



U.S. Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs
Subcommittee on Federal Spending Oversight

Senator Rand Paul, M.D. (Kentucky), Chairman



WASTE REPORT for August 24, 2015

The Sweet, Sweet Musical Styling of Waste

From Duke Ellington to Tony Bennett, jazz is a part of the American soul. One group taking the genre to new levels is the New Orleans-based Soul Rebels. The Village Voice said of the group, “[t]he hip-hop-inflected eight-piece Soul Rebels are arguably the most dynamically au courant of the city’s many fine brass bands.”¹

Have not had a chance to take in one of their concerts? Well, you’ve paid for one of their concerts overseas. That’s right, earlier this summer, **the U.S. Department of State spent nearly \$50,000 of taxpayer money to, “...support the Soul Rebels to travel to Turkey to give public performances as part of the 22nd Istanbul Jazz Festival.”**²

What is most surprising is that **the Soul Rebels were already on a European tour, making taxpayer financing for the stop in Turkey unnecessary.** In fact, after Turkey, the Rebels went on to make stops in Belgium, France, Ireland, Norway, and meet up with Tony Bennett and Lady Gaga at the “North Sea Jazz Festival” in the Netherlands.³

The group is hardly a fledgling act needing Uncle Sam’s help. The Soul Rebels have put out six albums since 1999, including *Power=Power (2013)* where they incorporate their unique sound to popular songs by the likes of Bruno Mars and Nicki Minaj. And that is not the only company they are keeping. They share a label with, Tom Jones, They Might Be Giants, and Alison Krauss.⁴

So, the question has to be asked, why does such a cutting edge, established group need Uncle Sam to pay for them to play at a well-established European jazz festival?

Just a little bit waste to get you singing the blues

¹ Gehr, Richard, *SOUL REBELS+JON CLEARY & THE ABSOLUTE MONSTER GENTLEMEN+LOST BAYOU RAMBLERS*; The Village Voice; New York, NY, June 2014.

² *IZMIR FOUNDATION FOR CULTURE, ARTS AND EDUCATION*; USASpending.Gov; Washington, DC; May, 2015

³ North Sea Jazz Festival, Songkick.org <http://www.songkick.com/festivals/32691-north-sea-jazz/id/21183698-north-sea-jazz-festival-2015>

⁴ <http://www.rounder.com/artists/#D>