

Drug testing welfare recipients



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There are approximately 30 million Americans on some sort of welfare right now. In 2010, the United States Federal Government spent \$0.8 trillion toward welfare. The amount spent on welfare in 2010 is one of the top expenses, money spent on defense and healthcare were the highest expenses, but welfare was third (Chantrill, Christopher). The main purpose of an economic welfare system is to assist citizens who are not able to support themselves or their families due to unemployment, underemployment, hardship, unskilled labor capacity, disability, or other similar reasons. So why are there some many Americans that solely rely on welfare benefits? Welfare recipients should be drug tested. Testing for drugs among welfare recipients would save the US Government millions of dollars, it would help many Americans overcome their illegal drug habits, and taxpayer's money would not support somebody's illegal drug use.

Not all welfare recipients use illegal drug. Actually, statistics show that the use of illegal drugs is slightly higher among unassisted families than assisted families. "The prevalence among persons in assisted families (9.6 percent) is higher than among persons in families receiving government assistance (6.8 percent)" (NHSDA). The problem is not who is using drug but that welfare recipients should not be given money from the government to pay for their drug addiction. People with history of drug convictions or drug history should be drug tested before receiving welfare benefits.

Drug testing welfare recipients would save the United States Government because welfare recipients that submit a faulty drug test would be cut off from benefits for a year, saving the government money. One drug test cost from \$10.00 - \$50.00. Yes, that can add up, but it is better than the

government spending on average \$44, 400 per year for a low income family of four (Rector, Robert, Katherine Bradley, and Rachel Sheffield). Also every person is not going to be drug tested immediately, it can be random, which will result in more saving. Drug testing welfare recipients would save money and unnecessary government spending.

Another benefit of drug testing people receiving welfare, is it would stop some Americans from using illegal drugs. Illegal drug use in America is on the rise over the last couple of years and without testing welfare recipients, America is supporting this rise. Drug testing welfare recipients would not stop everyone on welfare from using illegal drugs but it would help some. Illegal drug use has many harmful effects, not on the person using them also on their family and friends.

People on drugs are not prepared to get a job, therefore they will always be dependent on the welfare system. This is not the reason the welfare system was created, it was made to help for a short period of time. Drug testing welfare recipients will result in many Americans “ kicking” their drug habits in which will eventually lead to job ready citizens. Drug testing people on welfare is not to cause hardship, but to help create better citizens.

The last reason that welfare recipients should be drug tested is taxpayer’s money should not be given to somebody to use illegal drugs. Most working people in America have to submit to drug test at their place of employment. Many working Americans have to submit a drug test to get a job and then agree to random drug testing to keep their jobs. The working Americans, pay their taxes, in which is where the government ultimately receives their

money to pay for welfare. Why should people who have to work for their money have to submit to a drug test, but welfare recipients, who sit back and collect do not have to stay drug free? Welfare recipients should have to submit a clean drug test to even receive these benefits just as working Americans do.

There are people that oppose drug testing welfare recipients. The main reason people oppose this idea is because they think it will not save the US Government money. As discussed before, the government would save money. One low income family of four would save the government \$44, 400. That adds up faster than the money spent on the drug test itself. Another opposing reason is, some people think it is against the 4th Amendment. The 4th Amendment- search and seizure, drug testing welfare recipients is not against this amendment because it is your choice to sign up for welfare benefits.

If one does not like the rules to receiving welfare then they don't have to sign up for benefits. Not to make it cut and dry but "beggars can't be choosers". In conclusion, drug testing welfare recipients would ultimately benefit America as a nation. Drug testing would save the government money, or allow money to be spent elsewhere like education. Drug testing welfare recipients would also help many citizens get off drugs, so they can keep their benefits and also make them better prepared to get off the system and into employment. Taxpayers would also be satisfied by this proposal because they would know that their money is going to more efficient spending and the money is not supporting somebody's drug habit. Drug testing welfare recipients has many benefits and little disadvantages.

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