



Koch Brothers Working With Deion Sanders To Fight Poverty

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The Koch brothers have a new target: poverty. Their group, Stand Together, has actually been around for a year and a half or so, but is planning to invest \$21M in Dallas to help fight poverty. The guy who's going to be working with the Kochs is NFL Hall-of-Famer Deion Sanders. Via *The Dallas Morning News* (emphasis mine):

"I feel like after so many years of doing this alone, I'm part of a wonderful winning team with the infrastructure and resources to take it to the next level," Sanders said...

Sanders said he had no concerns about teaming up with anyone from the Koch family, which is known for its sometimes-divisive influence on American politics.

"I saw firsthand how wonderful and gracious and giving and kind the Koch family was in regards to really trying to make this country a better place for everyone," he said.

I wonder how many leftists out there are turning their heads faster than tops when they learn those "evil" (not really) Koch brothers, the ones who want to "screw America" (not really), are working on ending poverty without *gasp* *the government's involvement* (really). It's an absolutely shocking idea, right? Well actually...not really! Here's what USA Today reported last year.

The organization, known as Stand Together, is still in its start-up phase but aims to raise \$15 million this year, top officials told USA TODAY in the first interview about the new organization. Organizers described Stand Together as engaging in "venture philanthropy" aimed at "strengthening the fabric of American society."

"The sole purpose of Stand Together is to make a real difference in real people's lives by actually solving the problems they have," the group's executive director, Evan Feinberg, said.

He said the group won't veer into policy fights but instead initially plans to focus on partnerships with private groups addressing social problems, such as gang violence and high recidivism rates.

The cynics will probably sit there and say the Kochs are only doing Stand Together to make their image look better. But if you look at the history of libertarianism, you'll see it really has been

about fighting poverty without the government's involvement. The Future of Freedom Foundation opined in 2014 the government war on poverty has failed, and believes the best way to fight it is through free markets.

1. End all income taxation and welfare. Leave people free to keep everything they earn. Prohibit the government from taking care of anyone, including seniors and the poor, with welfare of any kind, including old-age retirement benefits, education, and health care. Separate charity and state, just like religion and the state.

2. End all economic regulation, including permits to start businesses, licenses to engage in occupations and professions, minimum-wage laws, and price controls. Leave all economic enterprise totally free of any government control, management, or manipulation. Separate economy and state.

3. Totally open the nation's borders (and internal borders) to the free movement of people, goods, and services. Leave individuals totally free to hire whomever they want, buy from whomever they want, and sell to whomever they want.

4. Do away with a giant military-intelligence establishment and limit the government to the defense of the country. No policing the world. No foreign aid. No foreign military bases. No war on terrorism or war on communism.

5. Separate money and state. Let the free market decide the type of money that is used. No more fiat money. No more central bank. A society based on sound money.

It's a very "red meat" libertarian argument against government involved welfare, that's unfortunately going to only appeal to libertarians. People have unfortunately been "conditioned" to think the government has to play a role in making sure people don't fall into poverty. Arnold Kling's 2006 argument at Cato Institute is a little less "red meat," and more on how individuals can help others through volunteering and charitable organizations.

When I sold my business, I decided to go into volunteer teaching. At first, I considered going into the public schools, because the children are so needy. But instead I went into a private school. I think that private schools appreciate help much more, and they also have a portion of needy students. I would rather offer my time and effort through a private school than channel it through an institution of public schools that I regard as corrupted by politics and unable to give priority to the needs of students and their parents...

Charities are in a position to demand something of value from their clients, even if that "something" is nothing more than a human "Thank you." Charities are also in a position to set the terms under which their clients receive aid and to cut off clients who fail to comply with those terms.

Charities can be flexible in how they handle individuals. One person may need transportation to a job. Another person may need drug rehabilitation. With hands-on

involvement and with flexibility, charitable organizations are more likely to discover solutions to the pathologies of poverty.

It appears the Kochs are taking a similar approach by empowering individuals through their own efforts, and the efforts of other nonprofits. Via [USA Today](#):

Americans for Prosperity, the Kochs' long-standing, largest grass-roots arm, offers "couponing classes." Another Koch group, the Libre Initiative, hands out free holiday turkeys to Latinos. In 2014, Charles Koch and Koch Industries contributed \$25 million to the United Negro College Fund, much of it for scholarships. Koch's top aides have partnered with the Obama administration in a high-profile push to overhaul the criminal justice system and began an effort to roll back job-licensing laws that Koch argues unfairly exclude the poor and ex-felons from jobs and business opportunities.

Let's also not forget free market folks are fans of the arts and making sure their money can be used to help others. Andrew Carnegie built libraries and gave most of his fortune away. John D. Rockefeller Sr. was also involved in charitable efforts, even if his legacy will be tarnished by the claims of bad behavior practices with Standard Oil.

But it doesn't have to just be "the rich" who help others. People can donate to churches or charities or help the poor by buying them food, clothes, or giving them money for bills. The fact is the government doesn't have to be involved in the War on Poverty because individuals of all incomes are doing what they can to help. That's how it should be.