



STATE OF CONNECTICUT  
EXECUTIVE CHAMBERS

M. JODI RELL  
GOVERNOR

July 13, 2009

Dear Chief Elected Official:

As you know the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 – the federal stimulus act – is providing the State of Connecticut and its cities and towns with much-needed resources to help us all weather this economic downturn. In fact, we have reached a milestone this week, surpassing \$1 billion in projects and efforts around the state receiving stimulus funds.

Since President Obama signed the ARRA into law on February 17, 2009, my administration has aggressively applied for every stimulus dollar for which the state is eligible. The process has not been without its challenges, however. The deadlines are strict, the funds are available at most for two years, and the processes to apply and document, in keeping with the cornerstone of transparency on which the act is predicated, are dynamic.

As we have all discovered, utilizing Recovery Act funds comes with many challenges and, at times, some frustration. In particular, using stimulus money means applying the letter of the federal law to every step of each project. Simply put, a road paving job using stimulus dollars comes with more federal restrictions in its design, scope, timeline, materials, etc. The federal government is holding everyone – state and municipal governments – accountable for every stimulus dollar used. We absolutely should be accountable and transparent given the extraordinary amount of taxpayer dollars required for this landmark piece of legislation.

I am committed to helping our municipalities and regional planning agencies clearly understand what the federal act requires in order to proceed with their projects and create local jobs.

Toward that end, I am appointing OPM Undersecretary of Intergovernmental Policy David LeVasseur as the state's stimulus ombudsman to municipalities and regional planning organizations (RPOs). David's duties will include helping our municipal partners navigate ARRA requirements and deadlines and providing clarity every step of the way. He may be contacted at (860) 418-6484.

Many of you are already very familiar with David and his experience at both the local and state levels. He has ably overseen the state Office of Responsible Growth since its inception in 2006. He has extensive background as a planner and a conservationist, and as

the former First Selectman of Killingworth, David certainly understands the hurdles local governments and planning agencies must deal with on a daily basis.

I also understand that even with all of David's skills and attributes, the work he performs in this role will not completely address all of the challenges we face going forward. Toward that end, I ask that if you have recommendations or suggestions for enhancing the state's overall efforts to implement the Recovery Act that you please send them along to my attention.

Thank you for your efforts, to date, in working to successfully help maximize the effectiveness of these dollars in your community. I look forward to working with you to ensure these Recovery Act funds position our state and its citizenry to grow and prosper.

Sincerely,

  
M. Jodi Rell  
Governor