



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

John A. DeFrancisco

Wasteful and Unevenly Distributed Stimulus Spending

JOHN A. DEFRANCISCO

Federal stimulus aid is supposed to be used to jumpstart our sluggish economy and get Americans back to work. Instead, we have seen how stimulus dollars are being wasted and allocated unfairly. That is why we need better accounting of how Albany is using federal stimulus aid to help revitalize our state's economy.

Last week, news reports revealed that \$120,000 of federal stimulus money is being used to fund a project to reprint 20-year-old pamphlets —without creating a single job. The brochure, first created in 1989, touts Onondaga Lake. While Onondaga Lake is a central part of our community and a valuable part of our effort to increase tourism, recreation and industry, it is hard to see how reprinting a 20-year-old brochure is going to help us attain our goals and create new employment opportunities.

I immediately spoke out against this poor use of funds, and U.S. Senators Schumer and Gillibrand did the same, asking for the money to be used in a way that would create or sustain jobs. This situation highlights the danger of a program with far too many dollars and far too little oversight.

Governor Paterson needs to provide more detail on the use of more than \$20 billion in funding that the state is receiving, much of which has already been spent filling holes in the state budget. Instead of creating the jobs that Upstate needs right now, Albany has been pouring money into New York City, the bloated state budget, and just about anywhere else than where it is needed most.

A recent analysis released by Onvia, a private company that runs the recovery.org Web site, details the massive amounts of stimulus dollars that are being spent in New York City. According to the analysis, more than \$1.3 billion of stimulus money is being spent on projects in the City, which is more than half of the \$2.5 billion already flowing to the state.

This news is troubling and emphasizes the ongoing problems created by the regional imbalance in Albany. The three New York City Democrats who are leading our state – Governor Paterson, Speaker Silver, and Senator Smith – have once again put Upstate and Central New York last. They have once again neglected our needs and pushed our projects to the side.

Stimulus funds should be used to create and retain jobs and strengthen our economy. In addition, Upstate New York should receive its fair share of the aid. If you agree, please contact Governor Paterson, Speaker Silver and Senator Smith, and urge them to ensure that stimulus aid is used in the most effective way possible.