

President Obama sings Deval Patrick's tune

Fans see vision, critics see flaws

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President Obama wants to set the nation on an economic course very similar to the vision outlined by Gov. [Deval Patrick](#) for Massachusetts — in 2009.

“It’s almost like Evergreen Solar on a cosmic level,” said Nate Little, executive director of the Massachusetts Republican Party, referring to Obama’s call for more federal funds for clean-energy companies, as part of a national push for “innovation.”

In his State of the Union speech this week, Obama outlined a plan emphasizing innovation, education, infrastructure improvements and reducing the federal deficit as the way to “win the future” for America.



In a speech at an economic summit in October 2009, Patrick — a fellow Democrat who has shared with Obama similar political rhetoric and even campaign aides in the past — emphasized innovation, education, infrastructure improvements and balanced regional growth as the keys to the Bay State’s economic future.

The similarities weren’t lost on the governor’s economic czar yesterday — nor on Patrick’s critics.

“They’re two leaders who have a similar long-term vision,” said Greg Bialecki, the Bay State’s secretary of housing and economic development.

Bialecki said the state’s economic agenda is one of the reasons why Massachusetts has recovered faster than other states from the recent recession. “Massachusetts has been a little ahead of the curve in terms of reinventing itself,” said Bialecki.

But Little said Obama and Patrick are merely “two peas in the pod.”

“They have the exact same world view: government spending is the solution,” said Little.

He blamed Patrick’s idea of “innovation” for ultimately leading to state economic assistance for Evergreen Solar, the Marlboro-based clean-energy company that

recently announced it's moving 800 jobs to China. The administration had pledged \$58 million in economic incentives to Evergreen.

Robert McCullough, an Oregon energy analyst, expressed doubt whether the nation, or Massachusetts, can create many jobs by investing public money in clean-energy companies.

"It's not a question of vision, but it's a question of implementation," said McCullough, saying government has a bad track record of "backing failures."

But Andre Mayer, economic director of the Associated Industries of Massachusetts, said the Bay State's economic model of cutting-edge companies with highly skilled workers seems to be working, despite setbacks like Evergreen Solar.

"We've done pretty well compared to the rest of the nation," he said.

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