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### **Letter: How long can US sustain welfare state imbalance?**

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We hear more and more about the growing state of welfare and America's shift toward socialism and it bothers many of us.

To get a handle on where we are, we have to take a look at all the welfare program categories available: Food stamps (SNAP), housing, medical, social services, education, direct cash, energy and utility assistance, child care and development programs.

All are headed by government agencies (departments of Health & Human Services, Housing & Urban Development, Labor and Agriculture). Since Lyndon Johnson started the war on poverty 50 years ago, the U.S. taxpayer has spent \$22 trillion on anti-poverty programs. Despite this level of spending, the Census Bureau reports there has been NO net reduction in poverty levels since the mid-1960s. As a matter of fact, poverty increased.

According to the labor department, we currently have 110 million people who receive some kind of welfare support, while we have 85 million people working in the private sector and an additional 25 million who are government workers. I don't know how we can sustain this level of support without creating more private-sector jobs.

CATO Institute analyses shows that in most states welfare programs pay more than minimum-wage. By analyzing a hypothetical mix of welfare programs available in all 50 states, finds that in 10 states welfare produced a value exceeding \$35,000 a year, untaxed. The report goes on to state that in some states welfare pays more than \$20 per hour. Sources are retrieved from Department of Labor and [heritage.org/](http://heritage.org/).

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