



## Letter: Which programs are ‘welfare’?

January 3, 2015

A recent writer gave statistics on “welfare” that really surprised me, so I tried to verify them. According to this site, <http://www.statisticbrain.com/welfare-statistics/> (sources include U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, U.S. Department of Commerce, CATO Institute), 12.8 million are on “welfare,” 46.7 million are on food stamps, and 5.6 million are on unemployment insurance. It gives the percentage of the population on “welfare” as 4.1 percent at an annual cost of \$139.1 billion dollars. Add these three up and you get about 20 percent of the population.

It states 46.5 percent of AFDC (Aid to Families with Dependent Children — now called Temporary Assistance to Needy Families — TANF ) recipients are on AFDC from two to over five years.

A 2011 Health and Homeland Security report ([http://aspe.hhs.gov/hsp/14/indicators/rpt\\_indicators.pdf](http://aspe.hhs.gov/hsp/14/indicators/rpt_indicators.pdf)) stated 23.1 percent (an all-time high) of the U.S. population was on “welfare,” which was defined as TANF, Supplemental Security Income, and/or food stamps.

It appears it all depends on how much of the “welfare” pie you want to count.

Michael Danek

Laingsburg