month, "only 2 of the 10 highest funded recipients completed more than 2 percent of planned units." New York had completed 280 out of 45,400 planned units as of December, Texas had completed 0 of 33,908, and California 12 out of 43,400. **That's 292 homes in three states with a total population of roughly 80 million.**

So much for the 87,000 jobs the administration promised "right away." The inspector general report is unsparing: "The job creation impact of what was considered to be one of the Department's most 'shovel ready' projects has not materialized," and neither have "the significant reductions in energy consumption."

Prior to the stimulus, weatherization funds were not subject to the Davis-Bacon Act, a union-friendly law that mandates government pay contractors the "prevailing wage." Slavishly committed to the unions, Democrats made Davis-Bacon apply to the new weatherization funds, and the Department of Energy spent the past year trying to determine the prevailing wage in thousands of counties. At least the program kept someone busy.

According to a Government Accountability Office report, meanwhile, 90 percent of the homes slated for weatherization in Michigan were subject to historic preservation review; as of last fall, only two people worked in the state's historic preservation office.

The stimulus devoted \$2 billion to wind power, creating an estimated couple of hundred jobs while permanent wind manufacturing employment still declined last year. The Department of Energy will hand out \$2.3 billion in tax credits for the creation of 17,000 "clean" jobs - at a cost of \$135,000 per job, if they materialize.

We're out billions and nothing was done. This is the story not only of the Obama administration but America in 2010. We have too many regulations. Ronald Reagan didn't just cut taxes, he

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cut regulations. We can't grow out of this recession in this regulatory environment. Obama is the wrong man in the wrong place at the wrong time. Everything that needs to be done is the opposite of what Obama wants to do.

De-regulation doesn't cost money, it would help reduce the debt and deficit but increasing economic activity. This is a major opportunity that the Obama White House is ignoring.