

Welfare study findings contradict opinionator

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In his Nov. 25 My View, “Welfare is breaking up our families,” Doug Grainger claims that a typical 16-year-old who has a child and goes on welfare will get a package of benefits “worth somewhere between \$50,000 and \$70,000 a year.”

A study done by the conservative Cato Institute in 2003 and reported in the International Business Times has very different numbers. It found that “in the state with the largest welfare benefit program (Hawaii), a hypothetical household that is eligible for every single welfare program and successfully manages to gain access to aid, could receive up to \$49,175 in aid.”

However in the state at the bottom of the Cato list, Mississippi, that figure is only \$16,984; and the fact is that “it is nearly impossible for any household to be eligible for every welfare program.”

According to Elise Gould, an economist with Economic Policy Institute, “If you look at the lowest quintile, you see a very different story.”

“The poorest fifth of all U.S. households receive on average \$4,633 from welfare programs, not including Medicaid, according to data from the Congressional Budget Office,” said Gould. “Labor income, or income from work, is on average \$12,871 for the same set of households.”