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Welfare Payments

Hawaii offers the most generous welfare benefits package in the U.S., according to a report from the Cato Institute in Washington.

The estimates are based on a hypothetical family participating in about seven of the 126 federal anti-poverty programs.

In Hawaii, that translates into a 2013 package of \$49,175. Rounding out the top five areas: the District of Columbia (\$43,099), Massachusetts (\$42,515), Connecticut (\$38,761) and New Jersey (\$38,728).

The state with the lowest benefits package in 2013 was Mississippi, at \$16,984, followed by Tennessee (\$17,413), Arkansas (\$17,423), Idaho (\$17,766) and Texas (18,037).

To be sure, not all of those who rely on government programs take part in every benefit to which they are entitled, and the most generous benefits are in states that have the highest costs of living.

--Brenda Cronin
Real Time Economics Blog
WSJ.com