

Last week marked the one year anniversary of the American Reinvestment and Recovery Act, or the stimulus bill, passing into law. While the debate over its success has been focused on whether or not it is stimulating the economy and on various questionable uses of funds, in my estimation this legislation is accomplishing exactly what it was intended to accomplish – grow the government.

Those of us concerned about the ever increasing level of government debt gasped at the astonishing \$787 billion cost estimates for this bill. True to form it has actually cost 10 percent more at \$862 billion. We heard over and over that government could not sit around and do nothing while people lost their jobs and houses.

The administration claimed that unemployment would not go above 8 percent if the stimulus bill passed.

Now, a year later, the government estimates that unemployment is over 10 percent.

The real number is closer to 20 percent.

It appears that those promises were total fabrications in order to close the deal.

In any case, the American people know that more government spending obviously equals more government. If the goal was to strengthen the private sector, Congress would have allowed businesses and individuals to keep more of their own money through meaningful tax cuts.

Outrageously, the administration claims that they did “cut taxes” by reducing withholding, and that they have stimulated the private economy by increasing the amount of money in every worker’s paycheck.

What they fail to mention is they did not change the total amount of taxes due.

This means that all that money not withheld from paychecks will add up to a big unpleasant surprise when returns are filed this year.

Many tax preparers are already seeing shocked taxpayers having to come up with big checks to the government when they normally expect a refund.

Stimulus, indeed!

The administration also claims that thousands of jobs have been created or saved by this massive spending bill, but these are just more government jobs, and counterproductive in the long run. Funding for the public sector necessarily comes at the expense of an overtaxed private economy. But, it makes sense that government would seek to expand its payroll since every new bureaucrat becomes a likely advocate for big government, when an increasing number of Americans are demanding the opposite.

But the more the burden, the closer the government parasite comes to killing its host.

Rather than learning the lessons of the past year, the administration is moving full-speed ahead to do even more

economic damage. With the stimulus bill set as a precedent and victory declared, another “jobs” bill is in the works.

And, in order to address the unavoidable issues of our massive deficit, the administration has named a bi-partisan commission to find ways to decrease it.

Tax increases on the middle class are notoriously back “on the table”, exposing that campaign promise as another instance of merely saying what the people wanted to hear.

If the obvious solution to our spending problems was seriously put forth, that is, getting back to the constitutional limitations of government, I would be shocked.

More likely, this will be a tactic to increase taxes and spending in a way that passes the political buck.