

July 23, 2009

## **Are Millions of Stimulus Dollars Being Wasted on Duplicative Geospatial Data Collection and Mapping?**

*Natural Resources Witness Confirms Biden's Point that Some Stimulus Money "is Going to be Wasted"*

In June, Vice President Biden [admitted](#) that some of the stimulus money "is going to be wasted." Today, during an Energy and Mineral Resources Subcommittee hearing on *Federal Geospatial Data Management*, Ranking Member Doug Lamborn (CO-05) learned about possible stimulus waste from John Palatiello, Executive Director of Management Association for Private Photogrammetric Surveyors.

During his testimony regarding geospatial data collection and mapping projects, Mr. Palatiello said that "**tens of millions**" of stimulus dollars could be wasted just on duplicative federal broadband mapping.



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*Transcript:*

**Lamborn:** John, do you think that the stimulus bill is going to be wasting tax payer dollars because of duplicative mapping?

**Palatiello:** Well I can think of at least one instance, couple of instances. Number one we have a very deep concern of several procurements that we've seen in the last couple of days and there's rumor at this point of further procurements where stimulus money is going to be used by federal agencies to buy mapping equipment.

That's going to increase unemployment because you have private companies that have already made the investment in that equipment struggling to keep people employed and if the work for services, contracts for services, isn't coming out of the government to keep people employed or to created jobs in the services sector then those equipment purchases are actually going to have the opposite of the desired effect.

\* \* \*

**Lamborn:** Ok, now when we talk about the amount of money that the stimulus package is going to, or I say the so-called stimulus, we'll be potentially wasting, are we talking about millions, hundreds of millions or even into the billions?

**Palatiello:** I think it is difficult to put a number on it. I think there is certainly going to be tens of millions of dollars that will be spent under broadband mapping that will duplicate something that we already have. I think the examples that I gave before about agencies buying equipment to perform mapping activities in house when there are private companies that already have that equipment and provide that capability in the market place if you can quantify how much of that actually goes on by the agencies that is going to be in the millions of dollars as well, so we do have a concern in that area.

Background:

Geospatial data is collected and used by federal agencies to create maps and make policy decisions on a wide range of issues including transportation, natural resource management, agriculture, national security, human health and to manage natural disasters. Advances in mapping technology and demands for mapping products have created greater demand in the federal government for geospatial services. However, due to a lack of coordination, multiple federal agencies will often request mapping of the same area, which wastes federal resources and taxpayer dollars.

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