

Amount	Time Period	Department or Category of Waste	Waste or Policy Suggestion	Argument for Waste or Policy Suggestion	Source
\$495,000	2009	ARRA	Taxpayer Funded Political Ads on MSNBC: \$495,000 was spent to air commercials touting the Obama administration "green training" job efforts on Obama friendly Olberman and Maddow MSNBC cable shows. These funds did not create any jobs.	As the commercials only ran on MSNBC shows hosted by Obama supporters and didn't create any new jobs this seems more like a political ad to promote President Obama's political agenda than a jobs Ad.	http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2012/au-g/21/stimulus-funds-spent-obama-ads-olbermann-maddow/
\$24,000,000	Grant	ARRA	Powerful Routers Installed in Tiny Rural Libraries and Schools: Government officials in West Virginia used millions of federal taxpayer dollars to purchase 1,064 high-capacity Internet routers to increase broadband access throughout the state. Each router cost \$22,600 for a total of \$24 million and were paid for with federal stimulus dollars. Each router is capable of serving a computer network with tens of thousands of users, such as the network of a large university campus; however the routers were installed at sites with only a few users, such as government offices, schools, libraries and other public offices.	Before purchasing the routers, the state identified 1,064 locations to place the routers, but did not investigate which of these actually needed new routers. Seventy percent of the high-powered routers have gone to schools and libraries, even though the equipment is unnecessary for these rural institutions. Some of the libraries receiving the equipment have only one computer for citizens to use, and schools receiving the equipment often have only a few computers. Yet the routers are designed to serve a minimum of 500 users. More work should have gone into identifying the need for new routers before \$24 million in tax payer money was spent.	http://www.coburn.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?a=Files.Serve&File_id=b7b23f66-2d60-4d5a-8bc5-8522c7e1a40e
\$35,000	Grant	ARRA	A Novel Idea Taxpayers Will Not Want to Read About: Many readers are increasingly going high tech, switching from paperbacks and hardcover books to e-books that can be read on Kindles and Nooks. The Fullerton Public Library in California, however, is going a different direction, spending thousands of dollars to install a vending-style book machine at a train station just blocks from the library.	Encouraging reading by providing easier access to books is a noble goal, but spending tens of thousands of dollars on a costly, out-of-date vending machine is probably not what taxpayers had in mind.	http://www.coburn.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?a=Files.Serve&File_id=b7b23f66-2d60-4d5a-8bc5-8522c7e1a40e
\$104,500,000	Not Specified	ARRA	Over 100 Million for a Harbor and an Airport for Town with no Roads and 75 Full-Time Residents: Remember Alaska's infamous bridge to nowhere? Well, another town has upped the ante after building an unused \$75.5 million airport and a \$29 million harbor with no roads connecting to the town. And along with the missing road, the harbor is also currently lacking electricity, running water, and, well, boats. The hope is that along with possessing "strategic importance," the harbor will be used by Trident Seafood's, the largest seafood processor in the Aleutians. The inactive harbor now shares Akutan territory with the nearby airport. Residents are required to stake a six-mile hovercraft ride to reach the airstrip, which is located on a nearby island. However, there are no airlines currently serving the airport.	Spending 100 million on a harbor and airport with no boats, no airplanes, no roads and almost no people is a waste for taxpayers.	http://news.yahoo.com/blogs/sideshow/alaskan-town-home-airport-no-planes-harbor-no-230803871.html
\$48,700	2011	Dept. of Agriculture	The 2nd Annual Hawaii Chocolate Festival: Nearly \$50,000 in federal money was awarded in 2011 to the Hawaii Department of Agriculture to help support the Hawaiian cacao industry and provide outreach during the 2nd annual Hawaiian Chocolate Festival. The 2012 Hawaii Chocolate Festival will highlight the culinary talents and products specifically linked to Hawaii's chocolate industry.	Taxpayer funds should not be used to promote one industry over another or to subsidize an industry that already enjoys wide market appeal.	http://www.coburn.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?a=Files.Serve&File_id=b69a6ebd-7ebe-41b7-bb03-c25a5e194365

\$100,000,000	Not Specified	Dept. of Agriculture	Tighten Controls on Federal Employee Credit Cards and Cut Down on Delinquencies: A recent audit revealed that employees of the Department of Agriculture (USDA) diverted millions of dollars of taxpayer funds for personal purchases through their government-issued credit cards. Sampling 300 employees' purchases over six months, investigators estimated that 15 percent abused their government credit cards at a cost of \$5.8 million. Taxpayer-funded purchases included Ozzy Osbourne concert tickets, tattoos, lingerie, bartender school tuition, car payments, and cash advances."	Using government credit cards to make taxpayer-funded purchases for items such as Ozzy Osbourne concert tickets, tattoos, lingerie, bartender school tuition, car payments, and cash advances shows a culture of fraud and widespread abuse of taxpayer funds within the Department of Agriculture. Tighter controls and oversight of agency funds is necessary to stop this abuse.	http://www.heritage.org/research/reports/2010/10/how-to-cut-343-billion-from-the-federal-budget
\$2,000,000	Not Specified	Dept. of Agriculture	The Two Million Dollar Intern: The Department of Agriculture's Office of the Chief Information Officer funded a \$2 million intern program. Only one intern was hired full time as a result.	At a cost of \$2 million per job this program is a shining example of government job creation in action.	http://thf_media.s3.amazonaws.com/2012/pdf/SR121.pdf
\$49,990	Grant	Dept. of Agriculture	Potato Chip Pork: The USDA awarded a nearly \$50,000 Value Added Producer Grant (VAPG) to help New York's Martin Sidor Farms "revamp their marketing strategy to raise brand awareness and increase sales of their North Fork Potato Chips.	Despite the popularity of the chips, which were named "official snack of the day" on The Rachel Ray Show, the federal government apparently thought they needed taxpayer support.	http://www.coburn.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?a=Files.Serve&File_id=b7b23f66-2d60-4d5a-8bc5-8522c7e1a40e
Tens of millions	Not specified	Dept. of Agriculture	Better Enforce Eligibility Requirements for Food Stamps: Apparently administering the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program is anything but a "SNAP" for the Department of Agriculture, examples of fraud and abuse in the program are nearly too numerous to count.	One example involves a lottery winner in who still received \$200 a month food stamps after winning \$1 million dollars. Giving food stamps to people who are not eligible takes funds away from those who actually need them, weakens the food stamp program and wastes taxpayer money.	http://www.heritage.org/research/reports/2010/10/how-to-cut-343-billion-from-the-federal-budget
\$16,400,000	Annually	Dept. of Agriculture	Dead, Duplicate, and Disqualified Food Stamp Recipients: The USDA Inspector General found roughly 2,000 dead people are still receiving food stamps in New York and Massachusetts combined. Additionally, its investigation revealed 7,236 people in these states are receiving duplicate benefits, while 286 are on state lists that should exclude them from receiving food stamps. These unnecessary payments amount to \$1.4 million every month.	The sharing of data between agencies would lead to less waste in the form of mistaken payments. Reform of reimbursement methodology is necessary to stop overpayments.	http://www.coburn.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?a=Files.Serve&File_id=b7b23f66-2d60-4d5a-8bc5-8522c7e1a40e
\$99,000	2012	Dept. of Agriculture	Vodka, Bourbon, and Brandy Paid for by Taxpayers: In spite of the robust demand for alcoholic beverages, the U.S. Department of Agriculture awarded a \$99,000 grant to the new Clayton Distillery Company, a New York distillery in 2012. Using taxpayer money, owners plan to buy a copper still and stainless steel vodka column. The distillery believes the grant will cover two-thirds of the equipment cost.	Taxpayer funds should not be used to advantage one company over another, nor should they be used to subsidize an industry that already enjoys wide market appeal.	http://www.coburn.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?a=Files.Serve&File_id=b7b23f66-2d60-4d5a-8bc5-8522c7e1a40e
\$1,300,000	Grant	Dept. of Agriculture	Corporate Welfare for the World's Largest Snack Food Maker: The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the Department of Commerce are spending over \$1.3 million to help the world's largest snack food maker build a Greek yogurt factory in New York. Last year, PepsiCo Inc. earned net revenues of \$66 billion. Looking to expand their earnings, the corporation is now teaming up with the German company Theo Müller Group to sell "premium yogurt products in the U.S."	Corporate welfare to build infrastructure for the company's facility gives it a financial edge to push into a booming market. Twenty-nine other yogurt plants are located in New York. Collectively, they produced 530 million pounds of yogurt last year, a 43 percent increase over the year before. Nationwide, yogurt sales are expected to generate \$7 billion this year, an increase of 9 percent over last year – when sales increased by 7.5 percent. Considering the company's billions of dollars in annual profits and the plentiful demand for the Greek yogurt nationally, PepsiCo clearly does not need handouts from the government to subsidize its private business.	http://www.coburn.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?a=Files.Serve&File_id=b7b23f66-2d60-4d5a-8bc5-8522c7e1a40e

\$15,000	2012	Dept. of Agriculture	\$15,000 Decorative Arch for Community of 10,000: The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) awarded \$15,000 in federal funds for the construction of a gateway arch at the entry point of the Cottage Grove Historic District in Oregon. Made possible by the USDA's Rural Business Enterprise Grant, the project was pursued by community leaders for years, who hoped to attract new patrons to local businesses. They seek to revitalize the city's downtown area, and putting an arch to mark its entrance was the best idea the community of about 10,000 came up with.	The gateway arch ironically illustrates the gateway to wasteful federal grants. While intentions for the project were noble, the use of federal funds for a vanity project clearly is not.	http://www.coburn.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?a=Files.Serve&File_id=b7b23f66-2d60-4d5a-8bc5-8522c7e1a40e
\$24,877	Grant	Dept. of Agriculture	The Idaho Firearms and Accessories Manufacturers Association (IFAMA) Received Taxpayer Funds to Study the Economic Success of the Idaho Gun Industry: The group said it spent taxpayer money on what amounted to a gun show. IFAMA's report intends to boost the perception of the industry by giving information on how many jobs it creates in the state. Yet in Idaho the firearms and accessories industry already supports thousands of jobs. Over half of the states households own a firearm, well above the national average. Gun sales nationwide have increased in recent years. The industry produces over \$4 billion in revenue annually.	The right to bear arms is guaranteed by the Constitution, but government funding for the firearms industry is not.	http://www.coburn.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?a=Files.Serve&File_id=b7b23f66-2d60-4d5a-8bc5-8522c7e1a40e
Tens of billions	FY2012	Dept. of Agriculture	Food Stamps for Taco Bell, Beer, and Condoms: Billions of dollars in food stamp payments have been used for everything from Kentucky Fried Chicken and Taco Bell, to beer, soda, and condoms. In three states, some individuals even received more food stamp benefits because they smoke marijuana.	The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP, previously known as food stamps), could help families that are struggling financially, but lax controls have led to systemic wasteful expenditures. Approximately \$2.5 billion will be wasted on improper SNAP payments, showing that purchase controls need to be tightened.	http://www.coburn.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?a=Files.Serve&File_id=b7b23f66-2d60-4d5a-8bc5-8522c7e1a40e
\$100,000	2011	Dept. of Agriculture	Celebrity Chefs in Indonesia: Even though the connection between celebrity chefs and spurring economic growth is tenuous at best, the Washington State Fruit Commission received \$100,000 in federal money for a Celebrity Chef Fruit Promotion Road Show in Indonesia. The event is designed to raise consumer awareness through promoting American grown fruit in cooking recipes and demonstrations done by Celebrity Chefs.	The U.S. government should not be funding "Celebrity Chef" promotions in the U.S., let alone in Indonesia.	http://www.coburn.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?a=Files.Serve&File_id=b69a6ebd-7ebe-41b7-bb03-c25a5e194365
\$6,900,000	2012	Dept. of Agriculture	Grants to Billion Dollar Tire Company: The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) awarded the Cooper Tire and Rubber Company nearly \$7 million for the development of natural rubber tires using guayule. Guayule is a plant native to the American Southwest and Mexico, with a long history as a natural rubber alternative. Research, development and commercialization of guayule-derived natural rubbers have gone on for more than a century, including during World War II and again during the 1970s oil crises. A history making the grant particularly questionable.	This grant is also subsidizing research already happening in the private sector. Bridgestone Corporation recently announced plans for an extensive research project in the United States dedicated to developing Guayule as a commercially viable, renewable source of high-quality natural rubber." Bridgestone is looking to build a pilot farm and expects to have trial rubber production operational in the next three years. If Bridgestone can fund their own guayule research, why can't Cooper Tire?	http://www.coburn.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?a=Files.Serve&File_id=b7b23f66-2d60-4d5a-8bc5-8522c7e1a40e
\$49,447	FY2012	Dept. of Agriculture	Smokey Bear Balloons: The U.S. Forest Service gave tribute to Smokey Bear by spending \$49,447 in taxpayer funds to have Smokey Bear balloons at several balloon festivals throughout the American Southwest. Over the last seven years the department has spent more than \$230,000 for Smokey Bear hot-air and cold-air balloon appearances	While Smokey's message serves the purpose of reminding citizens of the dangers of wildfires, federally funded appearances at balloon festivals should be a government expenditure that goes up in smoke. The money spent by the U.S. Forest Service could be better directed to funding more DC-10 tankers to help fight one of the more than 6,000 wildfires that plagued the United States in 2012.	http://www.coburn.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?a=Files.Serve&File_id=b7b23f66-2d60-4d5a-8bc5-8522c7e1a40e

\$75,000	2011	Dept. of Agriculture	Tax Dollars to Promote Michigan Christmas Trees: Yule'll be happy to know that \$75,000 of your tax dollars went to increase awareness about the role Michigan plays in the production of trees and poinsettias. It is unclear why the state needs help promoting a very successful industry; the \$40 million industry is the third largest in the nation in total trees harvested with about 3 million trees. The state also grows more than 2.3 million Poinsettias' annually	Taxpayer funds should not be used to promote one industry, or segment of an industry over another or to subsidize an industry that already enjoys wide market appeal.	http://www.coburn.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?a=Files.Serve&File_id=b69a6ebd-7ebe-41b7-bb03-c25a5e194365
\$50,400	2011	Dept. of Agriculture	Government "Cheese Trail": The Oregon Cheese Guild received \$50,000 in taxpayer funding to promote the Oregon cheese industry. The guild plans to support a statewide Oregon Cheese Trail that will link dairies, restaurants and shops along the way. The federal funds will be used to produce video vignettes on cheese to highlight the cheese industry in Oregon. The videos will feature cheese farmers, cheese experts, and the history of cheese in the state.	It is unclear why this promotion is necessary. Cheese is certainly not an emerging market or one that needs government assistance. Taxpayer funds should not be used to promote one industry over another or to subsidize an industry that already enjoys wide market appeal.	http://www.coburn.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?a=Files.Serve&File_id=b69a6ebd-7ebe-41b7-bb03-c25a5e194365
\$111,413	2011	Dept. of Agriculture	Beer Brewing Lessons in China: In what should leave taxpayers hopping mad more than \$111,000 in federal funds will pay for a delegation of hops and brewing experts to travel to China to conduct a series of classes for Chinese breweries. In June 2012, the Hop Growers of America (HGA) plans to send a team consisting of three contractors, including a marketing firm with expertise in hops and beer brewing, a US brewing consultant, and a Chinese firm to recruit breweries and to translate to breweries in China. The goal is to target China's top 20 breweries and conduct a series of seminars on the benefits of brewing with U.S. hops. The group will make multiple trips to China to conduct the seminars	The HGA is promoting American products overseas and opening up markets to American products which is a good thing, however it's a public cost for private benefit. If private companies want their industries or products promoted there should be a charge to the beneficiaries instead of a charge to the taxpayers.	http://www.coburn.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?a=Files.Serve&File_id=b69a6ebd-7ebe-41b7-bb03-c25a5e194365
\$9,490,000	2011	Dept. of Agriculture	Duplicative Program to Help Other Countries Manage Their Forests: The U.S. Forest Service spends millions of dollars each year to help other nations promote sustainable forest management, even though it's not part of its official mission, and duplicates other government efforts. The International Forestry Program delivers technical assistance, policy development, and disaster preparedness and response by trained forestry experts to international partners. In Fiscal Year 2011, the program received nearly \$9.5 million in federal funding.	Noting that it overlaps with programs of the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), and is not consistent with the Forest Service's mission "to sustain the health, diversity, and productivity of the Nation's forests and grasslands to meet the needs of present and future generations," we recommended eliminating the program.	http://www.coburn.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?a=Files.Serve&File_id=b69a6ebd-7ebe-41b7-bb03-c25a5e194365
\$62,000	2011	Dept. of Agriculture	Promoting South Dakota, Colorado and Ohio Wine: Tens of thousands of federal dollars will help pay for the 2012 Drink Local Wine Conference in Colorado and to promote awareness of South Dakota and Ohio wines.	Industries that benefit from these advertisements should pay for them. The Federal government should not use funds to promote one industry over another.	http://www.coburn.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?a=Files.Serve&File_id=b69a6ebd-7ebe-41b7-bb03-c25a5e194365
\$60,000	2011	Dept. of Agriculture	Stimulus Funds for a Tree Census: Sixty thousand dollars in federal funds paid for a tree survey and inventory in Henderson, Nevada. In total, the community of Henderson has over 1,348 acres of undocumented tree assets which will be mapped by location, identified by species, and undergo tree health evaluations, and maintenance prioritization.	While it is unclear that any new jobs were created from these funds, \$1,200 WAS budgeted from the stimulus grant for city employees to go to a national urban forestry conference. With Nevada's struggling economy, perhaps helping the unemployed in the state would be a better place to spend the stimulus money than counting trees.	http://www.coburn.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?a=Files.Serve&File_id=b69a6ebd-7ebe-41b7-bb03-c25a5e194365

\$181,966	2011	Dept. of Agriculture	Creating a Smart Phone App for Picking Tennessee Farmers: Yes, there's an app for that. The Tennessee Department of Agriculture received \$181,966 in taxpayer dollars to create an app for smart phones and tablets to help connect consumers with specialty crop producers. The marketing campaign is designed to help further its "Pick Tennessee Products" campaign and to help consumers find farmers through an online specialty crop directory. The program is aimed squarely at Tennessee residents in the hope they will shop locally at Tennessee farms.	While having even more avenues to access the program's listings may be helpful, it is hardly a pressing need, especially when the information is already available on their website. Furthermore, using taxpayer funds to promote one industry over another is questionable. Industries that benefit from these programs should pay for them. The Federal government shouldn't use funds to promote one industry over another.	http://www.coburn.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?a=Files.Serve&File_id=b69a6ebd-7ebe-41b7-bb03-c25a5e194365
\$93,000	2011	Dept. of Agriculture	Farmers Market Advertising Campaign: Over \$90,000 in federal funding will go toward the continuation of a state-wide advertising campaign (in Oklahoma), which will provide funding to local farmers markets for specialty crop promotional activities, OK Grown tote bags, and other advertisements. The money will also help cover the costs associated with signs, marketing items, advertising for local specialty crops, and a newsletter. Federal funding has gone toward several similar promotional campaigns in Oklahoma over the last several fiscal years	The number of farmers markets over the past two decades has exploded, increasing by 16 percent just last year and more than doubling since 2000. There are now over 6,000 farmers' markets nationwide. In light of the robust success these enterprises are enjoying, it is questionable why federal assistance for farmers' markets is even needed. Nevertheless, not only does the Specialty Crop Block Grant Program continue to fund farmers' markets, but there are at least four other federal programs that offer support for the development of farmers' markets.	http://www.coburn.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?a=Files.Serve&File_id=b69a6ebd-7ebe-41b7-bb03-c25a5e194365
\$11,976,000	Annually	Dept. of Agriculture	Energy Program Repeatedly Slated for Termination Continues to get Funding: Nearly \$12 million was spent in 2011 on an energy assistance program that both the current and former administrations agree should not even exist. The USDA High Energy Cost Grant program provides grants for low cost electricity to rural areas. However, only Alaska, Hawaii, and a small number of additional remote regions in the continental United States qualify for them, leaving other states out in the cold.	Both the Bush and Obama Administrations have targeted the USDA High Energy Cost Grant program for elimination because it is duplicative of, and less effective than, the Rural Utilities Service's (RUS) Electric Loan Program.	http://www.coburn.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?a=Files.Serve&File_id=b69a6ebd-7ebe-41b7-bb03-c25a5e194365
\$55,000	2011	Dept. of Agriculture	Federal Grant Pays to Package Grass-fed Cow Butter: Kriemhild Dairy Farms was awarded over \$55,000 to purchase and install a new butter packing machine, allowing it to begin offering 8-ounce packages of their Meadow Butter made from the milk of their grass-fed cows. Previously Kriemhild had only offered 2 to 10 pound packages, so the new butter filler machine will allow them to begin selling more of their product to individuals. The farm has received a similar 2010 grant from the United States Department of Agriculture to complete a business plan for Meadow Butter, a grass-based butter product, and to pay for packaging and a logo.	Taxpayer funds should not be used to promote one industry over another or to subsidize an industry that already enjoys wide market appeal.	http://www.coburn.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?a=Files.Serve&File_id=b69a6ebd-7ebe-41b7-bb03-c25a5e194365
\$14,970,000	2011	Dept. of Agriculture	Program for Repairing Poor Families' Houses Will Mainly Serve Property Developers: At a cost of nearly \$15 million, the Multi-Family Housing Revitalization Program was intended to help repair the homes of low-income families. The primary beneficiaries of the program however, have become the developers of the properties rather than the families that live in them, according to government documents.	The President's budget recommended terminating the program, noting that adequate funding has already been supplied for most cost effective and justified repairs, and at this point, additional funding in the demonstration program could be seen as over-subsidizing the multifamily housing property owners.	http://www.coburn.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?a=Files.Serve&File_id=b69a6ebd-7ebe-41b7-bb03-c25a5e194365

\$742,907	2011	Dept. of Agriculture	Baaaadddd Spending: The U.S. Department of Agriculture awarded a \$742,907 grant to Montana State University (MSU) to research the use of targeted sheep grazing to control weeds. MSU faculty will also develop two new college courses based on their findings. The researchers note that since organic farmers do not use chemicals for weed control, they often have to till the soil to clear a field of weeds and prepare it for planting. Tilling, however, can put the topsoil at risk of washing or blowing away. The solution? Let grazing sheep munch on the weeds. The strategy allows farms to take advantage of weeds, cover crops and crop residues for fiber and meat production, according to MSU's lead researcher on the project. In addition, according to the university, sheep manure and urine will act as natural fertilizers.	Is new research in this field necessary? Mankind has understood for thousands of years that sheep graze. The American Sheep Industry Association sells a Targeted Grazing Handbook, which includes information about how grazing sheep can contain weeds, for \$25. Taxpayers should say "bah!" to this unnecessary research project.	http://www.coburn.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?a=Files.Serve&File_id=b69a6ebd-7ebe-41b7-bb03-c25a5e194365
\$936,818	2011	Dept. of Commerce	Online Soap Operas: The Department of Commerce awarded \$28.5 million to One Economy Corp. to generate broadband adoption in under-served communities. One of the projects funded by One Economy Corp was to create a web-based television series, Diary of a Single Mom.	Perhaps One Economy Corp should focus on generating broadband adoption instead of funding soap operas. Federally funded access to on-line soap operas should not be a priority for taxpayers.	http://www.coburn.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?a=Files.Serve&File_id=b69a6ebd-7ebe-41b7-bb03-c25a5e194365
\$1,000,000	2012	Dept. of Commerce	Federal funding for Cell Phone App Creators: The U.S. Department of Commerce provided \$1 million to Ogden City, Utah, to create a "Mobile App Lab." The "lab" will include a code shop operated by the Weber State University Research Foundation, a training center, and office space from high-tech start-ups. Some hope the lab will inspire entrepreneurs to get creative in their application development.	With the spread of iPhones, tablets, and other portable devices, developers are rushing into the wireless sector in hopes of creating the next big app. Since the start of 2008, more than 30 billion mobile phone apps have been downloaded onto iPhones. At a time of trillion dollar deficits, it makes little sense to spend money on an economically thriving industry and force future generations to fund the next Instagram or Angry Birds.	http://www.coburn.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?a=Files.Serve&File_id=b7b23f66-2d60-4d5a-8bc5-8522c7e1a40e
\$2,000,000	2011	Dept. of Commerce	\$2 Million (taxpayer) Dollar Wine Exhibition: A \$2 million federal grant will help pay for a multimillion-dollar wine exhibition and culinary center in Washington State. The center owned by the Port of Benton hopes to educate the public about Washington State's wine and food industry. In addition the new culinary center, the Port of Benton oversees two other local wine destinations, including Prosser Vintner's Village and Prosser Wine and Food Park. Federal money comes from the U.S. Department of Commerce Economic Development Administration.	Taxpayer funds should not be used to promote one industry over another or to subsidize an industry that already enjoys wide market appeal.	http://www.coburn.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?a=Files.Serve&File_id=b69a6ebd-7ebe-41b7-bb03-c25a5e194365
\$100,000	2011	Dept. of Commerce	Growing Massachusetts Video Game Industry: The Massachusetts Digital Games Institute (MassDiGI) University Center at Becker College, described as the new promotional arm for the states video game industry, was awarded \$100,000 in federal money to help support the industry by developing intellectual property for games and helping businesses get access to capital.	It is unclear why an industry worth \$2 billion in the state would need government aid to further develop. Nevertheless, the money has been approved thanks to the U.S. Department of Commerce's Economic Development Administration (EDA). Over the next five years, Becker College is expected to receive up to \$500,000 from the EDA for this initiative	http://www.coburn.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?a=Files.Serve&File_id=b69a6ebd-7ebe-41b7-bb03-c25a5e194365
\$25,000,000	FY2012	Dept. of Defense	Duplicative Defense Language and Cultural Training: The Department of Defense has created 18 different products or programs to teach language and culture to members of the military. This language and culture training is not provided through a single department or service and all these courses overlap with at least one other program.	Better coordination to avoid overlapping and duplicative programs would increase training efficiency and lead to a savings of \$25 million.	http://www.gao.gov/assets/590/588818.pdf

\$100,000	Not Specified	Dept. of Defense	The \$100,000 coffee break: Nearly \$100,000 worth of "coffee break refreshments were among the itemized expenses revealed Friday from two controversial Veterans Affairs conventions, whose combined price tag topped \$5 million.	Perhaps employees at the Department of Veterans Affairs should spent less time on "coffee breaks" and more time finding ways to better serve our veterans.	http://www.foxnews.com/politics/2012/08/24/conference-expense-list-details-millions-spent-by-va-in-latest-federal-waste/#ixzz28FZw77aZ
\$8,500,000	2009	Dept. of Defense	Biofuel, Only \$424 a Gallon: The Pentagon paid Solarzyme Inc. \$8.5 in 2009 for 20,055 gallons of biofuel based on algae oil or \$424 a gallon.	The Navy is not the Department of Energy and is not the proper place to fund alternative energy research.	http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/07/02/us-usa-navy-greenfleet-idUSBRE86106X20120702
\$12,000,000	2012	Dept. of Defense	Going green for \$27 a gallon: The Pentagon paid \$12 million for 450,000 gallons of biofuel, in order to show off its new "Green Fleet". However at nearly \$27 dollars a gallon the fleet probably won't be getting very far.	The Navy is not the Department of Energy and is not the proper place to fund alternative energy research.	http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/07/02/us-usa-navy-greenfleet-idUSBRE86106X20120702
\$700,000	Not Specified	Dept. of Defense	Pentagon Raids Weapons Program to Buy Jerky: The Pentagon is attempting to develop its own brand of jerky treats. Only the money is coming from a program specially created to equip soldiers with the weapons they need.	While our men and women in uniform certainly would welcome new menu options, these dollars could be better spent at a time when sequestration imposed by the Budget Control Act is set to cut billions of dollars from our national defense budget.	http://www.coburn.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?a=Files.Serve&File_id=b7b23f66-2d60-4d5a-8bc5-8522c7e1a40e
\$24,450	2011	Dept. of Defense	Coast Guard Spends Taxpayer Dollars on Mardi Gras Float: The United States Coast Guard spent more than \$24,000 on a float for the 2011 New Orleans Mardi Gras celebration. According to the U.S. Coast Guard's website, each year the Coast Guard uses its visibility during Mardi Gras festivities to better acquaint the public with their role as America's maritime guardian. The Coast Guard also uses the float as a recruiting tool.	Using a Mardi Gras float as a recruiting tool is a questionable expense at best, and a excuse to attend Mardi Gras on the taxpayer dime at worst.	http://www.coburn.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?a=Files.Serve&File_id=b69a6ebd-7ebe-41b7-bb03-c25a5e194365
\$51,474	2011	Dept. of Defense	Air Force Academy Builds "Stonehenge-like Worship Center": The Air Force Academy completed construction and dedication of a \$51,474 outdoor worship center in 2011. It has been described as a small Stonehenge-like circle of boulders with a propane fire pit. The worship center is for the handful of current or future cadets whose religions fall under the broad category of "Earth-based", which includes Wiccans, Druids and Pagans. Three students out of 4,300 students self reported as currently having an earth-based religion.	The American people support religious freedom, but this investment challenges their faith in government to ever make smart budget choices.	http://www.coburn.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?a=Files.Serve&File_id=b69a6ebd-7ebe-41b7-bb03-c25a5e194365
Billions of dollars	2012	Dept. of Education	Scale back the U.S. Department of Education Bureaucracy: In recent years, the Department of Education's annual budget increased by nearly 36 percent yet as little as 65 to 70 cents of every dollar of federal educational spending actually makes it into the classroom.	More money should be directed to local governments to make education choices not used for more bureaucracy.	http://www.heritage.org/research/reports/2010/10/how-to-cut-343-billion-from-the-federal-budget
Hundreds of millions	FY2012	Dept. of Education	Duplicative STEM Education Programs: Federal agencies spent \$3.1 billion on STEM education programs in FY2010. According to GAO, 173 of the federal government's 209 STEM education programs (or 83 percent) administered by 13 federal agencies are duplicative to some degree with at least one other federal STEM program.	The federal government's 209 STEM education programs should be reviewed and streamlined to improve coordination and performance, minimize duplication, and eliminate unnecessary expenditures.	http://www.gao.gov/assets/590/588818.pdf
As much as 1 billion	Not Specified	Dept. of Energy	One Billion in Energy Tax Credits for Prisoners and Children: As much as \$1 billion or more in tax credits for energy efficient residential improvements are being claimed by individuals with no record of owning a home, including prisoners and underage children.	Giving energy tax credits to individuals with no record of owning a home shows a lack of proper management and oversight and is a waste of taxpayer funds.	http://www.coburn.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?a=Files.Serve&File_id=b69a6ebd-7ebe-41b7-bb03-c25a5e194365

\$15,000,000	Annually	Dept. of Energy	<p>Recruiting Scientists for Russian Weapons Institutes: A Cold War-era program to prevent the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction has had more money than it can spend – carrying over more from year to year than Congress appropriates for its annual budget. The money has helped recruit new scientists for Russian weapons institutes, contrary to the original intent of the program. This year, the program received almost \$15 million. For many years during the 2000s, it took in far more than it spent. The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) states the program has created almost 2,800 private-sector jobs in Russia.</p>	<p>Following the collapse of the Soviet Union, the "Initiative for Proliferation Prevention" program was created to ensure unemployed Soviet weapons scientists and engineers were placed in private-sector, nonmilitary employment so these experts were not hired by terrorist groups or rogue nations. Now, the program is recruiting young nuclear scientists, an objective far removed from its original purpose. According to the Government Accountability Office (GAO), Officials from 10 Russian and Ukrainian weapons institutes told GAO that the IPP program helps them attract, recruit, and retain younger scientists and contributes to the continued operation of their facilities. Critics have also questioned the need for the program given that the U.S. engages in a number of nonproliferation diplomatic activities. Even the Department of Energy has conceded this program is duplicative, as several other U.S. Government initiatives are also aimed at preventing weapons of mass destruction proliferation</p>	<p>http://www.coburn.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?a=Files.Serve&File_id=b7b23f66-2d60-4d5a-8bc5-8522c7e1a40e</p>
\$100,000	2012	Dept. of Energy	<p>Contest to Create a Phone App that Already Exists: The Department of Energy (DOE) launched a contest offering \$100,000 in prizes for development of mobile phone apps allowing users to track their home energy usage. Yet the app the agency is looking for already exists. Private application developers "Opower", "EnergySaver", "Energy Tracker", "U-Tracker" and "SD Energy" all provide consumers with energy-tracking options.</p>	<p>Instead of investing taxpayer dollars in this project, the department should let the marketplace determine the best apps for consumers. Maybe Uncle Sam needs to develop an app to track duplicative government apps.</p>	<p>http://www.coburn.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?a=Files.Serve&File_id=b7b23f66-2d60-4d5a-8bc5-8522c7e1a40e</p>
\$500,000	Not Specified	Dept. of Energy	<p>Missing Green Energy Equipment: An Inspector General audit found that the Department of Energy cannot locate \$500,000 worth of "green energy" manufacturing equipment that was bought with stimulus money.</p>	<p>More oversight is necessary to ensure that half a million worth of manufacturing equipment doesn't simply "go missing"</p>	<p>http://cnsnews.com/news/article/energy-dept-unable-locate-500000-equipment-bought-stimulus-money</p>
\$2,200,000	Annually	Dept. of Energy	<p>Install Energy Efficient Lighting at the Dept. of Energy: A June 2010 report from the Department of Energy's Inspector General showed that the Department could save \$2.2 million annually by adopting more efficient lighting systems, like installing occupancy sensors in rooms.</p>	<p>The Department of Energy should follow its own advice about being energy efficient by installing more energy efficient lighting in their buildings.</p>	<p>http://www.usnews.com/news/articles/2011/05/26/eight-easy-ways-to-cut-government-spending?page=2</p>
\$100,000,000	Annually	Dept. of Energy	<p>Duplicative Diesel Emissions Programs: There are 14 programs costing hundreds of millions each year administered through the Department of Energy, Department of Transportation and the Environmental Protection Agency, to reduce diesel emissions. GAO reports that each program overlaps with at least one other program "in the specific activities they fund, the program goals, or the eligible recipients of funding". These programs should be examined to identify duplicative or unnecessary programs and to streamline programs to better utilize available funding.</p>	<p>The overall effectiveness of federal funding for activities that reduce mobile source diesel emissions may be limited because agencies generally do not collaborate. Uncoordinated program efforts can waste scarce funds, confuse and frustrate program customers, and limit the overall effectiveness of the federal effort.</p>	<p>http://www.gao.gov/assets/590/588818.pdf</p>

\$330,000,000	Annually	Dept. of Health and Human Services	Billions in Payments for Tax Cheats: One of the largest federally funded programs, Medicaid, provides billions of dollars in payments to tax cheats who owe millions in unpaid taxes. Almost 7,000 Medicaid providers in just three states owed \$791 million in unpaid federal taxes but received \$6.6 billion in Medicaid reimbursements in just one year according to a Government Accountability Office (GAO) investigation.	A fix to the problem seems simple: the IRS should garnish a portion of each provider's future Medicaid payments. Yet, because of a loophole in federal law, the IRS cannot hold a continuous levy (a process similar to garnishment of wages) against Medicaid payments from states to providers. The agency is allowed to send onetime levies to state Medicaid agencies, but these have not been effective. GAO estimated in Florida, New York, and Texas alone, the IRS could collect anywhere from \$22 million to \$330 million annually in unpaid taxes if it could better levy Medicaid payments.	http://www.coburn.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?a=Files.Serve&File_id=b7b23f66-2d60-4d5a-8bc5-8522c7e1a40e
\$106,000	Grant	Dept. of Health and Human Services	Youtube Healthcare Video Contest: "An apple a day keeps the doctor away," says the old adage. Although there are endless ways to find ideas for healthy eating, the federal government decided to add one more – a YouTube video contest.	As adorable or fun as some of the videos may be, such words are falling on ears that have heard messages about fruits and veggies for years. A description of the video contest itself states "efforts have been underway nationally for nearly 20 years to promote fruits and vegetables." Its videos are unlikely to compete with millions of others that command people's attention, and federal programs already exist promoting healthy eating. This project proved to be nothing but an unhealthy use of taxpayer dollars.	http://www.coburn.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?a=Files.Serve&File_id=b7b23f66-2d60-4d5a-8bc5-8522c7e1a40e
Billions of dollars	1992 - 2012	Dept. of Health and Human Services	Medicaid Overpayments: The House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform estimates that New York State overbilled the federal government by \$15 billion over the past 20 years for Medicaid costs for developmentally disabled patients, an amount that exceeded the entire Medicaid budgets of 14 states.	The failure to recognize the overpayments over a time period of at least 20 years signals a systemic problem in the Medicaid agency. The inspector general of HHS found that Medicaid was paying New York facilities the equivalent of \$1.9 million per patient, per year. Reform of reimbursement methodology is necessary to stop overpayment.	http://thehill.com/blogs/healthwatch/medicaid/50711-gop-slams-15-billion-in-medicaid-overpayments
\$765,828	2011	Dept. of Health and Human Services	Taxpayer Funded House of Pancakes: Almost \$800,000 of federal taxpayer funds went to subsidize pancakes in the nation's capital. An International House of Pancakes (IHOP) franchise was built with financial assistance courtesy of Uncle Sam. It was intended to help an underserved community however the new IHOP is not located in an "underserved community" but in the popular Columbia Heights neighborhood.	Observers noticed that in this day of anti-obesity crusades, the secretary of Health and Human Services used her own discretionary grant money to subsidize a restaurant that serves two of Men's Health magazine's 20 most unhealthy restaurant dishes.	http://www.coburn.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?a=Files.Serve&File_id=b69a6ebd-7ebe-41b7-bb03-c25a5e194365
\$6,279	2011	Dept. of Homeland Security	Taxpayer-Funded Snow Cones for Emergencies: Department of Homeland Security funding was used to purchase thirteen Snow Cone ice-making machines for 13 counties across Michigan in support of emergency management and the Citizen Corps program. According to the Michigan state government, the Snow Cone ice-making machines were intended to assist with treating heat exhaustion and other illnesses during large events (including possible terrorist incidents or similar emergencies).	Buying snow cone machines to deal with heat exhaustion and other emergencies seems like a questionable use of federal funds.	http://www.coburn.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?a=Files.Serve&File_id=b69a6ebd-7ebe-41b7-bb03-c25a5e194365
\$98,000	2012	Dept. of Homeland Security	Nearly \$100,000 for Underwater Rescue Robot for Community not Located near Large Bodies of Water: Columbus, Ohio, recently used a \$98,000 UASI grant to purchase an underwater robot. Local officials explained that it would be used to assist in underwater rescues.	While certain communities could justify the purchase of a robot for use in underwater rescues. Columbus, Ohio is not located near any large bodies of water where underwater rescues could be a frequent occurrence. This purchase is yet another example of communities taking advantage of grants offered by the U.S. regardless of if they make financial sense.	http://www.washingtonguardian.com/homelands-urban-follies-0

\$45,000,000	2005 - 2009	Dept. of Homeland Security	A 45 Million Camera Surveillance System Codenamed "Project Shield" Failed Because it wasn't Built to Withstand Chicago's Harsh Weather: The \$45-million Cook County Homeland Security initiative was supposed to make residents feel safe, but in the end, the troubled Project Shield resembled more of a disaster. The Cook County initiative was replete with equipment that failed to work because of weather conditions, missing equipment records and untrained first responders, according to a report by the Inspector General of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security.	Of 128 municipalities in Cook County, 32 never received any equipment, and many others returned it because officers never got training on how to use it. Other cameras often targeted police parking lots, streets and intersections with "questionable homeland security benefits." Some were located in police station lobbies, not the most likely venue for a terrorist attack. Some of the equipment failed in extremely hot or cold weather — in other words, Chicago weather. Moreover, Cook County's homeland security chief said that the \$65,000 cameras mounted in police squad cars not only didn't work, they blocked air bag deployment, making police ... less safe.	http://articles.chicagotribune.com/2012-01-10/news/ct-edit-shield-20120110_1_semifunctional-system-mismanagement-and-poor-design-homeland-security
\$285,933	2012	Dept. of Homeland Security	Town of 23,000 Receives Tank to Patrol Annual Pumpkin Festival: Keene, New Hampshire, with a population just over 23,000 and a police force of 40, set aside UASI funds to buy a BearCat armored vehicle. Despite reporting only a single homicide in the prior two years, the City of Keene told DHS the vehicle was needed to patrol events like its annual pumpkin festival.	Homeland Security could certainly find a better use for their funding than to provide armored vehicles to sleepy New Hampshire towns with little risk of a terrorist attack.	http://www.washingtonguardian.com/homelands-urban-follies-0
\$255,000	Grant	Dept. of Housing and Urban Development	Federal Funds for Cartoon School: Although the cartooning business is clearly doing fine on its own, nearly 24 million unit sales of comic books and graphic novels have been made this year, up 15 percent from last year; federal authorities decided it was a national priority to support cartoonists and comic book artists. The state of Vermont has committed \$255,000 of its federal Community Development Block Grant to support a program for graduates of the Center for Cartoon Studies (CCS). The CCS provides one- and two-year certificate programs for creating "visual narratives" for "comic and non-comic geeks alike.	Aspiring cartoonists and comic book artists and writers are eligible to receive federal financial aid to attend art schools across the country. So it may be no laughing matter to taxpayers that the unaccredited cartoon school with fewer than a hundred students would receive hundreds of thousands of dollars from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.	http://www.coburn.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?a=Files.Serve&File_id=b7b23f66-2d60-4d5a-8bc5-8522c7e1a40e
\$21,600,000	2012	Dept. of Housing and Urban Development	Abandoned New Orleans Homes are still on Federal Rolls Seven Years After Katrina: As recently as October 2012, a federally funded program to help facilitate the sale of nearly 9,000 homes abandoned after Hurricane Katrina was still holding over 3,000 homes. Over \$21.6 million was spent in the last year to maintain the homes and administer the program, with \$5.8 million remaining. Since the program's creation, the federal cost has been over \$200 million, much of it coming through the Department of Housing and Urban Development.	Local officials have said they are not working to sell the homes because they do not want to hurt current housing prices. Yet some developers have noted officials have not been acting quickly enough. "How many years does it take them to do something?" asked Donald Vallee, a New Orleans developer. Built on a poor foundation, this \$200 million investment in real estate has left taxpayers with nothing but empty homes and open lots.	http://www.coburn.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?a=Files.Serve&File_id=b7b23f66-2d60-4d5a-8bc5-8522c7e1a40e
\$484,000	2011	Dept. of Housing and Urban Development	Taxpayer Funds to Build a "Mellow Mushroom" Pizza Restaurant: A private developer received nearly half a million dollars in federal funds to build Mellow Mushroom Pizza Bakers, a nationwide pizza chain, in Arlington, Texas. Reports indicate the project will cost approximately \$1.3 million, with \$484,000 in federal funding came from the Community Development Block Grant program at the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.	Our nation currently faces many challenges; a shortage of beer and pizza, however, is rarely cited as one of them.	http://www.coburn.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?a=Files.Serve&File_id=b69a6ebd-7ebe-41b7-bb03-c25a5e194365

\$206,426	FY2012	Dept. of Housing and Urban Development	California Towns Sell Federal Grants to Neighbors: Some California towns have decided to sell their portion of their annual federal Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) to get around the program's requirements. Beverly Hills, often noted for its affluence, and the city of Santa Fe Springs will sell \$206,426 of their CDBG dollars this year to other cities, in exchange for \$145,662 in general revenue. By selling the block grant for less than it is worth, states and cities free themselves of the program's requirements and collect other financial benefits.	Beverly Hills received \$180,307 in CDBG funds this year. To say the least, Americans generally do not consider the idealized Los Angeles suburb an impoverished town, and with good reason. With iconic landmarks such as Rodeo Drive and its celebrity population, Beverly Hills has one of the highest per capita median incomes in the nation, exceeding \$66,000. Yet, the city has been accumulating CDBG funds for years without spending the money and now has a balance of unspent funds near \$675,000. This black market of federal grants raises the question of whether federal funds are targeted efficiently in the first place.	http://www.coburn.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?a=Files.Serve&File_id=b7b23f66-2d60-4d5a-8bc5-8522c7e1a40e
\$3,400,000	Loan	Dept. of Housing and Urban Development	Funds to Help the Poor Used for Risky Business Loans: The city of Providence has been using part of its federal Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) to issue millions of dollars in risky loans. Now 25 percent of the program's loans, collectively worth \$3.4 million, and are delinquent. The city is actively trying to collect \$1,365,660 in delinquent loan payments from 11 local businesses.	CDBG funds are generally to be used for programs to benefit low- to moderate-income people, such as low-income housing and anti-poverty measures. Not for funding questionable businesses like "Fatty McGee's Restaurant".	http://www.coburn.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?a=Files.Serve&File_id=b7b23f66-2d60-4d5a-8bc5-8522c7e1a40e
\$750,970	2012	Dept. of Housing and Urban Development	Taxpayer Funds for Smuttynose Brewery: A New Hampshire brewery, Smuttynose, will use \$750,970 in federal funds from the Community Block Grant to construct a new brewery and restaurant on farmland outside of Portsmouth. The taxpayer money will help the brewery purchase three brew tanks and install sewer connections to its 42,000-square-foot facility.	As the federal safety net is in danger and our country faces a fiscal crisis, taxpayers do not need to be contributing to an already-successful brewing business.	http://www.coburn.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?a=Files.Serve&File_id=b7b23f66-2d60-4d5a-8bc5-8522c7e1a40e
\$505,000	Grant	Dept. of Housing and Urban Development	Pet Shampoo Company Fetches more than Half a Million Dollars: Nebraska steered \$505,000 of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds provided by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to Sergeant's Pet Care Products, Inc., which specializes in pet shampoo and toothpaste. The company spent \$500,000 for capital improvements, including machinery to manufacture the pet toothpaste and shampoo and about \$5,000 for administrative costs.	Taxpayers apparently need a real watchdog to protect against more wasteful spending on pet beauty products.	http://www.coburn.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?a=Files.Serve&File_id=b7b23f66-2d60-4d5a-8bc5-8522c7e1a40e
\$1,000,000,000	2012	Dept. of Housing and Urban Development	Suspend acquisition of federal office space: Each year the federal government spends money to acquire hundreds of thousands of feet of new office space while at the same time paying to maintain vacant office buildings.	The federal government has no need to continue acquiring additional office space while spending billions each year to maintain vacant office space.	http://www.heritage.org/research/reports/2010/10/how-to-cut-343-billion-from-the-federal-budget
\$388,000	Not Specified	Dept. of Housing and Urban Development	Building Five Bus Shelters for a Four Stop Bus Route: The city of Grants Pass, Oregon, will spend \$388,000 in federal money, \$77,600 apiece, for five bus shelters along its small, four-route bus system. Enough to build four small houses at each of the stops along the route.	With America's small towns struggling to recover from this economic downturn surely a better use of \$388,000 can be found.	http://www.coburn.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?a=Files.Serve&File_id=b7b23f66-2d60-4d5a-8bc5-8522c7e1a40e
\$1,000,000	2011	Dept. of Housing and Urban Development	Los Angeles Redirected \$1 Million in Taxpayer Funds Intended to Help the City's Homeless and Low-income Residents to a Wealthy International Architecture Firm Designing a NFL Football Stadium: The funds came from a federal Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), which the Department of Housing and Urban Development administers. Specifically, the city of Los Angeles committed \$1 million in CDBG money to facilitate the relocation of the architecture firm from Santa Monica to Los Angeles. The company, Gensler, employs approximately 2,800 people and its revenues exceeded \$460 million last year.	Funds intended to help the homeless in Los Angeles should not go to a successful multinational corporation instead.	http://www.coburn.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?a=Files.Serve&File_id=b69a6ebd-7ebe-41b7-bb03-c25a5e194365

Not Specified	1998 - 2012	Dept. of Interior	Funds for Fish Hatchery that has Never Hatched a Fish: The Bureau of Indian Affairs funded a fish hatchery that never saw a fish hatch for fourteen years, continuing funding even after the land had been converted to office space.	The fact that money could be paid out for fourteen years to a fishery that hadn't produced a single fish shows the lack of oversight and level of mismanagement and abuse of taxpayer money in this agency.	http://cnsnews.com/news/article/bureau-indian-affairs-funded-non-existent-fish-hatchery-14-years
Hundreds of millions	Not Specified	Dept. of Justice	The One Billion Dollar Courthouse: The federal government continues to move forward with a plan to construct a 600,000-square-foot federal courthouse in downtown Los Angeles, despite objections from both Democrat and Republican lawmakers and government watchdogs that the project is unneeded. The project has a long and troubled history of wasteful spending. Between fiscal years 2001 and 2005, Congress appropriated \$400 million for the project. By 2008, the new courthouse's estimated costs had ballooned to \$1.1 billion, and the project at one point was slated to feature 54 courtrooms.	In autumn 2011, the government came forth with another plan to get the project moving again, reducing its size and budget. However, despite the revisions the plan still exceeded the congressionally authorized size, overestimated the quantity of future judges, and had not even considered courtroom sharing among judges. Nevertheless, federal officials sprinted to spend their appropriated funds, issuing the new construction notice in January.	http://www.coburn.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?a=Files.Serve&File_id=b7b23f66-2d60-4d5a-8bc5-8522c7e1a40e
\$1,300,000	Annually	Dept. of Justice	Old-Fashioned X-Rays for Prisoners: In an era when x-rays have become almost entirely digitized, the Bureau of Prisons still spends about \$1.3 million every year to create hard copies of prisoner x-rays. The bureau also spends taxpayer dollars to mail the copies to different institutions when prisoners are transferred.	The bureau could cut back on waste by using digital x-rays instead of hard copies which are available for almost instantaneous analysis. Since they would be stored as computer files, the x-rays also could easily be transferred to other doctors and prisons.	http://www.coburn.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?a=Files.Serve&File_id=b7b23f66-2d60-4d5a-8bc5-8522c7e1a40e
\$500,000	Grant	Dept. of Justice	Taxpayers Pay for Courtroom Camera Too Powerful to Use: Officials in one Alabama county used federal tax dollars to purchase a surveillance system so advanced they cannot even utilize its full capabilities without violating constitutional rights. Each camera is "capable of high-resolution images and could be manipulated to zoom in on text messages or computer screens as well as conversations between attorneys and their clients." Because of the system's potential for eavesdropping, federal officials launched an investigation into its potential for trampling on citizens' right to privacy.	The multi-month investigation concluded county officials had no intent to obtain illegal audio recordings when they purchased the equipment. However, to avoid pesky constitutionality issues, the courthouse security team has decided to turn off the audio recording features of the system. A cheaper system without audio recording technology would have undoubtedly been a smarter investment and would not have infringed upon the privacy rights of courthouse patrons or our nation's right to fiscal responsibility.	http://www.coburn.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?a=Files.Serve&File_id=b7b23f66-2d60-4d5a-8bc5-8522c7e1a40e
\$20,000,000	2009	Dept. of Labor	Millionaires Receiving Millions in Unemployment Benefits: There were 2,362 people who earned a million dollars or more in taxable income in 2009 and who also received federal unemployment benefits that year, according to a report by the Congressional Research Service. In fact, these millionaires collectively raked in more than \$20 million in unemployment benefits.	Department of Labor regulations require that unemployment benefits must be paid to all unemployed workers regardless of their income. This requirement is based upon a 1964 U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) decision that precludes states from means-testing to determine UC [unemployment compensation] eligibility. This requirement should be removed. People earning more than \$1 million a year should not receive unemployment benefits.	http://cnsnews.com/news/article/2362-millionaires-got-unemployment-benefits
\$4,600,000	Not Specified	Dept. of Labor	Waste, Fraud and Abuse in the Largest Job Corps Contractor: Government investigators have identified the U.S. Department of Labor's largest Job Corps contractor, Management and Training Corporation (MTC), as a prime case of waste, fraud, and abuse. MTC has been found to be improperly awarding subcontracts to the highest bidders. Investigators scrutinized as much as \$4.6 million of questionable costs. Among its contracts, MTC operates the Paul Simon and Clearing Job Corps Centers in Chicago and Clearfield, Utah, respectively. Both centers improperly awarded about 80 percent of sub-contractor awards reviewed.	Unfortunately, every taxpayer dollar wasted by MTC is one that could be helping people train for gainful employment in the private sector.	http://www.coburn.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?a=Files.Serve&File_id=b7b23f66-2d60-4d5a-8bc5-8522c7e1a40e

\$14,000,000,000	Annually	Dept. of Labor	Government Overpaid \$14 Billion in Unemployment Benefits in 2011: The federal government and states overpaid an estimated \$14 billion in benefits in FY 2011, or roughly 11% of all the jobless benefits paid out, according to reports from the U.S. Labor Department.	With a mispayment rate of 11% any private company would have adjusted how they handle payments long ago. Better oversight and management of unemployment benefits would increase efficiency and decrease the waste of federal funds.	http://money.cnn.com/2012/07/09/news/economy/overpaid-unemployment-benefits/index.htm
Not Specified	Not Specified	Dept. of State	Duplicative Agencies to Identify Fraudulent Travel Documents: There are seven different U.S. Government entities across three federal agencies involved in providing training to officials working for foreign governments to detect fraudulent travel documents.	According to GAO, State Department officials told GAO that they were not aware of how many agencies and office were involved in providing fraudulent travel document training to foreign governments. No official mechanism or process exists for coordinating among these agencies involved with this training.	http://www.gao.gov/assets/590/588818.pdf
\$100,000	Not Specified	Dept. of State	State Department sends American Comedy Tour to India: The Department of State paid for an American comedy group to make a seven-city tour across India called "Make Chai, Not War." The full cost to taxpayers was \$100,000.	While the comedian's may have been performing their jokes in India the real joke in on the American taxpayers for paying for this trip.	http://www.coburn.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?a=Files.Serve&File_id=b7b23f66-2d60-4d5a-8bc5-8522c7e1a40e
\$770,000,000	Not Specified	Dept. of State	Over 700 million to Repair Mosques and other Religious Buildings in Foreign Countires: Part of a program to improve relations with foreign nations the U.S. State Department has spent over three quarters of a billion dollars repairing historical buildings in other countries.	The U.S. has tried to buy good relations with foreign nations using USAID and other programs however there is scant evidence these funds have done any good. At a time of burgeoning deficits and with plenty of historical buildings in the U.S. in need of repairs perhaps this money could be better spent at home.	http://www.factcheck.org/2011/03/funding-mosques-overseas/
\$25,000	Grant	Dept. of State	A \$25,000 Love Ballad: A grant totaling \$25,000 was used to transcribe a Maldivian love ballad into English.	With a federal deficit over 16 trillion spending \$25,000 to translate a Maldivian love ballad is a prime waste of federal spending. It also seems pretty expensive for a translation.	http://minivannews.com/travelandarts/us-funds-digital-preservation-of-traditional-maldivian-love-ballad-26543
\$30,000	2011	Dept. of State	New York Dance Troupe Gets Money for Trip to Indonesia: In September 2011, the U.S. Department of State awarded New York City's Battery Dance Company \$30,000 in taxpayer money to send eight members of the dance company on a weeklong trip to Indonesia. The group's activities will include performances and workshops. According to its website, the Battery Dance Company has harbored an interest in Indonesia for many years, having presented Balinese dance at its own downtown dance studio.	As exciting as a taxpayer funded trip to Indonesia for may be for the Battery Dance Company, the reason this trip was funded with federal dollars remains elusive.	http://www.coburn.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?a=Files.Serve&File_id=b69a6ebd-7ebe-41b7-bb03-c25a5e194365
\$306,000	2011	Dept. of State	U.S. Taxpayer Money Pays for European Student's Leadership Skills: Over \$300,000 in U.S. taxpayer money paid for an initiative called Summer Institutes for European Student Leaders. This funding allows high school and college students from Denmark, France, Germany, and the United Kingdom to come to the U.S. at U.S. taxpayer expense to learn about civic activism and environmental leadership at American colleges.	With a national debt of \$16 trillion perhaps this money could be better spent teaching our own students about fiscal responsibility, civic activism and leadership then students from Europe.	http://www.coburn.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?a=Files.Serve&File_id=b69a6ebd-7ebe-41b7-bb03-c25a5e194365
\$150,000	Annually	Dept. of Transportation	Oklahoma Keeps Unused Airport Open to Collect Federal Checks: The airport averages just one flight per month, has no planes based there, and is situated mere miles from two more heavily used airports.	An airport with no planes, no terminal, one runway and that only receives one flight a month is a perfect example of government waste in (in)action.	http://www.coburn.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?a=Files.Serve&File_id=b7b23f66-2d60-4d5a-8bc5-8522c7e1a40e
\$142,419	2012	Dept. of Transportation	Free Bus Rides for Super Bowl Attendees: Indianapolis received a \$142,419 grant from the U.S. Department of Transportation to offer free rides on several bus routes for four days surrounding the event, including game day. Full fare for the service typically costs \$1.75 per ride.	If they were not busy at the game, the referees may have thrown their yellow flags on this low-priority use of taxpayer money. Prices for Super Bowl tickets easily average \$3,000. Fans could have probably afforded the fare out of their own pockets.	http://www.coburn.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?a=Files.Serve&File_id=b7b23f66-2d60-4d5a-8bc5-8522c7e1a40e

\$529,689	2011	Dept. of Transportation	Extreme (rock) Home Makeover: Federal Highway Funds to Transform Abandoned "Rock House" into Visitors Center. The Talimena Scenic Drive is a 54-mile stretch of scenic highway that runs from Talihina, Oklahoma, to Mena, Arkansas. Indeed, some consider it one of the region's most beautiful landscapes, and say it offers one of the nation's most vibrant fall color tours. That may explain why the area has three federally funded visitors and interpretive centers. But even the most rabid fans of the Talimena Scenic Byway are probably at a loss why the U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) thinks the area needs a fourth visitors center, at a cost to federal taxpayers of more than half a million dollars.	Indeed, the USDOT's National Scenic Byways program has awarded the Talihina, Oklahoma Chamber of Commerce \$529,689 to convert an abandoned rock house in the community into the Talimena Scenic Drive Interpretive and Visitors Center. The total cost of upgrading and renovating the dilapidated rock house is \$652,740, more than 14 times the value of the median home in Talihina, a town of about 1,200 residents. The federal grant for a duplicative visitor center makes even less sense when one considers that the scenic Talimena Drive isn't the most the pressing transportation need in eastern Oklahoma. The regions crumbling road infrastructure makes the area 8th in the nation for its number of structurally deficient bridges.	http://www.coburn.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?a=Files.Serve&File_id=b69a6ebd-7ebe-41b7-bb03-c25a5e194365
\$1,100,000	Grant	Dept. of Transportation	Sidewalks to Nowhere: Some locals call it the "sidewalk to nowhere", a 20-block-long sidewalk intended to help kids walk to school. The sidewalk was funded with \$1.1 million from the Safe Routes to School program, but the highway along which it was built is not considered safe by many in the community. County officials targeted the area for a sidewalk believing the new path would alleviate the safety concerns and eliminate the need to bus the students. Neither goal is likely to pan out, making the project questionable from the beginning.	This is yet another example of the perils of a central bureaucracy. Decisions such as where to build a sidewalk are best left to local governments who have knowledge of, and a vested interest in the local community.	http://www.coburn.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?a=Files.Serve&File_id=b7b23f66-2d60-4d5a-8bc5-8522c7e1a40e
\$520,000	FY2012	Dept. of Transportation	Another Bridge to Nowhere: More than ten percent of the bridges in Dayton, Ohio, are deficient and as many as 13 cars drive over one of Dayton's 184 deficient bridges every second. Yet, mere miles away from the city, the federal government is spending \$520,000 to restore an unused bridge that is not even connected to a road or trail. Controversy surrounds accepting the federal money because the bridge is not on a road, is in a fairly remote area, doesn't carry vehicles anymore, and isn't tied to any park, tourist attraction or walk/bike trail. On one side of the bridge, No Trespassing signs warn people to stay away. The amount being spent to rehabilitate this unused bridge in Xenia Township, Ohio, actually exceeds the township's entire annual roads budget.	To justify receipt of the federal grant, the county's engineer who approved submitting the grant application stated, "This is money set aside in a transportation bill by senators and congressmen, and if I didn't get it, someone else would."	http://www.coburn.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?a=Files.Serve&File_id=b7b23f66-2d60-4d5a-8bc5-8522c7e1a40e
\$145,000	2012	Dept. of Transportation	Highway Funds for Bronze Sculptures: There are 78 structurally deficient bridges in Iowa, yet the state is spending thousands of dollars of federal transportation funds to pave the way for a sculpture garden rather than fixing the state's bridges. The sculpture garden will be located in the town of Waterloo, Iowa, and will be dedicated to former resident Lou Henry Hoover, the wife of 31st U.S. President Herbert Hoover.	While taxpayers certainly respect and honor America's First Ladies, federal funds for roads, highways and bridges could be better spent ensuring the safety of roads and bridges.	http://www.coburn.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?a=Files.Serve&File_id=b7b23f66-2d60-4d5a-8bc5-8522c7e1a40e

\$3,700	Grant	Dept. of Transportation	Real Money for Toy Roads: Thirty-thousand Lego pieces, paid for with a \$3,700 National Scenic Byways grant, are being assembled to build a miniature replica of a historic downtown street in Martinsburg, West Virginia. The 18-foot-long display will depict Queen Street as it likely appeared in the 1920s and '30s. It is expected to be a permanent exhibit at the Children's Museum, which will showcase George Washington's "adventures in the Eastern Panhandle" of West Virginia. The museum is primarily funded with a \$290,000 National Scenic Byways grant awarded by the Federal Highway Administration.	With 2,593 structurally deficient or functionally obsolete bridges in West Virginia, federal transportation dollars would probably be better spent on real, rather than toy roads.	http://www.coburn.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?a=Files.Serve&File_id=b7b23f66-2d60-4d5a-8bc5-8522c7e1a40e
\$800,000	2011	Dept. of Transportation	Federal Dollars for Horse-Drawn Carriage Exhibits: The Wisconsin Historical Society received \$800,000 to install exhibits in a carriage museum and a visitor center at Wade House, a historical tourist destination in Wisconsin. The Wesley Jung Carriage Museum "will bring compelling stories within the world of horse-drawn transportation to life in vignette settings, interactive exhibits and hands-on experiences."	Funding comes from the Federal Highway Administration's Transportation Enhancement program. By law, regardless of other pressing transportation needs, states must spend a certain percentage of their Surface Transportation Program (STP) funding on Transportation Enhancement activities. Even then however, those activities must relate to surface transportation. While a horse-drawn carriage museum may technically qualify as "related to surface transportation" it does little to fix the nearly one third of Wisconsin's major roads are poor or mediocre condition, according to the American Society of Civil Engineers.	http://www.coburn.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?a=Files.Serve&File_id=b69a6ebd-7ebe-41b7-bb03-c25a5e194365
\$8,300,000	2011	Dept. of Transportation	Millions Of Federal Transportation Dollars Pay for Covered Bridge Preservation Program: The National Historic Covered Bridge Preservation Program provides grants to repair or rehabilitate covered bridges each year. In FY 2011, this program received \$8.3 million in federal funding. While some covered bridges are still in use, others have been bypassed in favor of steel bridges. The covered bridges main function now is to look scenic and attract tourists, noted the Associated Press.	President Barack Obama's budget proposal for 2012 would eliminate 55 Department of Transportation programs, including the National Historic Covered Bridge Preservation Program, and merge them into five separate accounts. Most projects would still be eligible for highway funding, but would have to compete with other highway and bridge projects for funds. An economist with the Brookings Institution observes, "I love covered bridges, but I don't think it should be a federal responsibility to preserve them."	http://www.coburn.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?a=Files.Serve&File_id=b69a6ebd-7ebe-41b7-bb03-c25a5e194365
\$300,000	2011	Dept. of Transportation	Exhibit on the History of Rivers, Trails, Railroads, and Roads: Three hundred thousand dollars in federal money will pay for a new exhibit on the history of transportation at a local museum in Missouri. The display at the St. Charles County Heritage museum will explain the influence of rivers, railroads, roads, and trails in the region over the years. The grant application highlights how the county and its residents have had to rely on multiple forms of transportation and as technology changed the area had to adapt to the changing transportation methods/patterns.	With the federal deficit exceeding \$1.3 trillion this year, not everyone in the community agrees the federal government should fund this type of project. A county executive said, "It's the kind of thing the federal government can't afford to do." But he further acknowledged, "It's out there and available so we applied for it."	http://www.coburn.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?a=Files.Serve&File_id=b69a6ebd-7ebe-41b7-bb03-c25a5e194365
\$5,180,000	2011	Dept. of Transportation	Steamboat Interpretive Center: Louisiana received a \$5.2 million federal transportation grant to construct the Steamboat Overlook Interpretive Center. The facility will contain interpretive exhibits depicting the history and culture of the steamboat era. The displays will specifically show the Mississippi River's impact on the transportation, commerce, music, and the folk life and folklore of river life.	At a time when Louisiana has 3,800 deficient bridges, it is unclear why taxpayers are spending millions on a Steamboat Interpretive Center.	http://www.coburn.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?a=Files.Serve&File_id=b69a6ebd-7ebe-41b7-bb03-c25a5e194365

\$221,540	2011	Dept. of Veterans Affairs	Wasteful VA Conference: In January 2011, fifty employees from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs attended an eleven day conference at a resort in Scottsdale, Arizona. The final cost exceeded \$221,000. The tab for taxpayers: \$90,540 for travel, \$30,000 for hotel accommodations, \$4,000 for audiovisual, and \$97,000 for the contractor in charge of the meeting. The total cost was \$221,540.	With the availability of teleconferencing, conferences are, in large part, no longer necessary.	http://www.coburn.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?a=Files.Serve&File_id=b69a6ebd-7ebe-41b7-bb03-c25a5e194365
\$141,450	Grant	Environment	Studying Pig Poop: The Environmental Protection Agency awarded a \$141,450 grant under the Clean Air Act to fund a Chinese study on swine manure.	Its bad enough that we are funding studies on pig poop, but does it also have to be Chinese study?	http://blog.heritage.org/2012/10/16/top-10-examples-of-wasteful-federal-spending-in-2012/
\$1,000,000	FY2012	Environmental Protection Agency	\$1,000,000 for an EPA Geographic Program on Lake Champlain: Since FY 2001, there have been 11 earmarks worth a total of \$5.8 million for projects on Lake Champlain, including a \$650,000 trail construction project.	Because Lake Champlain falls within Adirondack Park which is a state-level protected area and not a national park funds for Lake Champlain should come from the State of New York and not from the Federal Government.	http://www.cagw.org/reports/pig-book/2012/2012-pig-book.pdf
\$75,400,000	2008	FEMA	FEMA Replacing Buildings that only need Repairs: The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) asserted this year two buildings on the University of Iowa (UI) campus should be replaced after damage from the 2008 flood of the Iowa River. However, an investigation by the agency's Office of Inspector General (IG) concluded the agency made a faulty decision and could save taxpayers \$75.4 million by taking back the money it gave toward the buildings' replacement and instead focusing efforts on rehabilitating the existing buildings.	Not only did officials inaccurately estimate the cost of replacement, the cost of repair was inflated by including projects that agency guidelines excludes from estimates. For example, upgrades to meet newer building codes do not qualify as repairs. The IG concluded FEMA should reverse its decision to replace the two buildings and instead award funds to repair them. This action would save taxpayers \$75.4 million.	http://www.coburn.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?a=Files.Serve&File_id=b7b23f66-2d60-4d5a-8bc5-8522c7e1a40e
\$4,800,000,000	FY2011	General Government	Duplicative Computer Systems: The Department of Defense made 2,383 information technology investments and the Department of Energy made 876 information technology investments in FY2011 for a total cost of \$79 billion. Taking a sample of 810 recent IT investments GAO found 37, or 4.56% of the sample to be duplicative, costing an estimated \$1.2 billion in unnecessary spending or around \$4.8 billion in total waste.	\$4.8 billion worth of duplicative computer systems is a waste of taxpayer money and should be streamlined.	http://www.gao.gov/assets/590/588818.pdf
\$2,000,000	Annually	General Government	Tax Dollars for Phantom Grants: The government pays as much as \$2 million annually in monthly services fees to maintain about 28,000 phantom grant accounts that are empty and have expired.	Grant accounts that have expired and run out of undisbursed funds should be closed to avoid account maintenance costs, and this would save taxpayer dollars.	http://www.coburn.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?a=Files.Serve&File_id=b7b23f66-2d60-4d5a-8bc5-8522c7e1a40e
At Least \$1 billion	Annually	General Government	Government Wide Missed Saving Opportunity: The stewards of taxpayers' dollars in Washington are not being very thrifty. In fact, they are ignoring a policy directing them to do so, which may be needlessly costing taxpayers as much as \$50 billion a year in over payments. Every year, the federal government spends over \$537 billion on products and services. With such massive purchasing power, agencies could use group orders to secure the best deals. In 2005, the Office of Management and Budget created the Federal Strategic Sourcing Initiative to leverage orders from multiple agencies to achieve such savings. Yet, agencies rarely use this program, according to an analysis by the Government Accountability Office (GAO). As a result, agencies are missing opportunities for big savings, overpaying at least \$1 billion and as much as \$50 billion annually.	If the federal government expanded its use of the strategy, GAO concluded taxpayers could easily see savings of \$1 billion every year. Ten percent savings on all federal procurement – in line with private sector practices – would be over \$50 billion annually.	http://www.coburn.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?a=Files.Serve&File_id=b7b23f66-2d60-4d5a-8bc5-8522c7e1a40e

\$12,500,000,000	2012	General Government	Halve the \$25 Billion Spent to Maintain Vacant Federal Properties: The government should not pay \$50 billion dollars to maintain vacant properties while at the same time paying to acquire new properties.	If there's no agency currently occupying the properties, they should either be sold or leased to recover expenses or otherwise trimmed down because \$25 billion is a lot to waste on empty rooms.	http://www.cbo.gov/sites/default/files/cbofiles/ftpdocs/120xx/doc12085/03-10-reducingthedeficit.pdf
Millions of dollars	2012	General Government	Green Building Programs: There are 94 federal initiatives to encourage green building: in the private sector, run by 11 different federal agencies. According to GAO, all of the programs essentially address the same issue, and in largely the same way: encouraging private builders to adopt "green" standards. GAO requested funding information for all 94 initiatives, but the agencies did not provide it and so GAO was unable to report the amount spent in 2011.	Not only are these programs inefficient, duplicative and unnecessary but furthermore, two-thirds of all the programs were unable to provide a single goal or performance measure related to green building.	http://www.gao.gov/assets/590/588818.pdf
\$180,000	FY2012	General Government	Taxpayers are Funding Official Portraits of Cabinet Secretaries and Other Top Appointees: The Environmental Protection Agency spent nearly \$40,000 on a portrait of Administrator Lisa P. Jackson and a painting of Air Force Secretary Michael B. Donley will cost \$41,200, according to federal purchasing records. The price tag for a 3-by-4-foot oil portrait of Agriculture Department Secretary Thomas J. Vilsack: \$22,500. All told, the government has paid out at least \$180,000 for official portraits since last year, according to a review by The Washington Times of spending records at federal agencies and military offices across government.	While painting official portraits of Presidents, Supreme Court Justices and top ranking Senators and Congressman makes sense, the lower you move down the food chain the less understandable it becomes. The government should not be spending tens of thousands of dollars for oil paintings of Cabinet Secretaries often placed outside the public's view. As David Williams, president of the Taxpayers Protection Alliance puts it, "It's not like people are going to be lining up for an exhibit, 'HUD Secretaries Through the Years,'".	http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2012/nov/11/picture-this-cabinet-portraits-for-big-bucks/?page=2
Not Specified	Not specified	General Government	Duplicative Housing Assistance: There are over 160 duplicative housing assistance programs costing \$170 billion a year. Since the 1930s, the federal government has been involved in supporting affordable housing through the establishment of the Federal Housing Administration (FHA), Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac. However, without proper oversight the federal government's involvement has ballooned into a puzzle of 160 overlapping and duplicative programs, administered through 20 agencies, all intended to encourage homeownership and provide affordable rental housing for low-income families.	While some housing assistance programs are necessary, 180 programs spread across 20 agencies are not. This web of programs can create service gaps, additional costs, and the potential for duplication. These programs should be examined and restructured to reduce duplication of services and to streamline housing programs.	http://www.gao.gov/assets/590/588818.pdf
Tens of billions	2012 - 2016	General Government	Reducing Medicare Payment Errors and Earned Income Tax Credit Errors will Save Tens of Billions of Dollars: Tightening oversight by updating computer systems will help fight errors and fraud and save billions of dollars each year.	We should make the investments necessary to make government programs (IRS, Medicare) run more efficiently. Spending a relatively small amount to update aging computer systems will save billions of dollars in the long run.	http://www.heritage.org/research/reports/2010/10/how-to-cut-343-billion-from-the-federal-budget
Not Specified	Not Specified	General Government	Duplicative Financial Literacy Programs: The GAO found 15 separate financial literacy programs are currently being operated by 13 different federal agencies. However, a 2011 survey conducted by the Departments of Treasury and Education found 56 financial literacy programs operated by 20 different federal agencies costing \$30.7 million per year. Not only are many of these programs duplicative, but different Departments can't even agree on how many programs there are.	Congress should review federal financial literacy programs and require federal agencies to evaluate programs' effectiveness, and identify operations for streamlining or eliminating duplicative programs.	http://www.coburn.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/richtnow?ContentRecord_id=a67daab3-c1ca-4f67-ad6e-8c13f97b91bd&ContentType_id=b4672ca4-3752-49c3-bffc-fd099b51c966&Group_id=00380921-999d-40f6-a8e3-470468762340
\$1,900,000.00	Not Specified	General Government	Hundreds of DC City Workers Took Nearly \$2 Million in Fraudulent Unemployment Benefits: Lisa Mallory, the director of the D.C. Department of Employment Services, told the D.C. Council that her agency had detected \$1.9 million in overpayments to District workers who collected unemployment benefits while on the city's payroll.	A case involving hundreds of government workers illegally collecting unemployment benefits while on the city's payroll shows a frightening lack of oversight within the DC city government as well as a culture of fraud and abuse of taxpayer funds. More oversight is needed to ensure this type of abuse doesn't happen again.	http://washingtonexaminer.com/d.c.-says-more-than-300-city-workers-involved-in-unemployment-scandal/article/2513901

\$8,000,000	Annually	Government Printing Office	Reduce Excess Printing of the Congressional Record: Every day, the Government Printing Office prints thousands of new pages of the Congressional Record, a publication that lists every word uttered in congressional sessions; information that is also available online. Cutting down on the number of copies printed to only those needed for archival purposes would save an estimated \$8 million a year, and many, many trees.	This example of waste could be ended to simultaneously help the environment and cut costs. The Government Printing Office prints the Congressional Record, but could save money by only printing what is necessary for archiving and then distributing the rest online.	http://www.usnews.com/news/articles/2011/05/26/eight-easy-ways-to-cut-government-spending?page=2
\$1,000,000	2008 - 2012	GSA	Bonuses for Employees Being Investigated for Misconduct: Since 2008 the GSA has given more than \$1 million in bonuses to employees being investigated for misconduct.	\$1 million in bonuses were paid out to GSA executives, many of whom were being investigated for poor conduct. This is a waste of taxpayer dollars and it highlights the lack of government accountability.	http://www.wusa9.com/news/local/story.aspx?storyid=207417
\$100,000	2010	GSA	Conference for GSA Interns in Palm Springs: The GSA sent 120 interns to a five-day conference in Palm Springs to the tune of at least \$100,000 and the entire conference was one big lavish expenditure for which taxpayers had to pay.	Interns in congressional offices often work out of small storage areas or spaces cleared out of a closet - they do not get sent to resorts and spas for a week on the taxpayers' dime. This conference is yet another example of the GSA's wasteful spending habits and lack of oversight.	http://news.yahoo.com/gsa-interns-treated-conference-resort-204621623.html
\$823,000	2010	GSA	GSA wastes \$800,000 on Las Vegas Conference: The GSA spent \$823,000 on a Las Vegas conference widely considered to be a waste of taxpayer funds that included such items as: \$6,325 for commemorative coins, \$75,000 for bicycles and \$3,200 for a session with a mind reader.	This conference is yet another example of the GSA's wasteful spending habits and disregard for the taxpayers' money.	http://newsfeed.time.com/2012/04/18/gsa-scandal-so-what-does-823000-buy-you-in-las-vegas/
\$24,000,000	2012	GSA	Government Funds to Buy Typewriters and Other Outdated Products: For years, the General Services Administration (GSA) has been awarding contracts to thousands of companies for outdated products like typewriters, photographic equipment, and commemorative items, even though most of the contracts produce little or no sales. The agency has not taken the time to determine which contracts it should no longer maintain.	GSA is now planning to eliminate contracts for unused products and hopes directing scarce acquisition resources away from the more than 8,000 obsolete contracts – which each cost at least \$3,000 per year to administer – will streamline the schedule process and save more than \$24 million a year.	http://www.coburn.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?a=Files.Serve&File_id=b7b23f66-2d60-4d5a-8bc5-8522c7e1a40e
\$1,500,000,000	Annually	Independent Agency	Cell Phone Fraud: The Federal Communications Commission (FCC), has been expanding a program to provide reduced-price cell phone service to some lower income Americans and the costs are ballooning out of control. What began as an effort in the 1930s to ensure that all Americans had access to telecommunications service has morphed into a new massive entitlement. Funding comes from the “universal service charge” tacked on to the phone bills of most Americans. As more people sign up for the subsidized phones, the charge increases, and for some cell phone users amounts to over \$10 per year.	Since 2007, the total cost of the program has increased twenty-fold. That alone should be reason enough to review the program.	http://www.coburn.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?a=Files.Serve&File_id=b7b23f66-2d60-4d5a-8bc5-8522c7e1a40e
\$1,000,000	Grant	Independent Agency	Book Club Funding Goes to Ghost Tours, Fishing Lessons, and Movie Screenings: The National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) has allocated \$1 million to organizations throughout the country to “read, discuss, and celebrate books from a selection of U.S. and world literature.” Grant recipients, however, often spend the money on projects that have little to do with reading, such as on costume parties, stage performances and ghost tours.	As fun as these types of “readings” and book clubs may be, they certainly do not need taxpayer support, especially when the money goes to a plethora of activities questionably related to actual reading.	http://www.coburn.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?a=Files.Serve&File_id=b7b23f66-2d60-4d5a-8bc5-8522c7e1a40e

\$2,000,000	Annually	Independent Agency	Eliminate the Japan-United States Friendship Commission (JUSFC): The JUSFC is an independent federal agency established to strengthen the US-Japan relationship through educational, cultural, and intellectual exchange. Its mission is to support reciprocal people-to-people understanding, and promote partnerships that advance common interests between Japan and the United States.	The commission was created to foster cooperation between Japan and the US following WWII, but considering that we are now linked in economic trade and relations are strong, do we need to continue funding the Japan-United States Friendship Commission?	http://www.heritage.org/research/reports/2010/10/how-to-cut-343-billion-from-the-federal-budget
\$113,277	2011	Institute of Museum and Library Services	Video game museum: The International Center for the History of Electronic Games (ICHEG) received over \$100,000 in federal funds for video game preservation. According to the organization's website, it collects, studies, and interprets video games, other electronic games, and related materials and the ways in which electronic games are changing how people play, learn, and connect with each other, including across boundaries of culture and geography	The video game industry is worth tens of billions of dollars. There is no need for a taxpayer subsidy for this initiative.	http://www.coburn.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?a=Files.Serve&File_id=b69a6ebd-7ebe-41b7-bb03-c25a5e194365
\$1,000,000,000	Not Specified	IRS	IRS Issues more than \$1 Billion in Bogus Refund Payments: By better utilizing available third-party data the IRS could identify and precept more than one billion dollars in potentially erroneous refunds.	Effective use of data from employers would save the approximate \$1 billion in tax refunds that are wrongly sent out to individuals. A centralized data log would allow for effective transitioning from data collection to processing the data.	http://www.treasury.gov/tigta/auditreports/2010reports/201040062fr.pdf
\$4,200,000,000	Annually	IRS	End Illegal Immigrants' Collection of Child Tax Credits: Require taxpayers to provide a valid Social Security number instead of an Individual Tax Identification Number in order to be eligible for child tax credits.	Illegal immigrants have been getting billions of dollars in tax refunds through the "Refundable Child Tax Credit" by claiming large numbers of children as dependents, including many children who live in other countries. One case in Indiana showed five illegal immigrants filed tax returns using a single false address to claim 20 children as dependents, even though none of the 20 children listed on the tax returns lived in the United States. As a result, the IRS sent more than \$29,000 in tax dollars to these individuals. I have cosponsored H.R. 1956 "The Refundable Child Tax Credit Eligibility Verification Reform Act" which would stop illegal immigrants from collecting this type of tax credit. ☐	http://www.treasury.gov/tigta/auditreports/2011reports/201141061fr.html
\$1,030,000,000	FY2009	IRS	Federal Employees with unpaid Federal Income Taxes: IRS data that shows nearly 100,000 federal civilian employees owed \$1.03 billion in unpaid federal income taxes in 2009. That number has remained fairly constant since 2004, but the amount owed has increased nearly 70 percent, from \$599.8 million, according to the agency.	The House passed H.R. 828 which would make any person with seriously delinquent tax debt ineligible for federal employment or to continue serving as a federal employee. The Senate should work to pass this important piece of legislation to help the government collect unpaid income taxes.	http://www.foxnews.com/politics/2012/07/31/chaffetz-wants-to-fire-tax-dodging-federal-employees/#ixzz23SNFuE4A
\$3,900,000,000	Annually	IRS	Identity Thieves Bilking the IRS out of Billions: This year, identity thieves will collect an estimated \$3.9 billion in tax refunds on fraudulent returns they will file using stolen Social Security numbers (SSN). The Treasury Inspector General for Tax Administration (TIGTA) released an investigation this year outlining what the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) needs to do to prevent rampant tax fraud. Over five years, taxpayers could lose more than \$20 billion to crooks. These losses are largely preventable with better anti-fraud measures.	Though the agency has developed a number of fraud filters, they need to be tightened. A test of the filters allowed most potentially fraudulent returns through the system. Congress could allow the IRS greater access to the federal database that tracks employment and wages to help the agency detect false documents and returns. With the explosion of identity fraud in the last few years, the IRS needs to move as fast as possible to end such widespread looting of honest taxpayers.	http://www.coburn.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?a=Files.Serve&File_id=b7b23f66-2d60-4d5a-8bc5-8522c7e1a40e
\$862,000	Not Specified	IRS	IRS Storing Excess Furniture Indefinitely: The Internal Revenue Service stores a total of 22,486 items of unused furniture in a warehouse at an annual cost of \$862,000	Why is the IRS storing so much unused furniture and why does it cost so much? Surely they can find a warehouse that doesn't cost nearly a million dollars a year to maintain or organize the world's largest yard sale.	http://thf_media.s3.amazonaws.com/2012/pdf/SR121.pdf

\$35,380,000	Quadrennial	Misc. Elections	Presidential Election Campaign Fund: \$35.38 million of taxpayer money will be used to pay for stages, food, alcohol, balloons and confetti for the Democratic and Republican National Conventions in 2012.	The Democratic and Republican Parties are not federal agencies and should not receive tax payer funds to pay for their events.	http://www.coburn.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?a=Files.Serve&File_id=b69a6ebd-7ebe-41b7-bb03-c25a5e194365
\$150,000,000	Gov. Loan	Misc. Energy	Compact Power Inc.: Built with \$150,000,000 in taxpayer funds to produce Volt batteries. President Obama touted it in 2010 as evidence "manufacturing jobs are coming back to the United States," but two years later, the Michigan hybrid battery plant built with \$150 million in taxpayer funds is putting workers on furlough before a single battery has been produced.	The government's picking winners and losers in the energy market has cost taxpayers billions of dollars. The rate of failure, cronyism, and corruption at the companies receiving the subsidies is substantial. The problem begins with the issue of government picking winners and losers in the first place. Venture capitalist firms exist for this very reason, and they choose what to invest in by looking at companies' business models and deciding if they are worthy. When the government plays venture capitalist, it tends to reward companies that are connected to the policymakers themselves or because it sounds nice to "invest" in green energy.	http://www.foxnews.com/us/2012/10/08/lg-plant-that-got-150m-to-make-volt-batteries-in-michigan-puts-workers-on/#ixzz28pd0CHDL
\$70,000,000	Gov. Loan	Misc. Energy	Abound Solar: Abound Solar was given a \$400 million loan guarantee by the Energy Department, and drew on about \$70 million dollars of the guarantee before the company filed for bankruptcy.	The government's picking winners and losers in the energy market has cost taxpayers billions of dollars. The rate of failure, cronyism, and corruption at the companies receiving the subsidies is substantial. The problem begins with the issue of government picking winners and losers in the first place. Venture capitalist firms exist for this very reason, and they choose what to invest in by looking at companies' business models and deciding if they are worthy. When the government plays venture capitalist, it tends to reward companies that are connected to the policymakers themselves or because it sounds nice to "invest" in green energy.	http://reason.com/24-7/2012/10/02/bankrupt-solar-company-struggled-with-fa
\$43,000,000	Gov Loan	Misc. Energy	Beacon Power: Energy storage company Beacon Power went bankrupt in 2011 after receiving a \$43 million loan guarantee to help build an energy storage plant in Stephentown, N.Y	The government's picking winners and losers in the energy market has cost taxpayers billions of dollars. The rate of failure, cronyism, and corruption at the companies receiving the subsidies is substantial. The problem begins with the issue of government picking winners and losers in the first place. Venture capitalist firms exist for this very reason, and they choose what to invest in by looking at companies' business models and deciding if they are worthy. When the government plays venture capitalist, it tends to reward companies that are connected to the policymakers themselves or because it sounds nice to "invest" in green energy.	http://www.politico.com/news/stories/1012/82031.html#ixzz28popGop1

\$118,000,000	Gov. Loan	Misc. Energy	Ener1: The parent company of an electric car battery maker which received a \$118 million grant from the Obama administration has filed for bankruptcy protection.	The government's picking winners and losers in the energy market has cost taxpayers billions of dollars. The rate of failure, cronyism, and corruption at the companies receiving the subsidies is substantial. The problem begins with the issue of government picking winners and losers in the first place. Venture capitalist firms exist for this very reason, and they choose what to invest in by looking at companies' business models and deciding if they are worthy. When the government plays venture capitalist, it tends to reward companies that are connected to the policymakers themselves or because it sounds nice to "invest" in green energy.	http://abcnews.go.com/Blotter/ener1-parent-obama-backed-green-company-files-bankruptcy/story?id=15456414
\$424,000	Gov. Loan	Misc. Energy	Mountain Plaza Inc.: The company which declared bankruptcy in June 2010, received \$424,000 as part of a \$2 million stimulus grant from the Environmental Protection Agency to install "truck stop electrification" systems.	The government's picking winners and losers in the energy market has cost taxpayers billions of dollars. The rate of failure, cronyism, and corruption at the companies receiving the subsidies is substantial. The problem begins with the issue of government picking winners and losers in the first place. Venture capitalist firms exist for this very reason, and they choose what to invest in by looking at companies' business models and deciding if they are worthy. When the government plays venture capitalist, it tends to reward companies that are connected to the policymakers themselves or because it sounds nice to "invest" in green energy.	http://www.foxnews.com/politics/2011/09/15/despite-stimulus-funding-solyndra-and-4-other-companies-have-hit-rock-bottom/
\$10,000,000	Gov. Loan	Misc. Energy	Olsen's Crop Service and Olsens Mill Acquisition Co.: Olsen's Mills failed despite receiving \$10 million as part of a \$64 million package for economic development loan assistance to increase employment, add equipment and machinery refinance existing debts and work capital for operations and acquiring land.	The government's picking winners and losers in the energy market has cost taxpayers billions of dollars. The rate of failure, cronyism, and corruption at the companies receiving the subsidies is substantial. The problem begins with the issue of government picking winners and losers in the first place. Venture capitalist firms exist for this very reason, and they choose what to invest in by looking at companies' business models and deciding if they are worthy. When the government plays venture capitalist, it tends to reward companies that are connected to the policymakers themselves or because it sounds nice to "invest" in green energy.	http://www.foxnews.com/politics/2011/09/15/despite-stimulus-funding-solyndra-and-4-other-companies-have-hit-rock-bottom/
\$156,000,000	Gov. Loan	Misc. Energy	Range Fuels: A cellulosic ethanol company backed by as much as \$156 million in U.S. loans and grants from the Department of Agriculture was forced to liquidate after failing to convert woodchips into ethanol	The government's picking winners and losers in the energy market has cost taxpayers billions of dollars. The rate of failure, cronyism, and corruption at the companies receiving the subsidies is substantial. The problem begins with the issue of government picking winners and losers in the first place. Venture capitalist firms exist for this very reason, and they choose what to invest in by looking at companies' business models and deciding if they are worthy. When the government plays venture capitalist, it tends to reward companies that are connected to the policymakers themselves or because it sounds nice to "invest" in green energy	http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2011-12-02/range-fuels-cellulosic-ethanol-plant-fails-as-u-s-pulls-plug.html

\$535,000,000	Gov. Loan	Misc. Energy	Solyndra: Solyndra LLC, a solar-panel maker received a \$535 million U.S. Energy Department Loan guarantee before going bankrupt.	The government's picking winners and losers in the energy market has cost taxpayers billions of dollars. The rate of failure, cronyism, and corruption at the companies receiving the subsidies is substantial. The problem begins with the issue of government picking winners and losers in the first place. Venture capitalist firms exist for this very reason, and they choose what to invest in by looking at companies' business models and deciding if they are worthy. When the government plays venture capitalist, it tends to reward companies that are connected to the policymakers themselves or because it sounds nice to "invest" in green energy	http://www.nbcbayarea.com/news/local/Solyndra-Shutting-Down-128802718.html
\$500,000	Gov. Loan	Misc. Energy	Spectrawatt: In June 2009, SpectraWatt received a \$500,000 grant from the National Renewable Energy Laboratory as part of the stimulus package. The company filed for bankruptcy in August 2011, saying it could not compete with its Chinese competitors, which receive "considerable government and financial support".	The government's picking winners and losers in the energy market has cost taxpayers billions of dollars. The rate of failure, cronyism, and corruption at the companies receiving the subsidies is substantial. The problem begins with the issue of government picking winners and losers in the first place. Venture capitalist firms exist for this very reason, and they choose what to invest in by looking at companies' business models and deciding if they are worthy. When the government plays venture capitalist, it tends to reward companies that are connected to the policymakers themselves or because it sounds nice to "invest" in green energy	http://www.foxnews.com/politics/2011/09/15/despite-stimulus-funding-solyndra-and-4-other-companies-have-hit-rock-bottom/
\$6,500,000	Gov. Loan	Misc. Energy	Thompson River Power LLC: Received a \$6.5 million grant from the federal government as part of the "stimulus" before declaring bankruptcy.	The government's picking winners and losers in the energy market has cost taxpayers billions of dollars. The rate of failure, cronyism, and corruption at the companies receiving the subsidies is substantial. The problem begins with the issue of government picking winners and losers in the first place. Venture capitalist firms exist for this very reason, and they choose what to invest in by looking at companies' business models and deciding if they are worthy. When the government plays venture capitalist, it tends to reward companies that are connected to the policymakers themselves or because it sounds nice to "invest" in green energy.	http://missoulanews.bigskypress.com/missoula/green-energy/Content?oid=1669000
\$249,100,000	Gov. Loan	Misc. Energy	A123 Systems: Received a \$249.1 million grant in 2009 from the Obama administration. The company is now set to be acquired by a Chinese auto supplier.	The government's picking winners and losers in the energy market has cost taxpayers billions of dollars. The rate of failure, cronyism, and corruption at the companies receiving the subsidies is substantial. The problem begins with the issue of government picking winners and losers in the first place. Venture capitalist firms exist for this very reason, and they choose what to invest in by looking at companies' business models and deciding if they are worthy. When the government plays venture capitalist, it tends to reward companies that are connected to the policymakers themselves or because it sounds nice to "invest" in green energy.	http://www.delawareonline.com/article/20121008/BUSINESS09/310090001/Chinese-firm-set-acquire-U-S-funded-battery-maker-A123?odyssey=mod%7Cnewswell%7Ctext%7CHome%7Cs

\$5,300,000	Gov. Loan	Misc. Energy	Evergreen Solar Inc.: The company which received \$5.3 million in stimulus cash has filed for bankruptcy. It reports it couldn't compete with Chinese rivals without reorganizing. The company intends to building up its manufacturing facility in China.	The government's picking winners and losers in the energy market has cost taxpayers billions of dollars. The rate of failure, cronyism, and corruption at the companies receiving the subsidies is substantial. The problem begins with the issue of government picking winners and losers in the first place. Venture capitalist firms exist for this very reason, and they choose what to invest in by looking at companies' business models and deciding if they are worthy. When the government plays venture capitalist, it tends to reward companies that are connected to the policymakers themselves or because it sounds nice to "invest" in green energy.	http://www.foxnews.com/politics/2011/09/15/despite-stimulus-funding-solyndra-and-4-other-companies-have-hit-rock-bottom/
\$98,500,000	Gov. Loan	Misc. Energy	Nevada Geothermal Power Inc: The renewable-energy developer that received a U.S. loan guarantee may transfer ownership of a Nevada power plant to a lender after projecting the facility will produce less power than expected.	The government's picking winners and losers in the energy market has cost taxpayers billions of dollars. The rate of failure, cronyism, and corruption at the companies receiving the subsidies is substantial. The problem begins with the issue of government picking winners and losers in the first place. Venture capitalist firms exist for this very reason, and they choose what to invest in by looking at companies' business models and deciding if they are worthy. When the government plays venture capitalist, it tends to reward companies that are connected to the policymakers themselves or because it sounds nice to "invest" in green energy.	http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2012-09-25/nevada-geothermal-may-transfer-declining-power-plant-to-lender.html
\$1,200,000,000	Gov. Loan	Misc. Energy	SunPower Corp.: The company said it will idle some solar cell production lines in the Philippines and cut about 900 jobs, or 17 percent of its global workforce, as overcapacity continues to cast a shadow on solar equipment makers. SunPower posted \$150 million in losses during the first half of this year and its debt is nearly 80 percent of its market value. The company is also facing class action lawsuits for misstating its earnings.	The government's picking winners and losers in the energy market has cost taxpayers billions of dollars. The rate of failure, cronyism, and corruption at the companies receiving the subsidies is substantial. The problem begins with the issue of government picking winners and losers in the first place. Venture capitalist firms exist for this very reason, and they choose what to invest in by looking at companies' business models and deciding if they are worthy. When the government plays venture capitalist, it tends to reward companies that are connected to the policymakers themselves or because it sounds nice to "invest" in green energy.	http://www.foxnews.com/politics/2011/10/12/solar-firm-that-received-12-billion-federal-loan-plagued-by-financial-problems-702546811/
\$1,460,000,000	Gov. Loan	Misc. Energy	First Solar: A solar energy company that received a \$1.46 billion loan guarantee from the Department of Energy recently announced that it will lay off 2,000 workers in the United States and world-wide. These actions, combined with other personnel reductions in Europe and the U.S., will reduce First Solar's global workforce by approximately 2,000 positions, about 30 percent of the total.	The government's picking winners and losers in the energy market has cost taxpayers billions of dollars. The rate of failure, cronyism, and corruption at the companies receiving the subsidies is substantial. The problem begins with the issue of government picking winners and losers in the first place. Venture capitalist firms exist for this very reason, and they choose what to invest in by looking at companies' business models and deciding if they are worthy. When the government plays venture capitalist, it tends to reward companies that are connected to the policymakers themselves or because it sounds nice to "invest" in green energy.	http://washingtonexaminer.com/article/1234901

\$5,900,000	Gov. Loan	Misc. Energy	Amonix Inc.: Just seven months after California-based solar power company Amonix Inc. opened its largest manufacturing plant in North Las Vegas, the company's contractor has laid off nearly two-thirds of its workforce.	The government's picking winners and losers in the energy market has cost taxpayers billions of dollars. The rate of failure, cronyism, and corruption at the companies receiving the subsidies is substantial. The problem begins with the issue of government picking winners and losers in the first place. Venture capitalist firms exist for this very reason, and they choose what to invest in by looking at companies' business models and deciding if they are worthy. When the government plays venture capitalist, it tends to reward companies that are connected to the policymakers themselves or because it sounds nice to "invest" in green energy.	http://www.lasvegassun.com/news/2012/jan/25/some-200-laid-north-las-vegas-amonix-solar-plant/
\$126,200,000	Gov. Loan	Misc. Energy	Ecotality: A company awarded \$126,200,000 in stimulus funds from the U. S. Department of Energy is under investigation for insider trading according to a federal subpoena obtained by CBS News. As part of the grant, the company is supposed to install 14,000 electric car chargers in five states. As of April of 2012, the company says they have installed 6,400, less than half. Electric cars are not rolling off production lines at the expected rate and sales have not been as strong as hoped.	The government's picking winners and losers in the energy market has cost taxpayers billions of dollars. The rate of failure, cronyism, and corruption at the companies receiving the subsidies is substantial. The problem begins with the issue of government picking winners and losers in the first place. Venture capitalist firms exist for this very reason, and they choose what to invest in by looking at companies' business models and deciding if they are worthy. When the government plays venture capitalist, it tends to reward companies that are connected to the policymakers themselves or because it sounds nice to "invest" in green energy.	http://www.cbsnews.com/8301-31727_162-57402463-10391695/stimulus-recipient-under-investigation-for-insider-trading/
\$33,000,000	Gov. Loan	Misc. Energy	Raser Technologies: a Utah company, filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection this year after burning through hundreds of millions of investor financing and a \$33 million Treasury Department grant that was awarded to the company in 2010.	The government's picking winners and losers in the energy market has cost taxpayers billions of dollars. The rate of failure, cronyism, and corruption at the companies receiving the subsidies is substantial. The problem begins with the issue of government picking winners and losers in the first place. Venture capitalist firms exist for this very reason, and they choose what to invest in by looking at companies' business models and deciding if they are worthy. When the government plays venture capitalist, it tends to reward companies that are connected to the policymakers themselves or because it sounds nice to "invest" in green energy.	http://usatoday30.usatoday.com/news/washington/story/2011-10-05/profits-elude-clean-energy-companies/50674030/1
\$13,300,000	Gov. Loan	Misc. Energy	Energy Conversion Devices: A solar-laminate supplier received a \$13.3 million stimulus tax credit in January 2010 to update its factory in Auburn Hills, Mich., and to hire some 600 people. ECD pleaded Chapter 11 bankruptcy on Valentine's Day 2012.	The government's picking winners and losers in the energy market has cost taxpayers billions of dollars. The rate of failure, cronyism, and corruption at the companies receiving the subsidies is substantial. The problem begins with the issue of government picking winners and losers in the first place. Venture capitalist firms exist for this very reason, and they choose what to invest in by looking at companies' business models and deciding if they are worthy. When the government plays venture capitalist, it tends to reward companies that are connected to the policymakers themselves or because it sounds nice to "invest" in green energy.	http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/02/14/energyconversion-idUSL2E8DE5M220120214

\$5,400,000	Gov. Loan	Misc. Energy	Azure Dynamics: A Detroit company that converted Ford commercial vans into hybrids and electric vehicles, has filed for bankruptcy protection in Canada.	The government's picking winners and losers in the energy market has cost taxpayers billions of dollars. The rate of failure, cronyism, and corruption at the companies receiving the subsidies is substantial. The problem begins with the issue of government picking winners and losers in the first place. Venture capitalist firms exist for this very reason, and they choose what to invest in by looking at companies' business models and deciding if they are worthy. When the government plays venture capitalist, it tends to reward companies that are connected to the policymakers themselves or because it sounds nice to "invest" in green energy.	http://www.prnewswire.com/news-releases/azure-dynamics-wins-doe-award-to-develop-next-generation-traction-inverter-127521153.html
\$500,000	Gov. Loan	Misc. Energy	GreenVolts Inc: is the latest heavily venture-financed solar company to go up for a fire sale. Investors, who had contributed about \$120 million of equity to the company, pulled the plug last month, deciding to not continue their support because of increasingly difficult market conditions, leading GreenVolts to lay off all of its 80-some employees and leave taxpayer holding the bill for a half a million dollar loan.	The government's picking winners and losers in the energy market has costs taxpayers billions of dollars and the rate of failure, cronyism, and corruption at the companies receiving the subsidies is substantial. The problem begins with the issue of government picking winners and losers in the first place. Venture capitalist firms exist for this very reason, and they choose what to invest in by looking at companies' business models and deciding if they are worthy. When the government plays venture capitalist, it tends to reward companies that are connected to the policymakers themselves or because it sounds nice to "invest" in green energy.	http://pevc.dowjones.com/Article?an=DJFVW00020121008e8a8au344&cid=32135029&ctype=ts&ReturnUrl=http%3a%2f%2fpevc.dowjones.com%3a80%2fArticle%3fan%3dDJFVW00020121008e8a8au344%26cid%3d32135029%26ctype%3dts
\$16,000,000	Gov. Loan	Misc. Energy	Nordic Windpower USA Inc.: filed for Chapter 7 liquidation Oct. 8 in U.S. Bankruptcy Court in Kansas City, listing 130 creditors who are owed a total of \$10 million to \$50 million. Nordic listed assets of \$500,000 to \$1 million.	The government's picking winners and losers in the energy market has cost taxpayers billions of dollars. The rate of failure, cronyism, and corruption at the companies receiving the subsidies is substantial. The problem begins with the issue of government picking winners and losers in the first place. Venture capitalist firms exist for this very reason, and they choose what to invest in by looking at companies' business models and deciding if they are worthy. When the government plays venture capitalist, it tends to reward companies that are connected to the policymakers themselves or because it sounds nice to "invest" in green energy.	http://www.bizjournals.com/kansascity/print-edition/2012/10/19/turbine-maker-nordic-windpower-files.html
\$3,000,000	Gov. Loan	Misc. Energy	Satcon Technology Corp.: A solar company that got a multi-million-dollar grant from the Department of Energy earlier this year announced that it will file for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection.	The government's picking winners and losers in the energy market has cost taxpayers billions of dollars. The rate of failure, cronyism, and corruption at the companies receiving the subsidies is substantial. The problem begins with the issue of government picking winners and losers in the first place. Venture capitalist firms exist for this very reason, and they choose what to invest in by looking at companies' business models and deciding if they are worthy. When the government plays venture capitalist, it tends to reward companies that are connected to the policymakers themselves or because it sounds nice to "invest" in green energy.	http://blog.heritage.org/2012/10/18/another-doe-backed-solar-company-goes-bankrupt/

\$20,000,000	Gov. Loan	Misc. Energy	Konarka Technologies Inc.: A Lowell state company developing solar panels said it has filed for Chapter 7 bankruptcy protection. Under Chapter 7, a company's operations cease, and a trustee is charged with liquidating the company's assets for the benefit of creditors.	The government's picking winners and losers in the energy market has costs taxpayers billions of dollars and the rate of failure, cronyism, and corruption at the companies receiving the subsidies is substantial. The problem begins with the issue of government picking winners and losers in the first place. Venture capitalist firms exist for this very reason, and they choose what to invest in by looking at companies' business models and deciding if they are worthy. When the government plays venture capitalist, it tends to reward companies that are connected to the policymakers themselves or because it sounds nice to "invest" in green energy.	http://www.boston.com/businessupdates/2012/06/04/konarka-files-for-chapter-ceases-operations/afQFI6wU5DKTZbSJKUdJQJ/story.html
\$100,000,000	Gov. Loan	Misc. Energy	Mascoma Corp: A New Hampshire-based business that was awarded amounts totaling up to \$100 million from the federal government while promising 70 jobs by the end of the year has created only three jobs and received strong criticism from environmental and fiscal groups across the political spectrum.	The government's picking winners and losers in the energy market has cost taxpayers billions of dollars. The rate of failure, cronyism, and corruption at the companies receiving the subsidies is substantial. The problem begins with the issue of government picking winners and losers in the first place. Venture capitalist firms exist for this very reason, and they choose what to invest in by looking at companies' business models and deciding if they are worthy. When the government plays venture capitalist, it tends to reward companies that are connected to the policymakers themselves or because it sounds nice to "invest" in green energy.	http://www.michigancapitolconfidential.com/17123
\$10,000	2012	Misc. Law Enforcement	Flushing Away Taxpayer Dollars: In an effort to prevent drunk driving, the Michigan State Police used \$10,000 in federal funds to purchase 400 talking urinal cakes which would repeat anti-drunk driving phrases. Nearly 200 bars and restaurants received the cakes from the state transportation department in hopes the device would "generate a conversation" among male bar-goers and their friends.	Purchasing professional breathalyzers for local bars would have been a more effective way for the state to curb drunk driving. Professional U.S. Department of Transportation-tested devices are available on Amazon.com for under \$100 each.	http://www.coburn.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?a=Files.Serve&File_id=b7b23f66-2d60-4d5a-8bc5-8522c7e1a40e
\$40,000	Grant	National Endowment for the Arts	Self-Reflection Video Game Based on Henry David Thoreau's 1845 Writings: The National Endowment for the Arts awarded a \$40,000 grant to the University of Southern California (USC) to support production costs of a video game based on the writings of Henry David Thoreau at Walden Pond in Concord, Massachusetts. Creators of the game explained players will "walk in his virtual footsteps, attend to the tasks of living a self-reliant existence, discover in the beauty of a virtual landscape the ideas and writings of this unique philosopher, and cultivate through the game play their own thoughts and responses to the concepts discovered there."	The lack of excitement surrounding the Thoreau game led one entertainment critic to quip, "We might have just discovered the most boring idea for a video game ever", and a waste of taxpayer dollars.	http://www.coburn.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?a=Files.Serve&File_id=b7b23f66-2d60-4d5a-8bc5-8522c7e1a40e

\$498,000	2012	National Endowment for the Humanities	Funding for Irrelevant and Bizarre Studies: The National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) is funding over half a million dollars in summer stipends for scholars and teachers to examine a variety of projects, a large number of which range from the irrelevant to the bizarre. Kalamazoo College received \$6,000 in summer stipends to study "Priests and Concubines in England, 1375-1559", \$6,000 for a scholastic inquest into romantic literature and suicide in Britain, and \$6,000 for a project titled "Music in the Films of Robert Altman: From M*A*S*H to A Prairie Home Companion."	Perhaps instead of funding studies such as "The Mother Goose Translation Project" they should study how to rein in the mounting debt and deficits by respecting the founding principles of a limited federal government.	http://www.coburn.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?a=Files.Serve&File_id=b7b23f66-2d60-4d5a-8bc5-8522c7e1a40e
\$270,000	2012	National Endowment for the Humanities	Funding to Digitize Periodicals Already Digitally Available: The Modernist Journals Project, a joint venture administered by Brown University and the University of Tulsa, was awarded \$270,000 in federal funds from the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH). The award was for the creation of "a digital archive of a group of important early 20th-century American periodicals. Need for federal funds to undertake the work is questionable however. Thanks to the work of libraries and hobbyists, the magazines are also available on the Internet at repositories such as Archive.org, Google Books, and Project Gutenberg.	Preservation of periodicals for educational enrichment is certainly a noble cause, but many of these are already digitally available. Is it truly a priority for federal taxpayers in a time of mounting deficits and debt?	http://www.coburn.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?a=Files.Serve&File_id=b7b23f66-2d60-4d5a-8bc5-8522c7e1a40e
\$24,995	Grant	National Endowment for the Humanities	Should We Want to be Happy?: New Mexico State University, Las Cruces received a \$24,995 grant to develop a course titled, "Should we want to be happy?" The curriculum will focus on "the nature, value and means to obtain happiness."	The course was funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities' "Enduring Questions" grant program, which awards funds to applicants to use for a "question-driven course" that encourages people "to grapple with a fundamental concern of human life addressed by the humanities, and to join together in a deep and sustained program of reading in order to encounter influential thinkers over the centuries and into the present day.	http://www.coburn.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?a=Files.Serve&File_id=b7b23f66-2d60-4d5a-8bc5-8522c7e1a40e
\$550,000	2011	National Endowment for the Humanities	Rockin' the Kremlin: The upcoming film by director Jim Brown, titled Rockin' the Kremlin, which will show how rock and roll contributed to ending the Cold War, was awarded a federal grant to the tune of \$550,000 to help complete the project. With a running time of 90 minutes, and slated for release in May 2012, the film has received more than \$6,000 per minute. According to the director, —The film focuses on cultural diplomacy and soft power, and the role that rock and roll had in ending the Cold War.	As interesting as the movie might be, the reason it deserved half a million in federal tax dollars at a time when our federal deficit is over \$16 trillion remains unclear.	http://www.coburn.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?a=Files.Serve&File_id=b69a6ebd-7ebe-41b7-bb03-c25a5e194365
\$548,731	2012	National Institutes of Health	Study Shows Adults in their Thirties who Binge Drink Feel Immature: With part of \$548,731 in grants from the National Institutes of Health (NIH), a group of researchers discovered that adults in their thirties who drink heavily feel immature.	Looking to explain the relevance of what seem to be obvious results, one of the study's co-authors stated, "When a heavy drinking 30-year-old comes in for therapy and says he doesn't feel like an adult, we can present this study and suggest that cutting back on alcohol could help him feel more mature."	http://www.coburn.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?a=Files.Serve&File_id=b7b23f66-2d60-4d5a-8bc5-8522c7e1a40e
\$666,905	Grant	National Institutes of Health	Do Watching Television Reruns make People Happy? Watching reruns gives people an energizing chance to reconnect with pseudo-friends, according to a National Institutes of Health (NIH) study published this year. Researchers used part of \$666,905 in NIH grants to look at the phenomenon.	The NIH grants that funded this study were targeted for alcohol abuse treatment and intimate partner violence. Perhaps better ways can be found in the future to help the victims of abuse or alcohol addiction other than telling them to watch T.V. reruns.	http://www.coburn.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?a=Files.Serve&File_id=b7b23f66-2d60-4d5a-8bc5-8522c7e1a40e
\$170,000	2009 - 2012	National Institutes of Health	Study of Jordanian Hookah Smokers: Taxpayers funded a National Institutes of Health study costing \$160,000 over three years to study the hookah-smoking habits of Jordanian university students.	With a federal deficit over 16 trillion studying the smoking habits of Jordanian college students should not be a priority.	http://thf_media.s3.amazonaws.com/2012/pdf/SR121.pdf

\$356,933	2011	National Institutes of Health	Cocaine and Risky Sex Habits of Quail: The University of Kentucky received a grant of \$181,406 in 2010 from the National Institute of Health to study how cocaine enhances the sex drive of Japanese quail. In 2011, grant funding was extended and an additional \$175,587 was provided for the study. The total awarded to the project will be \$356,933. The study seeks to verify the clinical observations that indicated that cocaine use in humans may increase sexual motivation, thereby increasing the likelihood of the occurrence of high-risk sexual behavior. The researcher conducting the study highlighted how Japanese quail are ideal animals to use when studying the link between sex and drugs because the birds readily engage in reproductive behavior in the laboratory.	It's hard to think of a more wasteful use of American taxpayers money than to give cocaine to quail and studying their sexual habits.	http://www.coburn.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?a=Files.Serve&File_id=b69a6ebd-7ebe-41b7-bb03-c25a5e194365
\$206,214	2011	National Institutes of Health	Organic Gardening Video Game: Researchers at the University of Southern California received \$206,214 in 2011 to develop and evaluate "Virtual Sprouts: Web-Based Gardening Games." The project is intended to be an interactive and simulation version of the First Lady's Organic Garden in a game-based environment. The game's purpose is to revolutionize Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math education on obesity, promote healthy food choices and decrease obesity rates.	Gardening may be a valuable tool in teaching children the value of healthy nutrition and physical activity. To that end, USC has already developed what the researchers say is a successful LA Sprouts gardening curriculum. A web-based gardening video game is not a wise use of American taxpayer dollars.	http://www.coburn.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?a=Files.Serve&File_id=b69a6ebd-7ebe-41b7-bb03-c25a5e194365
\$610,908	2011	National Institutes of Health	US Taxpayer Funds Survey of Well-Being in 120 Countries: Different countries have different opinions about what constitutes being well-off and feeling happy. The National Institute on Aging provided over \$600,000 to the researchers at the Rand Corporation in 2011 to conduct a worldwide survey of well-being. They will use a vignette methodology that allows identification of response scale differences within and between countries. The survey will present participants with hypothetical situations concerning income, family relations, job, and health. The grant will continue for five years.	Researchers justify this use of taxpayer dollars by saying, "It is important to know the determinants of life satisfaction and well-being across nations of the world." Given that other organizations like Gallup already conduct worldwide polls of people's wellbeing, the added-value created by this survey may be minimal. Perhaps Congress should instead poll taxpayers to see how happy they are with their tax dollars being used to study how happy people in other countries are.	http://www.coburn.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?a=Files.Serve&File_id=b69a6ebd-7ebe-41b7-bb03-c25a5e194365
\$25,000	Grant	National Science Foundation	Can Twitter predict the stock market? An NSF study analyzed people's moods on twitter and claims that "Twitter mood" can predict the stock market. The study found that measuring the collective public mood by analyzing millions of tweets can predict the rise and fall of the stock market up to a week in advance with up to 90 percent accuracy.	As interesting as studying the mood of twitter users might be it does little to further our understanding of science.	http://www.coburn.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?a=Files.Serve&File_id=2dccf06d-65fe-4087-b58d-b43ff68987fa
\$516,000	FY2012	National Science Foundation	Relive Your High School Prom: The National Science Foundation (NSF) has provided taxpayers with a chance to relive their high school prom. In 2012 the agency supported the creation of "Prom Week," a video game simulating all the social interactions of the event.	Certainly better uses can be found for half a million in taxpayer dollars that to create a game about going to Prom.	http://www.coburn.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?a=Files.Serve&File_id=b7b23f66-2d60-4d5a-8bc5-8522c7e1a40e
\$315,000	Not Specified	National Science Foundation	Does playing FarmVille on Facebook help people to make friends and keep them? A \$315,000 NSF study suggests playing FarmVille on Facebook helps adults develop and maintain relationships. The NSF-funded study has determined that many adults "are playing games such as Facebook's FarmVille to help initiate, develop, and maintain relationships."	Spending \$300,000 to study the social interactions in Facebook game FarmVille seems excessive and certainly shouldn't be a budget priority at a time of huge federal deficits.	http://www.coburn.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?a=Files.Serve&File_id=2dccf06d-65fe-4087-b58d-b43ff68987fa

\$1,000,000	Not Specified	National Science Foundation	How Quickly do American Parents Respond to Trendy Baby Names? Armed with a \$1 million grant from the NSF, researchers at Indian University-Bloomington and New York University analyzed baby names to determine trends in parents' naming decisions. Their conclusion: popular names are popular with parents.	The idea that popular names are popular with parents should be common sense and not the subject of a million dollar study.	http://www.coburn.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?a=Files.Serve&File_id=2dccb06d-65fe-4087-b58d-b43ff68987fa
\$2,000,000	Grant	National Science Foundation	Are People who Post Pictures on the Internet From the Same Place at the Same Time Often Friends? NSF has provided just over \$2 million to researchers at Cornell University to produce a study concluding if people post pictures indicating they are often in the same place at the same time, they are probably friends or otherwise socially connected.	The article's title sums up the seemingly obvious conclusion: "Online Photos May Reveal Your Friendships."	http://www.coburn.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?a=Files.Serve&File_id=2dccb06d-65fe-4087-b58d-b43ff68987fa
\$604,755	Grant	National Science Foundation	What are Group Dynamics Like in the Online Video Game EverQuest 2? Researchers at University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign were awarded a \$604,755 grant in 2007 to "use virtual worlds as an exploratorium to...model the dynamics of group behavior." The grant explains, "The most important and complex decisions made by governments and organizations occur in group contexts." The award summary specifically suggested EverQuest 2 as a way to study these important group decisions.	While perhaps an interesting study spending \$600,000 to study group dynamics in EverQuest 2 seems excessive.	http://www.coburn.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?a=Files.Serve&File_id=2dccb06d-65fe-4087-b58d-b43ff68987fa
\$755,546	Grant	National Science Foundation	How do Rumors Get Started? To answer the question, NSF has spent nearly \$1 million to study "rumor propagation".	Spending \$1 million dollars to study something most people learned in middle school seems like a low budget priority and something that could easily be cut.	http://www.coburn.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?a=Files.Serve&File_id=2dccb06d-65fe-4087-b58d-b43ff68987fa
\$199,088	Grant	National Science Foundation	Do Turkish Women Wear Veils Because They are Fashionable? To better understand this trend, NSF allocated \$199,088 for a survey of "veiling-fashion firms" in Turkey, case study interviews with three of these firms, and focus groups and interviews with salespeople, garment workers, and consumers in Istanbul and Konya. They found that more young, educated, middle-class Muslim women are choosing to wear the veil as "an act of fashion rebellion." This practice stems from the Turkish government tightening restrictions on veil-wearing for women attending universities in the late 1990s. In turn, many women began to think of the veil as "a means of rebelling against Turkey's rigid social and political structures" and it became "fashionable, popular, and ordinary".	While this is interesting social study, certainly someone other than the U.S. Government should have funded it. Studying the fashion habits of turkish women seems like a low priority at a time of trillion dollar budget deficits.	http://www.coburn.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?a=Files.Serve&File_id=2dccb06d-65fe-4087-b58d-b43ff68987fa
\$559,681	Grant	National Science Foundation	How Long can a Shrimp Run on a Treadmill? Scientist put shrimp on a tiny treadmill to determine if sickness impaired the mobility of the crustaceans. The researchers did find that sick shrimp did not perform as well, and did not recover as well from exercise as healthy shrimp.	While a study about bacteria and illness in shrimp could have value in studying illness in humans one questions if placing shrimp on mini treadmills is the best approach, and if it warrants at least 12 NSF grants totaling over \$3 million over the last decade.	http://www.coburn.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?a=Files.Serve&File_id=2dccb06d-65fe-4087-b58d-b43ff68987fa
\$476,000	Grant	National Science Foundation	How Often Do People Lie in Text Messages and Online Messaging? According to ground-breaking new research supported by the NSF, people are deceptive in text messages and instant messaging. The \$476,000 NSF-supported study performed by Cornell professors found that about 10 percent of these messages are deceptive in some way	Anyone who has ever sent a text message (or written a letter) knows that it is easier to lie in writing than in person or over the phone. It certainly doesn't warrant a half a million dollar study.	http://www.coburn.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?a=Files.Serve&File_id=2dccb06d-65fe-4087-b58d-b43ff68987fa

\$150,000	Grant	National Science Foundation	Can You Trust People in Virtual Worlds? The NSF funded the New School University to study “the ways in which people voluntarily develop ‘virtual civility’ and trustworthy identities in 3-dimensional virtual communities such as Second Life.” The \$150,000 grant is titled, “Virtual Civility, Trust, and Avatars.”	It seems like common sense that it would be more difficult to trust someone in a virtual world than in real life. Certainly more pertinent studies could have been undertaken using this \$150,000.	http://www.coburn.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?a=Files.Serve&File_id=2dccf06d-65fe-4087-b58d-b43ff68987fa
\$322,313	Grant	National Science Foundation	The National Science and Arts Foundation? The Office of Polar Programs funds an “Antarctic Artists and Writers Program” which is of limited scientific value. According to NSF, the purpose of the program “is to enable serious writings and works of art that exemplify the Antarctic heritage of humankind.” In order to facilitate their work, the program “provides opportunities for professional artists and writers to travel to Antarctica - at research stations, field camps, and aboard ships - to make the observations necessary to complete their proposed projects.	The National Science Foundation is not the proper agency to fund a program on painting.	http://www.coburn.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?a=Files.Serve&File_id=2dccf06d-65fe-4087-b58d-b43ff68987fa
\$325,000	FY2012	National Science Foundation	Robotic Squirrel Research: Researchers at San Diego State spent a \$325,000 National Science Foundation (NSF) grant to study how rattlesnakes react to a robotic squirrel.	Funding how rattlesnakes react to a robotic squirrel is a waste of tax payer money.	http://www.coburn.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?a=Files.Serve&File_id=b7b23f66-2d60-4d5a-8bc5-8522c7e1a40e
\$263,281	Grant	National Science Foundation	What are the Social Impacts of Tourism in Norway? An Indiana University (IU) professor received a \$263,281 grant from the NSF to study the social impact of tourism in the country of Norway. The NSF-funded research will focus on the needs, perceptions and opinions of “local residents, businesses, and policy makers, as well as tourists” as it relates to tourism in a number of Norwegian cities.	It is still unclear why the U.S. government is footing the bill for tourism research in cities in Norway rather than the city of Norway, Michigan or other U.S. destinations that could benefit from tourism.	http://www.coburn.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?a=Files.Serve&File_id=2dccf06d-65fe-4087-b58d-b43ff68987fa
\$500,000	Grant	National Science Foundation	Do Twitter Users "tweet" in Regional Slang? Researchers at Carnegie Mellon University received an NSF grant to perform a study of tens of thousands of tweets. A “tweet” refers to a 140-character or less post on the popular social networking site known as “twitter.” The conclusion was that, “regional slang and dialects are as evident in tweets as they are in everyday conversations.”	Spending half a million dollars to study “tweeting” habits nationwide is not only silly but a waste of tax payer money.	http://www.coburn.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?a=Files.Serve&File_id=2dccf06d-65fe-4087-b58d-b43ff68987fa
\$259,216	Grant	National Science Foundation	When is the Best Time to Buy Sporting Tickets? To answer this question, Dr. Andrew Sweeting reviewed ticket prices on stubhub.com and concluded that ticket prices for sporting events fall as the game got closer.	Sports fans everywhere can rejoice in this purchasing tip, but taxpayers should ask for a refund.	http://www.coburn.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?a=Files.Serve&File_id=2dccf06d-65fe-4087-b58d-b43ff68987fa
\$79,998	Grant	National Science Foundation	Why do the Same Teams Always Dominate March Madness? A team of engineers and social scientists at Duke University teamed up to develop a “Constructal Theory on Social Dynamics.” using a \$79,998 grant from the National Science Foundation.	The research helped them conclude that being a top-notch college basketball program helps to attract blue-chip recruits. “The best players will tend to choose winning programs, and these programs send higher percentages of athletes to the NBA, which in turn attracts the best players.” It seems obvious to most, but the mystery kept this team of researchers busy studying the phenomenon with taxpayer support.	http://www.coburn.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?a=Files.Serve&File_id=2dccf06d-65fe-4087-b58d-b43ff68987fa
\$1,200,000	2012	National Science Foundation	Should Grandparents Play 'World of Warcraft'?: Researchers believe they have found another means to help our memories as we age: the “World of Warcraft,” a fantasy video game featuring characters like orcs, trolls, and warlocks. The team of academics used part of \$1.2 million in grants from the National Science Foundation to continue a video game study this year. The study asked 39 adults ages 60 to 77 to play “World of Warcraft” for two hours a day over two weeks. In the game, players choose a character and rove around the virtual world participating in guild (group) missions, casting spells, and defeating evil creatures.	Perhaps instead of telling seniors to play more video games these funds could be used to study cognitive degenerative diseases such as Alzheimer's.	http://www.coburn.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?a=Files.Serve&File_id=b7b23f66-2d60-4d5a-8bc5-8522c7e1a40e

\$1,700,000,000	FY2012	National Science Foundation	Billions in Funds in Expired Grant Accounts: According to the National Science Foundation's 2010 financial statements, the agency currently has \$1.733 billion in "undisbursed balances in expired grant accounts." Agency policy is to close out grant awards on the award expiration date. One quarter later, any un-liquidated funds are to be de-obligated. NSF then identifies funding to be returned to the Treasury from any cancelled appropriations. In 2010, NSF returned \$33.68 million to the United States Treasury, while the agency is sitting on \$1.7 billion in undisbursed, expired funding. The account has steadily grown from \$1.53 billion in 2008 and 1.66 billion in 2009.	The total amount of undisbursed balances in expired grants calls into question the proposed \$1 billion increase for the agency in the administration's budget. The agency's record of failing to place an emphasis on closing out expired grants and returning unused funds to the United States Treasury raises question about the overall fiscal management of the agency. If the NSF is sitting on \$1.7 billion in unused funding their fiscal year 2013 budget should be reduced by \$1.7 billion.	http://www.coburn.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?a=Files.Serve&File_id=2dccb06d-65fe-4087-b58d-b43ff68987fa
\$144,152	2009 - 2011	National Science Foundation	Two Romantically Involved NSF Employees go on 47 Get-A-Ways on NSF's dime: A senior manager at NSF went on 47 trips in a two and a half year period with a direct subordinate, at a total cost of \$144,152 in NSF funds. The couple extended their business trips and unnecessarily traveled together in order to further their relationship. According to the IG report, "neither the supervisor nor his subordinate disclosed the nature of their relationship to any of the ADs [Assistant Directors]—explaining to investigators that they believed that if the ADs had known about the relationship, trips would have been 'squashed' or 'cancelled.'"	These abuses indicate a lack of sufficient oversight and management by the NSF leadership.	http://www.coburn.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?a=Files.Serve&File_id=2dccb06d-65fe-4087-b58d-b43ff68987fa
\$450,000	Not Specified	National Science Foundation	Employee Orchestrates \$450,000 Kickback Scheme: A research center employee used her position to steer contracts towards a particular business in return for a cut of their contract money. As a result, the business received \$270,000 worth of contracts. Later, the same employee set up a fake company to make bids on contracts. She received over \$450,000 in business for those contracts.	These abuses indicate a lack of sufficient oversight and management by the NSF leadership.	http://www.coburn.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?a=Files.Serve&File_id=2dccb06d-65fe-4087-b58d-b43ff68987fa
\$14,200,000	Not Specified	National Science Foundation	Colorado Contractor Overcharged NSF \$14.2 Million in Indirect Costs: The contractor outbid the competition by setting a lower ceiling for "indirect costs" than their competitors. When they were unable to keep their costs as low as they promised, instead of renegotiating with NSF the contractor tried to work around their rising costs through an accounting scheme. The contractor implemented their plan after an ambiguous oral statement made by an NSF staffer that they mistook for approval. The improperly charged money was only found after an audit of the contract.	These abuses indicate a lack of sufficient oversight and management by the NSF leadership.	http://www.coburn.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?a=Files.Serve&File_id=2dccb06d-65fe-4087-b58d-b43ff68987fa
\$547,430	Grant	National Science Foundation	Dancing Robot DJ: Using taxpayer dollars, an academic team developed a dancing robot named Shimi to serve as a disc jockey for smart phones. Shimi "is designed to change the way that people enjoy and think about their music," said its creator. When a smart phone is connected, Shimi "gains the sensing and musical generation capabilities of the user's mobile device." More than the average robot, Shimi can also "dance to the rhythm" of the music.	This "musical buddy" was developed using part of a \$547,430 grant from the National Science Foundation.	http://www.coburn.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?a=Files.Serve&File_id=b7b23f66-2d60-4d5a-8bc5-8522c7e1a40e
\$697,177	Grant	National Science Foundation	Science Research Dollars go to Musical About Biodiversity and Climate Change: The Civilians, a New York City-based theatre company, received \$697,177 from the National Science Foundation to create a musical about climate change and biodiversity. The musical opened this year at the Kansas City Repertory Theatre.	Unfortunately, taxpayer dollars did not go very far in advancing any sort of scientific dialogue. One reviewer wrote that the character dialogue is "heavy-handedly laced with facts that easily could've been cribbed from the Wikipedia entry on [climate change]...in fact, many of the songs sounded like a Wikipedia entry set to music".	http://www.coburn.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?a=Files.Serve&File_id=b7b23f66-2d60-4d5a-8bc5-8522c7e1a40e

\$1,300,000	2012	National Science Foundation	Government Funding for Cell Phone Technology: By 2016, over one billion people worldwide will own a smartphone. Even with a strong private sector incentive to make products as excellent as possible, the National Science Foundation (NSF) awarded \$1.3 million for a study to test the user experience, WiFi, 3G, and 4G performance, and even the performance of the operating system.	While advancing cell phone technology and development may be helpful to consumers, research is better funded by private industry, which will be the primary beneficiary from future successes.	http://www.coburn.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?a=Files.Serve&File_id=b7b23f66-2d60-4d5a-8bc5-8522c7e1a40e
\$350,000	Grant	National Science Foundation	Government-Funded Study Finds Golfers Need to Envision a Bigger Hole: Purdue University researchers used part of a \$350,000 National Science Foundation grant to examine the benefit golfers might gain from using their imagination. The solution? Golfers simply need to imagine the hole is bigger, researchers found. "Perceived increase in target size will boost confidence in one's abilities," they wrote.	While golfers might be pleased for the tip on improving their game, this study certainly isn't a "hole in one" for the American taxpayers.	http://www.coburn.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?a=Files.Serve&File_id=b7b23f66-2d60-4d5a-8bc5-8522c7e1a40e
\$500,000	Grant	National Science Foundation	Online Lawyer Training Gets Science Funding: Law schools are too far removed from practice, say some critics of the institutions. To give lawyers a leg up, the National Science Foundation (NSF) has awarded a \$500,000 for LawMeets, an online training program for rookie attorneys.	While practice as a lawyer may be valuable in the law community, a product that is valuable to rising attorneys should be funded privately and science dollars saved for advancing higher-priority research endeavors.	http://www.coburn.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?a=Files.Serve&File_id=b7b23f66-2d60-4d5a-8bc5-8522c7e1a40e
\$149,990	2011	National Science Foundation	Taxpayer Money Pays for "RapidGuppy" Cell Phone Game: Researchers at the University of California-Riverside have pushed the mission of the National Science Foundation to new limits. In 2011, they received an NSF grant of almost \$150,000 to create a video game called RapidGuppy for cell phones and other mobile devices. In the game, targeted for students 12-21 years old, users control the growth and evolution of a guppy. To reach the public, the researchers will use an extensive social media campaign, which they see as increasing the public level of interest in evolution, genetic change, and science careers. The university researchers will partner with several private companies to create the game, including Magmic, Inc., which has over 100 games available for mobile devices and over \$10 million per year in revenue.	While it is important to get children interested in science perhaps this money could have been better spent on science classes than cell phone games.	http://www.coburn.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?a=Files.Serve&File_id=b69a6ebd-7ebe-41b7-bb03-c25a5e194365
\$764,825	2011	National Science Foundation	Taxpayer Money to Study How College Students Use Mobile Devices for Social Networking: The National Science Foundation (NSF) awarded over \$760,000 to the University of Notre Dame to study the wireless and social networking habits of college freshmen. Two hundred and fifty participants will receive phones, each containing a lightweight agent that tracks how students use the phones and how they interact digitally with fellow students	While the study of social interaction using social networks may be a reasonable subject for study, spending three quarters of a million dollars to gather the same information that could be gathered through the use of a survey seems excessive.	http://www.coburn.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?a=Files.Serve&File_id=b69a6ebd-7ebe-41b7-bb03-c25a5e194365
\$300,000	2011	National Science Foundation	Understanding the Origin of Matter - Through Dance: Understanding how matter came to be in the universe is a difficult subject. Fortunately, the Liz Lerman Dance Exchange received \$300,000 from the National Science Foundation to teach the public about the origins of matter through a unique performance experience, The Matter of Origins. The first part of the program was a dance performance illuminated by video and vivid soundscape. The dance was intended to explore not only the beginning of matter, but also its physics. After that enlightening experience, the audience engaged in a facilitated dialogue with scientists, historians, philosophers, and religious leaders to discuss the origin of matter. Their conversation was in an immersive environment that incorporated dance, projected images, and provocative questions.	"Whether this part worked or not depends on how much you enjoy chatting about the bomb with strangers in a large noisy room with no alcohol," wrote the Washington Post in its review of the group's performance at the University of Maryland. "But," the critic noted, "the cake was divine."	http://www.coburn.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?a=Files.Serve&File_id=b69a6ebd-7ebe-41b7-bb03-c25a5e194365

\$500,000	2011	National Science Foundation	Analyzing Your Public Image With 'OhMyGov': Maintaining a positive public image is important for any elected official or government agency. One way to do that is to do good, efficient work that serves the taxpayers and voters for whom you work. Another way is to obsess over your image. For those who choose the second path, there are many consultants and tools to help you. One such consultant is OhMyGov, an Alexandria-based firm who, for several hundred dollars a month, will help you track your online image, count and track your Twitter and Facebook following, aggregate your mentions in news stories, and more. Obsessing over one's public image isn't new, but apparently the National Science Foundation believed OhMyGov gives it a fresh approach. In 2011, NSF awarded the firm \$500,000 to do its groundbreaking work, helping clients to maintain and enhance their images.	It's not clear what public benefit arises from the NSF grant, which appears primarily to benefit those in positions of power by helping them maintain and enhance their images. Nor is it clear why NSF has used taxpayer dollars to improve the business outlook for this company, which now has special privileges in government contracting because of its grantee status. If OhMyGov's product is useful to its clients, the company should be able to market itself without a handout from taxpayers.	http://www.coburn.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?a=Files.Serve&File_id=b69a6ebd-7ebe-41b7-bb03-c25a5e194365
\$425,642	2011	National Science Foundation	Study to Tell India how to Improve its Local Government: More than \$400,000 in federal funds were used for a study on how local politicians in India through better communications can improve as elected officials. The National Science Foundation awarded \$425,642 to research the effects of providing information to citizens on the performance record of local lawmakers. The investigators will follow citizens and officials in Dehli for two years, seeking to measure how much of an impact the dissemination of information among the citizens has on the decisions and performance of local officials.	With record-low approval ratings for U.S. lawmakers, it is unclear why taxpayers are paying for this type of project in another country and not here in the U.S.	http://www.coburn.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?a=Files.Serve&File_id=b69a6ebd-7ebe-41b7-bb03-c25a5e194365
\$198,195	2011	National Science Foundation	Does Tweeting and Friending Make You Happy? Two researchers were awarded a hefty sum of taxpayer dollars to find out. University of California-Riverside received a \$198,000 federal grant in 2011 from the National Science Foundation (NSF) to study motivations, expectations and goal pursuit in social media.	The highly respected Pew Research Center Internet and American Life Project may have already beaten these researchers to the punch with a slew of recently released studies. One released on November 9, 2011, found that more teens report positive personal outcomes than negative ones from interactions on social network sites. Another from November 15 surveyed 2,277 people about their use of Facebook, Twitter, MySpace and LinkedIn, and found that 66 percent of adults use the sites, primarily to keep up with friends and family. A final study, released December 2, 2011, found that 53 percent of adults aged 18-29 go online for no particular reason except to have fun or to pass the time.	http://www.coburn.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?a=Files.Serve&File_id=b69a6ebd-7ebe-41b7-bb03-c25a5e194365
\$338,998	2011	National Science Foundation	Federal Grant to Study Women, Weaving and Wool in Iceland, AD 874 - 1800: The National Science Foundation awarded a multi-year grant to study the impact of women on the Icelandic textile industry from the Viking Era to the 19th Century. The research investigates the roles of imported textiles and dyes within Iceland and the ways that "women's work in textile production influenced both Iceland's domestic and international commerce.	Instead of investigating the Icelandic Viking-era economy, perhaps the government should focus on addressing the struggling American industries of 2013.	http://www.coburn.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?a=Files.Serve&File_id=b69a6ebd-7ebe-41b7-bb03-c25a5e194365
\$300,787	Not Specified	NOAA	The NOAA Party Yacht: The NOAA's Fisheries Service Office of Law Enforcement paid \$300,787 for a luxury yacht that was used for a total of nine patrols before being taken out of service. The boat was also inappropriately used for personal entertainment by OLE personnel.	Paying \$300,000 for a luxury yacht that was in use for just over a year and undertook a total of nine patrols (as well as being used inappropriately for personal entertainment by OLE personnel) is the definition of government waste.	http://www.americanthinker.com/2012/03/noaas_party_boat.html

\$2,000,000	2012	Small Business Administration	Taxpayer Loans for Cupcakes: The Small Business Administration in 2012 arranged over \$2.0 million in loan guarantees for ten cupcake shops across the country. Taxpayers are on the hook for the loans if the businesses fail. To set up and finance the loans, taxpayers have already paid out \$19,935.	Private companies, not the government should determine whether or not to finance a new business. Using taxpayer money to make questionable business loans is not a good business practice.	http://www.coburn.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?a=Files.Serve&File_id=b7b23f66-2d60-4d5a-8bc5-8522c7e1a40e
\$120,000,000	Annually	Social Security Administration	Retirement and Disability Payments for Deceased Workers: The federal government sent an average of \$120 million in retirement and disability payments to deceased former federal employees every year for at least the past five years. In a September 2011 report, the Inspector General (IG) for the U.S. Office of Personnel Management found that —the amount of post-death improper payments is consistently \$100-\$150 million annually, totaling over \$601 million in the last five years.	In one example the IG found, an annuitant's son cashed his dead father's checks for 37 years. The son's scheme cost taxpayers more than \$500,000.	http://www.coburn.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?a=Files.Serve&File_id=b69a6ebd-7ebe-41b7-bb03-c25a5e194365
\$600,000,000	2012	Transportation	Trim the Federal Vehicle Fleet by 20 Percent: This option would cut the size of the federal vehicle fleet from half a million vehicles to 400,000 vehicles.	This suggestion is HR 6324, the "Cutting FUEL Act" which was recently passed by the House of Representatives. I am hopeful the Senate will take up and pass this deficit cutting bill.	http://www.heritage.org/research/reports/2010/10/how-to-cut-343-billion-from-the-federal-budget
\$349,317	2008 - 2010	U.S. Postal Service	Misuse of Government Travel Cards: Reviewed travel card usage for 274 employees with high-risk transactions found that 173 misused their government travel card by purchasing personal items and taking cash advances unrelated to official travel. While travel coordinators reviewed cardholder statements when delinquencies were identified, they did not routinely review for misuse if there was no associated delinquency. As a result, more than \$349,317 in inappropriate purchases and cash advances from October 2008 through September 2010.	In a recent study over 62 % of government employees misused their taxpayer funded travel expense cards to purchase personal, non-work related items. In most cases, management ignored this pervasive routine imposing no punishment or acknowledgment of the misuse of taxpayer dollars.	http://www.uspsaig.gov/foia_files/FF-AR-11-007.pdf
\$27,000,000	Annually	USAID	Moroccan Pottery Classes: A review by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) found that the project was not on track to achieve its goals. The translator hired for the sessions was not fluent in English and was unable to transmit large portions of the lectures, instructors used colored dyes and clays not available for purchase in Morocco and only an estimated ten potters attended the class regularly.	Spending \$27 million to teach pottery classes to Moroccans is a waste of tax payer money.	http://www.coburn.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?a=Files.Serve&File_id=b7b23f66-2d60-4d5a-8bc5-8522c7e1a40e
\$1,460,000,000	Annually	USAID	End Foreign Aid to Countries Which Hold More than \$10 Billion in U.S. Treasury Securities: The U.S. currently gives foreign aid to 15 countries which hold more than \$10 billion in U.S. treasury securities including 27 million to China and 71 million given to Russia in FY 2010. The total amount in foreign aid given to countries holding more than \$10 billion in U.S. debt in FY 2010 was \$1.46 billion.	The U.S. should not be giving foreign aid to countries that hold large amounts of U.S. debt such as China and Russia.	http://transition.usaid.gov/performance/cbj/185015.pdf
\$20,000,000	2011 - 2014	USAID	Remake of "Sesame Street" for Pakistan: In 2010, Rafi Peer Theatre Workshop, a Pakistani arts organization, was awarded \$20 million over the next four years, to create 130 episodes of an indigenously produced Sesame Street. According to news sources, the show will be renamed SimSim Humara and set in a lively village in Pakistan with a roadside tea and snacks stall, known as a dhaba, some fancy houses with overhanging balconies along with simple dwellings, and residents hanging out on their verandas.	While shows to educate and inspire child are great, taxpayers may be left wondering why they are paying for children's shows in Pakistan.	http://www.coburn.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?a=Files.Serve&File_id=b69a6ebd-7ebe-41b7-bb03-c25a5e194365

\$12,000,000	2011	USAID	<p>Failed Energy-Saving Project in Pakistan: The citizens of Pakistan experience power outages every day which last between 4 to 16 hours. In 2009, the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) decided to tackle the problem with a 3-year, \$23 million project to help industries in Pakistan develop plans on how to use less energy. As the USAID Inspector General (USAID OIG) recently reported, one year and \$2 million later, USAID had achieved modest progress, but instead of giving up it switched tactics: it would instead focus on convincing Pakistani farmers to get rid of older, less-efficient irrigation pumps and buy new, energy-efficient ones. But by September 2011, USAID's Inspector General found, USAID had replaced only 963 pumps less than 1/10th its goal. (The IG estimates that by the end of the project, only 1,500 pumps will be replaced.) Unfortunately, the price tag to the U.S. taxpayer did not change. The contractor in charge of the project spent \$10 million on the effort so far, driving the per-pump cost up to \$8,500.</p>	<p>While severe flooding during the project hampered the effort, the IG concluded the project's designers faced other daunting obstacles, including farmer's disinclination to participate in the program. An internal study identified some of the reasons farmers were deterred: additional masonry and electrical costs that USAID did not help defray; the availability of Chinese-made pumps at a lower cost than the ones offered by USAID; and a difference of opinion with USAID over the value of their old pumps. Two years later, the only difference USAID made with the project appears to have been wasting \$12 million.</p>	<p>http://www.coburn.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?a=Files.Serve&File_id=b69a6ebd-7ebe-41b7-bb03-c25a5e194365</p>
\$1,350,000	2011	USAID	<p>Entrepreneurship Training... in Barbados?: The federal government has spent trillions of dollars attempting to create new jobs here in America. Despite its lack of success, the Administration is now starting to spend millions more to create jobs abroad. In February 2011, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) announced a \$1.35 million award for an entrepreneurship initiative in the small island nation of Barbados. The grant will pay for the development of curriculum, courses, and faculty at Barbados' Cave Hill School of Business to teach students how to create and manage entrepreneurial start-ups. A USAID representative in Barbados explains why the American people should be paying for the program, noting it will address the challenge of creating new business opportunities in Barbados and its neighboring countries, especially for Caribbean young people.</p>	<p>Instead of focusing on creating jobs in Barbados maybe the Federal government should use our taxpayer funds "to teach students how to create and manage entrepreneurial start-ups" here in the United States.</p>	<p>http://www.coburn.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?a=Files.Serve&File_id=b69a6ebd-7ebe-41b7-bb03-c25a5e194365</p>

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