

WASHINGTON, D.C. - The House of Representatives on Wednesday passed its version of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (H.R. 1), an emergency stimulus package totaling \$825 billion in tax cuts and targeted spending.

"After all the debate is over, one truth will remain: our economy is in trouble and we need to act fast to fix it," said Congressman Sam Farr (D-Carmel), who voted in favor of the bill. "This legislation is a big step toward accomplishing that. Consumers are afraid to spend, banks are afraid to loan and businesses are afraid to invest. If the government doesn't step into that void, our economy will shut down, unemployment will skyrocket and families will be hurt. We can't let that happen."

California should be receiving around 10 percent of the total package, either as construction and project funding, tax cuts for California families or tax incentives for local businesses. The package is projected to create or save more than 800,000 jobs in California alone, according to Mark Zandi, noted economist and former adviser to Sen. John McCain. He predicts that the plan will lower California's unemployment rate by 2.3 percent.

"The concrete benefits of this bill -- new schools and affordable housing, repaired roads and bridges, a modernized energy grid and much more -- are a great bonus, but the first thing we have to do is put Americans back to work," Rep. Farr said. "The Central Coast will see funds in a variety of forms, from increased unemployment benefits and education funds to transportation projects and access to law enforcement grants. I encourage all our local elected officials to ramp up their grant application efforts as quickly as possible to ensure we get our share of this rescue package."

The Obama administration expects that the stimulus package, which passed the House by a vote of 244-188, will save or create up to 4 million jobs. With unemployment rates climbing (currently at 9.3 percent in California), creating jobs is the No. 1 priority of this legislation.

"This legislation fulfills the three goals of a stimulus: it's timely, it's targeted and it's temporary," Rep. Farr said. "It's definitely timely, as our economy continues to suffer. It's targeted, sending money toward projects that will create jobs and programs that will put money into the pockets of

those who need it most. And it's temporary, with more than three-quarters of the money spent within 18 months."

The Senate is expected to debate its version of the bill soon. The two versions will then be negotiated in a conference committee, voted on again, then sent to President Obama for his signature.

Among the provisions included in the bill:

- **Tax cuts.** The "Making Work Pay" tax credit will benefit more than 95 percent of working families. For 2009 and 2010, that means a tax credit of up to \$500 for individuals and \$1,000 for families. 12.6 million workers in California are projected to qualify for this working-class tax cut. The federal Earned Income Tax Credit will expand, as will the child tax credit, expected to benefit 2 million additional children in California

- **Infrastructure.** Nationwide, the stimulus will direct more than \$90 billion to a host of construction and energy infrastructure projects. California will receive \$2.8 billion for highway and bridge repair projects and another \$1 billion for additional transportation initiatives including public transit. More funds will be available for flood control and water quality projects and other programs intended to create jobs.

- **Education.** The stimulus dedicates more than \$140 billion to a wide range of education priorities nationwide. California will receive around \$5.5 billion to put toward several programs such as IDEA (special education), Title I (lower-income students), Head Start and a variety of technology and construction projects. Nearly 750,000 California students are also expected to benefit from increases in the federal Pell grant program.

- **Energy and technology initiatives.** A total of \$48 billion will be used to modernize the nation's energy system and retrofit public housing. Another \$16 billion will go toward scientific research and an expansion of broadband internet access.

- **Unemployment.** Unemployment benefits and job training programs nationwide will receive \$43 billion; an additional \$39 billion will help the unemployed pay for health insurance and another \$20 billion will go toward bolstering the food stamp program.

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- **Law enforcement.** A total of \$4 billion is included to support state and local law enforcement. \$3 billion will go toward grants for operating costs to prevent layoffs and maintain service levels; California will receive \$330 million from that pot of money. An additional \$1 billion will go toward the COPS hiring program, which will support 13,000 new police officers for three years.

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The "Making Work Pay" tax credit will benefit more than 95 percent of working families. For 2009 and 2010, that means a tax credit of up to \$500 for individuals and \$1,000 for families. 12.6 million workers in **California** are projected to qualify for this working-class tax cut. The federal Earned Income Tax Credit will expand, as will the child tax credit, expected to benefit 2 million additional children in **California**.

- **Infrastructure.** Nationwide, the stimulus will direct more than \$90 billion to a host of construction and energy infrastructure projects. **California** will receive \$2.8 billion for highway and bridge repair projects and another \$1 billion for additional transportation initiatives including public transit. More funds will be available for flood

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