

Monday, August 22, 2011

RSC Update: Welfare Reform 15 Years Later

From the Chairman

15 years ago today, Congressional Republicans and President Clinton enacted welfare reforms that emphasized work as the path out of welfare dependence. That 1996 law replaced an older program with the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program, also known as TANF. Clinton famously declared these changes would “end welfare as we know it,” and in fact millions of families have moved off TANF and into jobs and self-sufficiency. Despite these successes, more remains to be done.

According to a government [report](#) released this year, less than a third of work-eligible TANF recipients are actually meeting the program’s work requirements. More than half perform no work or job preparation at all. And while the 1996 reforms focused on TANF, there are actually more than 70 different federal programs that exist to provide assistance to low-income Americans.

That’s why earlier this year, members of the Republican Study Committee introduced H.R. 1167, the [Welfare Reform Act of 2011](#). Our proposal builds on the reforms of 1996, applies new work requirements to the food stamp program, forces Washington to give taxpayers a clear picture of how much money they spend across all the different welfare programs, and returns the skyrocketing cost of welfare to its precession level once our economy has recovered.

I’ll close this week’s message with thoughts from two men who spent much of their careers focused on the issue of welfare:

“We should measure welfare's success by how many people leave welfare, not by how many are added.” – President Ronald Reagan

“We must preserve not only the bodies of the unemployed from destitution but also their self-respect, their self-reliance and courage and determination.” – President Franklin Roosevelt

God Bless,

Congressman Jim Jordan
Chairman, Republican Study Committee

RSC Media Activity – RSC members work hard to ensure that the conservative viewpoint is well-represented in all corners of the media. Visit our [Media Center](#) for more.

- 39 Republican House Freshmen: [Senate Is Only Thing Blocking Reform](#); Politico, August 16.
- Rep. Eric Cantor (VA-07): [Removing the Obstacles to Economic Growth](#); The Washington Post, August 21.

Outlook – A quick look at what’s on the horizon.

- The House has recessed until September 7, though it will hold pro forma sessions throughout the month of August to prevent presidential recess appointments.

RSC Reports

- Each week the House is in session, the RSC Budget and Spending Taskforce compiles a [weekly report](#) on the latest budget and spending news. Additionally, the [RSC Money Monitor](#) tracks how bills passed by the House affect authorizations, mandatory spending, and federal government revenue.

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