

Republican Lee Terry joined his colleagues across the nation Wednesday in criticizing the year-old economic stimulus bill, saying it created few private-sector jobs.

Terry said the \$787 billion stimulus package pushed by President Obama early in his tenure to bolster the nation's struggling economy was a "government growth bill" that provided little help to Nebraska's businesses.

"This bill was never intended to help the private sector. That was the dirty little secret about this bill. That's why I voted against it. It was intended to help the government grow," said Terry, who held a press conference at a small retail store in central Omaha called the Tea Smith.

Terry was joined by Ernie Goss, an economist at Creighton University. Goss said the costs associated with the stimulus bill far outweigh any good the measure has done, saying he believes taxes, interest rates and inflation will rise because of increased federal spending.

Across the nation, Republicans and Democrats are holding dueling press conferences and releasing dueling press releases on the impact of the stimulus bill.

Obama argued last year that the measure was needed to create jobs and help the economy recover from a recession.

The administration has argued the the bill created 2 million jobs during the past year, including 3,800 in Nebraska. Obama also said Wednesday that the measure may have kept the nation from experiencing another Great Depression.

Terry voted against the stimulus package, although he did vote for a bank bailout bill that was proposed by former President George Bush.

