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**Towns Legislation Will Improve State and Local Government's Ability to Track Stimulus Dollars**

Washington, DC – U.S. Representative Edolphus “Ed” Towns, D-NY, the Chairman of the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, introduced the “Enhanced Oversight of State and Local Economic Recovery Act” (H.R. 2182) to provide state and local governments the ability to use stimulus funds in their efforts to meet the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act’s (ARRA) oversight provisions. Chairman Towns wants to ensure that those people responsible for monitoring and accounting the \$787 billion currently being allocated through the Recovery Act are able to do so both fairly and efficiently.

“Our state and local governments are on the front lines of this monumental effort to fight mismanagement of Recovery Act dollars and their success is vital to making the stimulus work,” said Chairman Towns. “Not initially providing funds for state auditors under the Recovery Act was an omission that needs to be rectified. I look forward to working with my colleagues to pass this legislation.”

The “Enhanced Oversight of State and Local Economic Recovery Act” modifies the Recovery Act and provides state and local governments the flexibility to set aside a portion of their stimulus funds for auditing, contract and grant planning and management, investigations of waste and fraud, and data collection.

The bill further permits state and local governments to use the federal supply schedules of the General Services Administration (GSA). The GSA schedules are pre-negotiated federal contracts for a range of common goods and services, for stimulus projects. The bill also requires the federal government to give detailed guidance to state and local governments on reporting jobs data to ensure consistency.

During the first stimulus oversight hearing in March, Chairman Towns initially raised his concern that individual states receiving billions in stimulus funding needed additional resources to monitor this large infusion of taxpayer dollars. Last week during the Committee's first stimulus oversight field hearing in Brooklyn, NY, the Committee received testimony from New York State and local officials that additional resources were needed to oversee Recovery Act spending. Chairman Towns announced that he planned to seek more flexibility for state and local governments to meet the demands placed on them by the Recovery Act.

"I am concerned that state and local governments are unable to meet the oversight demands placed on them by the Recovery Act. The stimulus calls for unparalleled oversight and accountability, so we must provide those whose job it is to root out waste, fraud, and abuse with the adequate tools to get the job done," added Chairman Towns.

H.R. 2182 is cosponsored by Representative Darrell Issa (R-CA), Representative Dennis Kucinich (D-OH), Representative Todd Platts (R-PA), Representative Peter Welch (D-VT), and Representative Gerry Connolly (D-VA). The bill incorporates part of H.R. 1911, introduced by Representative Connolly.

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### **Documents and Links**

- [Text of H.R. 2182 \(Enhanced Oversight of State and Local Economic Recovery Act\)](#)