

## **On Davidson's welfare opinion piece**

By Pat Ford  
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Jim Davidson's Friday opinion piece, "How did we get here?" uses data put forward by the Cato institute to make the case that welfare payments are largely (if not solely) responsible for an ever increasing national debt. One problem: Cato's data is bogus and was shown to be so by folks across the political spectrum soon after the report's release last year. Welfare does not pay more than minimum wage in 33 states, and welfare recipients in Hawaii do not receive \$29.13 (\$60k annually).

Where did Cato go wrong? They lump together eight different safety net programs and then presume that a single woman with two children is receiving the benefit of each and every one of these programs. In fact, very few people actually qualify for all eight assistance programs, and it should be noted that over the last 16 years, the limited number of people receiving cash assistance has declined by 60 percent. And for those households with at least one working-age, non-disabled adult, more than half work while receiving SNAP (food stamps). This is not to say that U.S. domestic assistance programs can't be improved.

But what Davidson and Cato are doing is blaming the poor for this country's ballooning national debt. It's wrong and, given the number of children relying on SNAP dollars for food, it's immoral.