

Obama's Energy Dept. Crony Slush Fund



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Newly

released communications regarding the loan approval for Solyndra, the now failed California solar energy company, show direct intervention by an Energy Department adviser and Obama campaign fundraiser, and raise new questions of [possible involvement](#) by Rahm Emanuel and the President. As more is learned, it becomes increasingly clear that the Administration used the Stimulus, and specifically the green energy loan program, as a campaign slush fund to distribute billions of dollars like party favors to supporters and to grandstand for re-election to a perceived constituency.

By mid-2009, the White House was obsessing to make headlines with an announcement of a \$535 million loan to Solyndra as the first of many green energy loans in the DOE's pipeline that would be funded by the recently passed Stimulus. Initially the staff tried to schedule an announcement by Obama, and later as approval was delayed, they shifted to the Vice-President.

"Ron said this morning that the POTUS definitely wants to do this (or Rahm definitely wants the POTUS to do this?)," a White House staffer told an Obama scheduler on August 17, 2009 [according](#) to *The Washington Post*. This was a reference to Ron Klain, Chief of Staff at that time for the Vice-President. "Rahm" refers to Rahm Emanuel, Chief of Staff to the President.

The Solyndra loan was finally approved in September 2009 over a plethora of warnings and objections from within the Department of Energy, the Office of Management and Budget, and numerous private and solar industry experts. Following the company's collapse, questions have haunted the White House of possible political corruption and cronyism as

investigations revealed that executives and investors in Solyndra were also significant donors to the Obama campaign with repeated access to top White House officials. In addition, critics charge that the administration disregarded objective financial analysis, and blindly threw billions of taxpayer dollars at green energy companies like Solyndra with little chance of success.

Oblivious to the warnings from his own White House advisers that the company was in serious trouble and would run out of cash in September, 2010 (and it did), Obama visited the Solyndra headquarters in May 2010 and hailed it as "leading the way toward a brighter and more prosperous future."

The Washington Post is also [reporting](#) that Steve Spinner, a major Obama 2008 campaign fundraiser, later appointed by the White House to "advise" the Department of Energy regarding the green energy loan program, applied heavy pressure on DOE officials for approval of the \$535 million loan guarantee for Solyndra.

"How (expletive) hard is this? What is he waiting for?" Spinner wrote to a DOE official by email on Aug. 28, 2009 questioning why the Solyndra application was not already approved. "I have the OVP (Office of the Vice-President) and the WH (White House) breathing down my neck on this. They are getting itchy to get involved."

Later the same day, Spinner asked the same DOE official to "walk over there and force him to give you the answer."

In another exchange just minutes after getting an email from Solyndra, Spinner fired off a message to the DOE officials asking if the White House budget office (OMB) had completed their review. "Any word on OMB? Solyndra's getting nervous," he wrote.

The loan was pushed through, and on September 4, 2009 Joe Biden [announced](#) by video link the deal as the "unprecedented investment this Administration is making in renewable energy and exactly what the Recovery Act (Stimulus) is all about."

Spinner's involvement is in direct contradiction of previous representations by the DOE. Spinner had specifically recused himself from the Solyndra application because his wife's law firm, Wilson Sonsini Goodrich & Rosati, represented the company on the DOE loan and pocketed \$2.4 million in legal fees for their efforts.

The AP [reports](#) that an administration official, speaking on condition that he not be identified because of ongoing investigations in the evolving scandal, said that Spinner "clearly was actively involved in facilitating between DOE and OMB."

Joe Biden was partially correct – unfortunately. Solyndra is typical of what the billions of Stimulus dollars tossed around by the Obama Administration was "all about" – about waste, cronyism, and corruption. The taxpayer is on the hook for \$535 million, but before this is done some once big shots in Washington will deservedly be cut down to size.