



Written by [Wallis W. Wood](#) on August 24, 2012

Obama Puts Millions More on the Dole

Did you know that the U.S. Department of Agriculture has been spending hundreds of millions of dollars trying to get more people to sign up for food stamps?

I kid you not. One of the most absurd examples was [“a 10-part series of Spanish-language ‘novelas’](#) that trumpeted the benefits of the food stamp program.”

In the public service announcements, several people pressure a wife and mother named Diana to sign up for assistance, even though she says she doesn’t need it.



In the fourth commercial, Diana says (in Spanish): “I don’t need help from anyone. My husband makes enough to take care of us.” That’s a great example of traditional American values, wouldn’t you say?

Apparently, it isn’t for the folks at the USDA, who produced the advertising campaign in 2008.

Diana’s friends keep badgering her to wise up and get with the program. Ultimately, they win her over. By the end of the series, Diana has her own food stamp Electronic Benefit Transfer card and has become an enthusiastic proponent of letting Uncle Sam buy her groceries.

[Senator Jeff Sessions \(R-Ala.\)](#) was just one of many Congressmen who condemned the series of messages: “It has become increasingly clear that, in recent years, the mission of the food stamp program has been converted from targeted assistance for those in need into an aggressive drive to expand enrollment, regardless of need.”

Indeed it has. In the past decade, federal spending on the food stamp program (technically known as SNAP, the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) has more than quadrupled. In Fiscal 2011, more than \$76 billion worth of food stamps were [distributed to 45 million Americans](#).

But those staggering numbers aren’t enough for some people. [As Sessions put it](#): “The program administrators take personal offense when people who technically qualify for their largesse decline to accept — and see it as an obstacle to overcome.”

In the 1970s, just one American in 50 received food-stamp benefits. Now that number is one in seven. In other words, 15 percent of the U.S. population is dependent on food stamps.

Earlier this year, House Democrat leader Nancy Pelosi said that Barack Obama should wear the title of “Food Stamp President” as a [“badge of honor.”](#) If so, he’s a very honorable man; participation in the food stamp program jumped 50 percent since he took office. During the same period, the cost to U.S. taxpayers has almost doubled.

But the federal food stamp program is just one example of Washington’s relentless drive to get more and more Americans on the dole. For example, did you know that more Americans have started receiving disability payments under Obama than the amount of new jobs that are being created?

As hard as that may be to believe, the [Bureau of Labor Statistics](#) reported that although the economy has created 2.6 million new jobs since June of 2009, during that same three-year period, some 3.1



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million people began receiving disability benefits. In other words, the number of new disability enrollees is rising 19 percent faster than the number of new jobs being created. Counting dependents, more than 10 million people receive a disability check each month.

In fiscal 2011, the disability insurance program [paid out \\$119 billion](#). Hold onto your hat, because the Congressional Budget Office says at the rate we're going, that number will jump to \$204 billion over the next 10 years. That's a 71 percent increase.

But let's not worry about what happens in 10 years. The CBO says that long before we get there, [the disability trust fund will be insolvent](#). At the rate we're going, we'll hit that wall in just four more years.

By the way, here's another depressing statistic about our disability program. Once someone gets on the program, by and large the only way that person ever leaves it is by dying. According to Social Security Administration numbers, only 1 percent of disability recipients ever get healthy enough to return to work.

And finally, let me add a few words about another effort by the Obama Administration that makes it easier to receive a welfare check.

In 1996, President Bill Clinton and Republicans in Congress agreed to make sweeping changes in this country's welfare program. The reform bill they passed, the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Act, created the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program and required welfare recipients to look for work to be eligible for benefits. It even specified which activities would qualify as "work." And as the name of the program implied (note the word "Temporary" in the title), such benefits were supposed to be short-term. Of course, there is nothing so permanent as a "temporary" government program.

Nevertheless, the results of the welfare-reform legislation were startling. Throughout the nation, welfare caseloads, which had remained unchanged for decades, dropped dramatically. Poverty numbers declined; employment among single mothers soared. And ever since, the measure has been hailed as a remarkable bipartisan success story.

Until last month, that is. On July 12, the Health and Human Services Department issued an administrative order that effectively reversed the 16-year-old work requirements contained in that landmark legislation.

Republican Congressmen are outraged at what they see as another illegal seizure of power by the Obama Administration. [Senator Orin Hatch \(R-Utah\) declared](#): "Gutting welfare work requirements with the stroke of a pen and without congressional input is simply unacceptable and cannot be allowed to stand. Neither the Obama Administration nor any Administration should have the power to unilaterally change the law as it sees fit." (I wonder if he hasn't been paying attention for the past four years.)

Add it all up and what do you get? Yes, massive new increases in federal spending; that goes without saying. But the other result is millions more Americans on the government dole.

And now for the \$16 trillion question: How do you think these new welfare recipients will vote?

A good quote — erroneously attributed at various times to both Alexis de Tocqueville and Alexander Fraser Tytler — to keep in mind is:

A democracy ... can only exist until the voters discover that they can vote themselves largesse from the public treasury. From that moment on, the majority always votes for the candidates promising the most benefits from the public treasury.



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But it sure is accurate, isn't it?

I'm not saying that this country has reached the point of no return. But it's become pretty obvious that Obama and his allies are doing everything they can to get us there.

Will they succeed? You had better do everything you can to make sure the answer is no.

Until next time, keep some powder dry.

Chip Wood was the first news editor of *The Review of the News* and also wrote for *American Opinion*, our two predecessor publications. He is now the geopolitical editor of *Personal Liberty Digest*, where his *Straight Talk* column appears weekly. This article first appeared in [PersonalLiberty.com](#) and has been reprinted with permission.



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