

THE ECONOMY

Governor Schwarzenegger Creates Federal Economic Stimulus Task Force



Puts Team in Place to Navigate Federal Funding, Ensure Efficiency, Accountability and Transparency

With an estimated \$85 billion in federal economic stimulus headed toward California over the next two years, Californians expect the state to track those dollars, seize as much as possible, use the funding effectively and ensure that spending is done with transparency and accountability. To that end, the Governor today announced the creation of the California Federal Economic Stimulus Task Force.

The Task Force will be charged with tracking the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funding coming into the state; working with President Barack Obama's administration; helping cities, counties, non-profits, and others access the available funding; ensure that the funding funneled through the state is spent efficiently and effectively; and maintain a Web site that is frequently and thoroughly updated for Californians to be able to track the stimulus dollars.

"With our state's 10.5 percent unemployment rate, there is no better time to seize as many of the available federal economic stimulus dollars as possible to help our unemployed, put people to work, and provide tax relief to Californians," said Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger. "This Task Force will keep track of all of the dollars coming into the state and ensure that Californians see how effectively those dollars are being spent."

The Task Force formalizes the administration's work that has been ongoing even before the passage of the ARRA. Cynthia Bryant, Deputy Chief of Staff to the Governor and Director of the Governor's Office of Planning and Research, will lead the Task Force and serve as California's liaison to the federal government on the Recovery Act. Chief Deputy Director of the Department of Finance Ana Matosantos will be deputy coordinator of the Task Force, tracking the money coming into the state and the guidelines for competing for those funds, as well as serving as a liaison to the Obama administration. Fred Klass, Chief Operating Officer of the Department of Finance, will oversee accountability and auditing functions of the Task Force. Teri Takai, California's Chief Information Officer, will oversee information and transparency; Luis Portillo, Director of the Governor's Constituent Affairs office, will serve as public liaison; and Jeffrey M. Barker, Chief Deputy Director of Communications to the Governor, will serve as the Task Force's communications director.

"If used efficiently, the Recovery Act dollars coming into California will be an instrumental part of getting our state back on track," said Task Force Coordinator Cynthia Bryant. "With dozens of streams of funding and myriad guidelines and deadlines to meet, this Task Force will make

certain that California is tapping into all available federal funding."

Bryant and Matosantos earlier this month participated in the White House's Recovery Act Implementation Conference in Washington D.C.

Additionally, the Task Force will include one representative from the administration for each of the main program areas through which the federal funding will flow. They are as follows: Health & Human Services/Health IT: Joe Munso, Undersecretary of the Health & Human Services Agency; Transportation: Will Kempton, Director of Caltrans; Housing: Lynn Jacobs, Director of the Housing & Community Development; Energy: Todd Ferrara, Deputy Secretary Resources Agency; Environment/Water Quality: Patty Zwarts, Deputy Secretary of Cal-EPA; General Government: Tracy Arnold, Governor's Director for Jobs & Economic Growth; Education: Kathy Gaither, Undersecretary of the Office of Secretary of Education; Labor: Jaime Fall, Deputy Secretary of Workforce and Development; Broadband: Teri Takai.

Last week, the Web site <http://www.recovery.ca.gov/> went live, giving all Californians a breakdown, by issue area, of the funding California is estimated to receive from the ARRA. The state estimates that it currently stands to receive approximately \$85 billion from the ARRA - approximately \$50 billion in education, infrastructure and other spending, and \$35 billion in tax benefits.

To date, \$625 million in anticipated ARRA funding has already been directed to 57 transportation infrastructure projects expected to create over 11,000 jobs in California. Additionally, the Governor launched the California Green Corps, a program to be funded by federal economic stimulus money and public-private partnerships to train at-risk young adults to fill jobs in California's growing green economy. Also, California's unemployed are already receiving an additional \$25 in per week in their unemployment checks thanks to federal funding.