



Trying Too Hard to Stimulate the Stimulus

In Tapper's May 28 blog entry entitled ["Stimulus Overhype?"](#) he takes the administration to task for inaccuracies in the report's description of the very first of the 100 projects. *100 Days, 100 Projects* lists the following as number one under the heading of "Renewable Energy": "Using \$27 million of Recovery Act funding, a public housing development in Washington, D.C., the Regency House, has undergone a green retrofit. As part of this upgrade, the building installed solar panels, a 'green' roof, a rainwater collection system, energy-efficient lighting as well as water conserving toilets, showerheads, and faucets. The greening of this building will allow the Regency House to save money in energy costs, while lessening their impact on the environment."



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Putting aside the unconstitutionality of the spending, the effect this spending will have on the economy as a whole (every dollar the government spends on stimulus projects must be siphoned out of the economy in the first place), or how long it will take for the projected energy savings to pay for the costs of the "green" retrofitting, it is undeniable that the \$27 million is the total amount given to the Washington, D.C., housing authority, not what has been spent on the projects listed. Among all the things claimed to be part of the "green retrofit," Tapper points out that "the only parts funded by the stimulus were the solar panels, at a cost of \$45,000, and the rainwater collection system, at a cost of \$14,000." What this boils down to is that the administration is claiming credit for improvements that were not even paid for with stimulus money, calling into question the veracity of other figures listed in the report. Misrepresenting \$59,000 in expenditures for only two of the many upgrades that were made as being the results of \$27 million in stimulus money is a vast discrepancy between reality and rhetoric.

Tapper does also recount, to the administration's credit, how at a May 28 briefing "White House press secretary Robert Gibbs conceded that the entry about the DC Housing Authority project was not as accurate as it could have been." This concession is good, but, since the [downloadable PDF version](#) of *100 Days, 100 Projects* still contains the error, it is doubtful that catching the administration in this stretching of the truth will lead to any retraction of its stimulus overhype.



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