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## ARRA: It ain't over 'til it's over

For better or worse, the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA, also known as the federal stimulus) is fading from most major headlines, and though the bulk of its economic impact is arguably behind us, several provisions have yet to be implemented, including more than 1,400 awards from around the Sixth District that had not begun as of the summer.

An "award" is any contract, grant, or loan made to a state as a result of the federal stimulus package. Most awards to Sixth District states so far have been in the forms of grants to departments of transportation, governors' offices, and departments of education.

It's also noteworthy that Sixth District states haven't received even half of the amounts that they've been awarded (as of June 30, 2010). A large reason for this is that federal agencies are still waiting for proposals on how state and local governments will spend grant money. Cities must disclose full project plans before grants are awarded, and navigating the red tape, bidding, and permitting processes slows how quickly states receive federal funds. Additionally, several contracts (the second-largest award category) won't be paid for until the work is 100 percent completed.

	Awarded (\$b)	Received (\$b)	Percent Received	Resulting jobs
AL	3.147	1.137	36.1	8,928
FL	9.485	3.324	35	40,603
GA	5.789	2.529	43.7	34,359
LA	3.045	1.067	35	8,987
MS	2.237	1.02	45.6	8,835
TN	4.798	1.685	35.1	15,390

Source: Recovery.gov

Note: "Resulting jobs" refers to jobs reported to have been created from the stimulus in the second quarter of 2010.

One question is on the minds of many: *Where has the money been going so far?*

In many states around the nation, including Sixth District states, state departments of transportation had lots of shovel-ready projects in hand at the time of ARRA's signing. This readiness is why, in the table below, you can see each state's department of transportation was either the first or second most-

funded category from the stimulus as of June 30, 2010.

The table below shows each Sixth District state's top five recipients of stimulus dollars to date. (All dollar amounts are in millions.)

From a national perspective, Christopher Flavelle and Jeff Larson of ProPublica have been keeping track of stimulus spending and funding allotments in their "[Eye on the Stimulus](#)" coverage. In a recent article they included a nifty graphic (similar to the one below) that sums up stimulus spending simply. As of this writing, their figures were updated Tuesday, October 19.

**The authors' definitions provide a good deal of clarity:**

**Spent:** Money that has actually been paid, leaving the government's bank account and entering the economy.

**In Process:** Money that has been committed to a certain project but not yet paid out.

**Left to Spend:** Money set aside for an agency to spend but which the agency has not yet decided how to spend.

Only time will tell how much economic impact comes from the "in process" category and the money still on the table.

*By Mark Carter, an economic analyst in the Atlanta Fed's research department*

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