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### BUDGET BOONDOGGLE AWARD CASH FOR CLINKERS

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Despite the heated rhetoric about the job-creating magic of the American Reinvestment and Recovery Act, it is clear the “stimulus” bill has failed to meet its promised goal of holding unemployment to 8 percent. Nevertheless, the bill continues to surpass predictions of wasteful government spending. The latest beneficiaries are two forgotten segments of the population: convicted felons and the dearly departed. While taxpayers will get stuck with the bill, both these groups will share in the largesse from \$787 billion worth of deficit spending.

- The Social Security Administration [SSA] mistakenly sent nearly \$1 million worth of checks to nearly 4,000 inmates nationwide. In Massachusetts alone, “stimulus” funds went to a prisoner convicted of first-degree murder, three prisoners convicted of second-degree murder, and five rapists.
- But it doesn’t stop there. It appears some fugitive felons, persons living overseas, and individuals who were kicked out of the country may also have received “stimulus” checks from the government.
- For a different group, the “stimulus” can be considered heaven-sent. The SSA sent checks to almost 10,000 deceased individuals at a cost of millions of dollars. Among the recipients were a man who moved to Italy in 1933 and was not a part of the Social Security system, and an individual who died more than 40 years ago.



With Federal agencies directed to spend billions in “stimulus” money as fast as they can, it is not surprising they cannot perform even rudimentary oversight of its programs. With a \$1.6 trillion deficit and unemployment at 9.7 percent and climbing, it is a close call; but providing “stimulus” checks to convicted felons edged out the competition, becoming the latest winner of the Budget Boondoggle Award.

