



The Washington Realignment

by **John Hayward** ([more by this author](#))

Posted 11/23/2010 ET

Updated 11/23/2010 ET

The Republicans on the House Ways & Means Committee released an [interesting chart](#) today. It compares the job gains predicted by Democrats during the passage of their massive “stimulus” bill with the actual job *losses* in each state. For example, the Democrats predicted 396,000 jobs would be gained in California, but it actually lost 543,400 jobs.

There are only two states that actually gained jobs, New Hampshire and North Dakota. Both of them gained substantially fewer jobs than the Democrats projected.

Oh, and there *is* one place where job gains were far *higher* than Democrat projections... nearly twice as high, in fact. Can you guess where that would be? The District of Columbia, of course.

The last few years have seen an immense realignment of jobs and income from the private sector to the government. According to a [June 2010 report](#) from the Cato Institute, the federal workforce has grown to 2.1 million workers, with a total payroll of \$230 billion. The average federal employee now earns twice as much as his private-sector counterpart, an advantage which has grown steadily over the past ten years. The number of government employees earning over \$100k per year has exploded during the recession, jumping from 14% to 19% of civil servants, according to a December 2009 article in *USA Today*.

Each of these new government jobs is *leverage* over the private sector. The movement of labor into the public sphere is not just a misallocation of resources. It is the creation of a *commitment* that will be very difficult to reverse. Attempts to cut government spending can be denounced on the grounds they will cause massive unemployment among government employees. Government hiring also swells the ranks of public-sector unions, which have enormous political clout, as they are essentially begging the government to make itself larger.

Private sector employees lose their jobs with little fanfare, as business conditions change. Public employees are only fired as a result of spending cuts, which they have abundant opportunities to loudly resist. They can also hide behind the most vital and visible government workers. When spending cuts are discussed, bloated bureaucracies disappear, leaving only a line of blindfolded teachers and cops up against the wall. The leviathan State is a curious beast that wears its vital organs on the outside, to protect its fat.

As labor shifts to the public sector, the economy becomes less flexible. For example, the Postal Service has been paying salaries to a lot of unnecessary employees, as the demand for “snail mail” deflates. A while back, surplus postal employees were offered reassignment to other government jobs. Their union flatly refused to consider it. The State is a dilapidated superstore whose toy department will be fully staffed a year after the last child leaves the building.

For all of these reasons, that massive clump of jobs congealing in the District of Columbia is a disturbing sign of rigor mortis setting in to a moribund economy. The money to fund all those jobs is extracted from the people who might invest in more private sector growth... if the arrogant masters of an increasingly powerful government didn't make a point of declaring them Enemies Of The People every few months. In a healthy system, the government is a carefully managed and minimized expense. In Obama's America, it's a heroin addiction that will clean out our pockets before it kills us. We should waste no opportunity to remind the new Republican House that they promised to kick that habit. It's not going to be easy.

John Hayward is a staff writer for HUMAN EVENTS, and author of the recently published [Doctor Zero: Year One](#). Follow him on Twitter: [Doc_0](#). Contact him by email at jhayward@eaglepub.com.

[Advertise](#) | [Privacy Policy](#) | [Terms and Conditions](#)
Copyright © 2010 HUMAN EVENTS. All Rights Reserved.