

## Happy days -- for government?

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There is now more evidence that the \$787 billion so-called "stimulus" is stimulating government bureaucracy, and not the private-sector, "shovel-ready" jobs it was supposed to create.

The Nelson A. Rockefeller Institute of Government looked at jobs in the private sector and in government, and found a startling contrast: The private sector has lost almost 7 million jobs in the recession, but state and local governments have gained a net 110,000 jobs in the same period. That increase in government workers is due in part to the stimulus, the institute said.

Unemployment in the United States is now 9.4 percent, contrary to assurances by President Barack Obama that it would not go over 8 percent if only Congress would pass the stimulus.

Congress did pass the stimulus, and joblessness is now much higher than the promised maximum.

But it's especially alarming that what jobs are being created are mainly in government -- especially when those jobs are being propped up with stimulus funds taken from private-sector taxpayers who are struggling to provide for their own households.

Unlike government, the private businesses that employ most of our citizens do not have the option of raising taxes to cover their losses. If they are losing money, they have to lay off workers or take other cost-cutting measures to survive.

Tad DeHaven, a budget analyst for the Cato Institute think tank, told The New York Times, "Basically what you have is your producers in society losing their jobs and looking for work, and their tax burden isn't necessarily going down -- and as a matter of fact they are likely to face tax increases going forward -- and government growing."

That is not a good sign. In a time of recession, it makes no sense for government to hire even more employees. Government, of course, has no "excess" revenue. But instead of continuing government waste, some of that money should be returned to taxpayers in the form of lower taxes, so we can invest it and get our economy growing again.

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