

# [Welfare. system by putting limits on eligibility](https://assignbuster.com/welfare-system-by-putting-limits-on-eligibility/)

Welfare. Whether you collect it, or you pay for it (and for EVERYworking American does one of the two), most citizens of our country are familiarwith it. Yet as every second of the day passes, more and more of my money andyours is being allotted to this growing epidemic called welfare.

The PersonalResponsibility Act, signed by the President, was a monumental change in welfareas we know, or used to know it. The welfare system is still in need or morestrict and stringent policy reform, yet the Personal Responsibility Act was aprodigious step in the right direction. In the past few years, the federal governments and state governmentshave tried to change and improve the welfare system. The Clinton Administrationcampaigned to “ end welfare as we know it.

” The Administration’s proposal limitsAFDC benefits to two years, during which employment services would be providedto recipients. Nearly 20 welfare reform bills have been introduced in the 103rdCongress. Besides the above mentioned bill, three major proposals were offeredby Republican members: The GOP Leadership Welfare bill, The Real Welfare ReformAct, and The Welfare and Teenage Pregnancy Reduction Act. Now the Republicanshave pulled together a strong and controversial bill on welfare reform.

ThePersonal Responsibility Act is an attempt to overhaul the welfare system byputting limits on eligibility and reducing dependency on government. This billaddresses the increasing problem of illegitimacy, requires welfare recipients towork, and caps welfare spending. Current programs will be consolidated, timelimits will be placed on benefits and savings are to go to deficit reduction. The bill’s main thrust is to give states greater control over the benefitsprograms, work programs, and Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC)payments and requirements. Under the bill, the structure for AFDC payments will drastically change. Mothers under the age of 18 may no longer receive AFDC payments for childrenborn out of wedlock and mothers who are ages 18, 19, and 20 can be prohibited bythe states from receiving AFDC payments and housing benefits. Mothers must alsoestablish paternity to as a condition for receiving AFDC payments, except incases of rape and incest and if the state determines that efforts to establishpaternity would result in physical danger to the mother.

The bill requiresstates to establish paternity in ninety percent of their cases. States are alsoencouraged to develop procedures in public hospitals and clinics to determinepaternity and establish legal procedures that help pinpoint paternity in areasonable time period. Also, in order to reduce the amount of time familiesare on welfare, states must begin moving welfare recipients into work programsif they have received welfare for two years. States are given the option todrop families from receiving AFDC benefits after they have received welfare fortwo years if at least one year has been spent in a work program.

States mustdrop families from the program after they have received a total of five years ofAFDC benefits. The bill allows states to design their own work programs and determinewho will be required to participate. Welfare recipients must work an average of35 hours a week or enroll in work training programs.

By the year 2001, 1. 5million AFDC recipients will be required to work. The bill grants greater flexibility to states allowing them to designtheir own work programs and determine who participates in them and can choose toopt out of the current AFDC program by converting their share of AFDC paymentsinto fixed annual block grants. The bill is also designed to diminish the number to teenage pregnanciesand illegitimate births. It prohibits AFDC payments and housing benefits tomothers under age 18 who give birth to out-of-wedlock children. The state hasthe option of extending this prohibition to mothers ages 18, 19, and 20.

Thesavings generated from this provision to deny AFDC to minor mothers is returnedto the states in the form of block grants to provide services to help theseyoung mothers who illegitimate children. The state will use the funds forprograms to reduce out of wedlock pregnancies, to promote adoption, to establishand operate orphanages, to establish and operate residential group homes forunwed mothers, or for any purpose the state deems appropriate. None of thefunds may be used for abortion services or abortion counseling. The bill also includes a number of other provisions to reduceillegitimacy. While AFDC is prohibited to mothers ages 17 and younger who havechildren out of wedlock, mothers age 18 who give birth to illegitimate childrenmust live at home in order to receive aid. Mothers already receiving benefitswill not receive an increase if additional children are born out of wedlock.

States are allowed to establish their own work training and educationprograms to help recipients move from the welfare program to paid employment assoon as possible. The training programs require recipients to work for anaverage of 35 hours a week or 30 hours a week plus five hours engages in jobsearch activities. One parent in a two parent family is required to work 32hours a week plus eight hours of job searching.

As long as states meet the participation requirements, the federalgovernment will not advise other parts of the program. States will design theirown work programs and determine who will be required to participate in them. Part of the participation requirement is requiring a certain number ofrecipients to participate in the job program. Starting in 1996, 100, 000 AFDCrecipients will be required to work; in 1997, 200, 000 recipients will berequired; in 1998, 400, 000 will be required; in 1999 600, 000 recipients will berequired; in 2000, 900, 000 will be required; and by 2001, 1. 5 million recipientswill be required to work. Identified non-parents, usually men, who receive food stamp benefits arerequired to work eight hours a week for those benefits. The bill caps the spending growth of AFDC, SSI and numerous publichousing programs, and the mandatory work program established under the bill.

Thecap equals the amount spent the preceding year for these programs with anadjustment for inflation plus growth in poverty population. The entitlementstatus of these programs is ended. The bill also consolidates a number ofnutrition programs into a block grant to states funded in the first year at 95percent of the aggregate amount of the individual programs. Programsconsolidated into the block grant include food stamps, the supplemental feedingprogram, infants, children, and the school lunch and breakfast programs, amongothers. Under the block grant, states will distribute food assistance toeconomically disadvantaged individuals more freely. To further reduce welfare spending, welfare assistance is denied to non-citizens, except refugees over 75 years of age, those lawfully admitted to theU.

S., or those who have resided in the U. S. for at least five years.

Emergencymedical assistance will continue to be provided to non-citizens. The bill allows states to create their own work programs and determinewho participates in them. States can also opt our of the AFDC program andconvert their AFDC payments into a fixed annual block grant and have the optionto provide new residents AFDC benefits comparable to the level provided in thestate in which they previously resided. To help combat illiteracy, states mayreduce AFDC payments by up to $75 per month to mothers under the age of 21 whohave not completed high school or earned their high school “ equivalency”. Payments may also be reduced if a dependent child does not maintain minimumschool attendance. State adoption agencies are encouraged, under the bill, to decrease theamount of time a child must wait to be adopted. Specifically, the billprohibits states from discriminating on the basis of race, color, or nationalorigin when placing children for adoption. AFDC beneficiaries who the state identifies as addicted to drugs oralcohol must enroll in an addiction treatment program and participate in randomdrug testing in order to continue receiving welfare benefits.

The bill is estimated to result in a net savings of approximately $40billion over five years. The denial of welfare to non-citizens saves about $22billion, the cap on welfare spending saves about $18 billion, the nutritionblock grant saves about $11 billion, and the requirement for paternityestablishment saves about $2 billion. The costs included in the bill are $9. 9billion for the work program and approximately $2 billion for miscellaneousstate options.

OK, personally, I don’t see what the big fuss these whiny littledemocrats are making over this bill. “ You shouldn’t be so hard on un-wedteenage mothers.” Well, lets think about this one.

They’re unwed, they’reteenage, and they’re mothers. Not a good combination. The majority of womenon welfare had their first child as a teenager. Most of these births now occuroutside of marriage and are unintended. Actually, I don’t think that we’rebeing hard enough. They’re lucky to receive any benefits at all. If this weremy bill, payments to unwed teens would end altogether.

It’s ridiculous to havea fifteen year old pregnant and out of school sitting at home sucking upgovernment dough. The government isn’t punishing them. They’ve punishedthemselves. If anything the government is giving these kids an incentive to bemore responsible. Welfare is a crutch. And people use it even after theirbroken leg has healed. And what about those who are not legitimately in this country? Thousands upon thousands of immigrants enter this country each year, becausethey know in America, they can receive benefits without even becoming a citizen.

This needs to end right now. American citizens hard at work each day should nothave to waste their tax dollars on the illegal Perez family from just over theborder who don’t speak a word of English nor contribute any of their money tothis country. Illegal immigrants under no circumstance should receive any moneyof any kind.

They do not belong to this country nor do they contribute towardit. As I stated in Congress in Action, I work at Genovese. I make sixty-five dollars a week. I SHOULD be making eighty, but fifteen dollars of my moneyeach week goes to the federal government to give to some illegal family orsingle mother. I pay for this family’s clothing. I pay for this family’s food.

I pay for this family’s home. But of course, my fifteen dollars a week is notenough to pay for all of the family’s expenses. So you, and your family have topay more money each year so that some other family doesn’t have to. I’mseventeen years old. I am going to an Ivy League university next year. I can’tafford to spend fifteen dollars on some illegal family in Texas or some singleirresponsible mother.

And do you know what the tragic part is? This “ family” does not give a single dime back to the government. And for illegal immigrants, that same government which gives them millions of OUR dollars a year, doesn’teven acknowledge that they exist. Somehow, THAT doesn’t sound very fair to me. And in fear or their payments ending, a great number of legal immigrantshave rushed to turn in their applications for U. S.

citizenship. At no time inhistory has the number of applicants for U. S.

citizenship been so large. In LosAngeles County alone, it’s quadrupled in just two years. “ In ’94 I think wewere running about 75, 000 applications a year.

Last year, we ran about 175, 000, and we’re looking at about 300, 000 this year,” says Richard Rogers, who works inthe Los Angeles branch of the Immigration and Naturalization service. Thanks toThe Personal Responsibility Act, hundreds of thousands more non-citizens areapplying to officially be a member of our country, and in turn contributetowards it. Many crybaby liberals believe these “ harsh” laws make non citizensworry about their benefits. Good. If they don’t give or do anything FOR ourgovernment, they SHOULD worry if the government decides not to give themanything. That worry is what pushes them to become a part of our nation, and bea REAL, tax paying American citizens.

Only until then can they at least expectsome benefits. Limiting AFDC payment by $75 to those who haven’t completed high schoolor gained a high school equivalency seemed way liberal to me. High school drop-out is one of the big reasons for the enormous about of money welfare consumeseach year.

If you don’t have at least a high school education, you will find ittough to land a job that will support yourself, let alone a family as well. School keeps kids off of the streets, and out of trouble with drugs, sex andpregnancies- things that will run them right out of school and right onto thewelfare payroll. Democrats love making a big sob story out of welfare” victims.

” It makes me truly sick. Want to hear a sob story? Me hardly seeingmy family for four years because I was too busy studying, and involving myselfin the school and community, bettering other’s lives, so that I may improvemyself as a person, go on to a good school, and make a success of myself. Andthe federal government didn’t give me a cent. They shouldn’t have to.

So if Ishouldn’t get paid for doing more than what I am have to, or am supposed to do, why should some pregnant, crackhead, sixteen year old girl get paid every weekfor doing what she’s NOT supposed to do? There’s a sob story. And spare me the argument that drug addicts are victims deserving asafety net, or that at least their children are. That mentality, inpsychological circles is called “ enabling”-making it possible for chronicallymaladjusted people to indulge their self destructive behavior at the expense ofthemselves and others. What “ enabling” actually does is help destroy the peopleyou ought to be trying to aid.

It is irresponsible. Stop and think. You havepeople on welfare who are drug addicts. You give them cash. What do you thinkhappens? They buy drugs. If there is any money left they MAY (1 in a millionchance) use it as intended. If not, they fall back on their main means forscoring. This means stealing or selling their bodies to get more of a fix, orjust to survive and make ends meet.

This is how it really is on the streets forthose welfare recipients who are also drug addicts. So why not do them a favorand say you can’t be a drug addict and a welfare recipient at the same time. Being an addict doesn’t necessarily mean you are a complete idiot. Asubstantial percentage of them aren’t happy about their addictions, but theyneed a big push to break their dependency cycle. The dumbest thing in the worldis to give an addict cash. So why should our welfare system do that in the nameof doing good? Why not make it universally clear that welfare benefits willonly go to people who, among other things, can pass a drug test at the time ofapplication, and at random periods thereafter? Why shouldn’t welfare policydiscourage drug addiction? God knows that we can’t rely on the President, seeing as how the public has re-elected a man whose first presidency showed adoubling of teen drug use, as well as a leader who admitted to smoking pot andsaid he would do it again. Cutting off welfare to those with a drug addictionhas nothing to do with individual liberties.

The individual is free to choosebetween continuing addiction or continuing welfare. And as for the time restraint.. why is it even 5 years that they can stayon AFDC? One is quite sufficient.

Do you know how long it took me to get myjob at Genovese??? Five days, not five years! And I am not even out of highschool. It pays above minimum wage, the full time benefits are excellent, thereis not a single reason why welfare recipients could not hold a job such as that. Yet year after year we continue to find them at home waiting for Bob the mailmanto deliver their welfare check. Pathetic. That is the only work to describe it. No, perhaps pathetic and sickening. And are we forgetting something? There exists something called theTENTH AMENDMENT!! Those powers not given to Congress, nor specificallyenumerated, are reserved for the states and respectfully to the people.

Thepowers specifically enumerated to Congress are found in Article I Section 8 ofthe Constitution. The only facet of this Article that the most looseconstruction liberal mind MIGHT be able to construe as a reason for increasingwelfare is that “ The Congress shall have Power to…

. provide for the commonDefense and general Welfare of the United States.” Providing for the generalwelfare of America means ensure that it’s citizen’s lives are protected, notspend hundreds of billions of dollars on the welfare system. Welfare is not aresponsibility of the federal government. It is one of the states, orrespectively, the people.. The American voters sent a clear message on thatNovember 8th of 1994.

They want to see a positive change in government. Manyof these same voters are pointing a finger at welfare as a perfect example ofbig government at work wasting taxpayer money. Congress was able to pushthrough to legislation that greatly enhances the fight against the welfare trap. Yet it is not the end of the war.

There are still several more battles to gountil we may sign a peace treaty.