



Americans in ‘poverty’ don’t lack modern luxuries

September 13, 2013

Tom Tillison

By official measures, poverty has risen dramatically in America, according to the Christian Science Monitor. Between 2000 and 2011, the poor increased from 33.9 million to 46.2 million, which is about 15 percent of the population.

By comparison, when President Lyndon B. Johnson declared war on poverty in 1964, the poverty rate was 19 percent.

As of today, the poverty threshold for a family of four is \$23,550, but what does that look like from a material standpoint?

According to the Census Bureau, those who live in households with income below the poverty level typically have cell phones, computers, televisions, air conditioning, refrigerators, gas or electric stoves, microwaves, and washers and dryers, CNS News reported.

In fact, 83.2 percent of households considered to be in poverty have a video-recording device in case they cannot get home in time to watch their favorite television show, as CNS News noted.

And 80.9 percent of these households have cell phones — no report on how many of these are taxpayer funded “Obama-phones.”

Additional statistics: Refrigerators – 97.8 percent, gas or electric stoves – 96.6 percent, television – 96.1 percent, microwave – 93.2 percent, air-conditioning – 83 percent, and computers – 58.2 percent.

Clearly, evaluating poverty in America has come a long way since the days of not having electricity and indoor plumbing.

And the change did not come cheaply. The Heritage Foundation shows welfare spending has increased 16-fold since the federal government began the “War on Poverty” and will continue to increase.

According to the Cato Institute, federal welfare spending has increased by 41 percent, more than \$193 billion per year, since President Obama took office — \$668 billion in fiscal year 2011 alone.