



Written by [Bob Adelman](#) on December 2, 2013

White House Thanksgiving Day Reminder: Be Thankful for SNAP

Last week the White House issued a [Thanksgiving Day reminder](#): “The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) helps millions of Americans put food on the table.” Then began a litany of statistics and charts along with explanations of how wonderful SNAP is, even getting in a dig at those selfish “House Republicans [who] would cause nearly 4 million Americans to lose access to SNAP next year.”



Harold Maass, writing at the liberal TheWeek.com blog, correctly [explained](#) some of the reasons why conservatives hate food stamps: it’s “entitlement spending gone wild,” 48 million Americans are on the food stamp dole, the program costs have more than doubled in seven years, it encourages government dependency, it is an attack on work, and so forth.

Henry Olsen, [writing for National Review](#), updated some of those statistics, noting that food stamp costs have quadrupled since 2000 and have created more government dependency than ever: Some four million SNAP recipients are able-bodied without dependents, and most work fewer than 20 hours a week — if they work at all.

The Heritage Foundation suggests that SNAP should be converted into a [“work activation” program](#), at least for those able-bodied individuals currently milking the system. It would require recipients to work, be looking for work, or be preparing for work. It also would end some loopholes which the states have been using to treat SNAP as a “bonus” program on top of unemployment benefits.

On the other hand, Tyler Durden, [writing at ZeroHedge.com](#), thinks the magic of statistics will somehow slow the growth of SNAP or perhaps convert it into something less costly and more morally acceptable. For example, he shows that “a single mom is better off earning a gross income of \$29,000 a year [and thus receive] \$57,327 in net income & benefits than to earn gross income of \$69,000 a year with net income and benefits of \$57,045.”

A great example is Lucy, age 32, who lives in Austin, Texas, with her husband and three kids. She called into a local radio station, which recorded the seven-minute conversation. [Here is Lucy’s take on SNAP specifically and welfare in general](#):

While workers out there and people like you [the radio show hosts] are preaching morality, there are people like me living on welfare. Can you really blame us? I get to sit home, I get to go visit my friends all day, I even get to smoke weed, and people I know who are illegal immigrants, who don’t get to contribute to society, we still gonna get paid.

Our checks are still gonna come in the mail every month and they’re gonna be on time. We get subsidized housing, we even get presents delivered to our kids for Christmas.

Why should I work?



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You're the ones going to work but we're the ones getting paid. So should you really blame us?

During her call to the radio station, using her ObamaPhone, she spelled out just how well she was doing: Her monthly rent of \$600 is being subsidized by \$550, leaving her with just \$50 to pay to house herself and her husband and three children. She gets \$425 a month from SNAP, her electricity bill is subsidized in the amount of \$150 a month, her cellphone is free, and the city of Austin pays \$100 toward her water bill.

When asked if she took any part-time "cash" jobs, Lucy said "only once in a while. But again, why should I?" When asked if her husband worked, she said "only occasionally." When asked if she had any plans to get off welfare and go get a real job, Lucy just laughed. If the video was true and not just a hoax, it would be a most persuasive case for reducing, reforming, or eliminating SNAP for such "professional welfare gamers."

Lucy and millions like her have made a Faustian bargain. The bargain is made between an individual such as Lucy and the entity promising to keep her housed, warm in the winter and cool in the summer, and well fed. The individual gives up independence for sloth and character for amoral gaming of the system. And in turn, the White House receives a lifetime supporter, regardless of party.

After all, in a world of declining morality and personal responsibility, why shouldn't she?

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