

Noah and I negate, Resolved: The United States should replace means-tested welfare programs with a universal basic income.

Contention 1: Welfare Cuts

Our current welfare system does a lot in order to help those in poverty.

[Worstell of Forbes in 2016](#) reports that the American system is excellent at reducing poverty. The official poverty rate doesn't take into account in-kind transfers like Medicaid, food stamps, and housing vouchers. The welfare system reduces child poverty from 20% down to about 2%.

[Bruenig in 2019](#) furthers that the welfare state cut the poverty gap by 66 percent.

Unfortunately, implementing a UBI would give extremely less support to those who need it.

[Greenstein of the CBPP in 2019](#) explains that financing a UBI by using the proceeds from eliminating all means-tested programs would equal an annual UBI of \$1,582 per person, well below the level of support most low-income families now receive. The increase in poverty and hardship would be very large. That's why the risk is high that under any UBI that could conceivably gain traction politically, tens of millions of poor people would likely end up worse off.

There are two main impacts

First, Cutting Medicaid

[Rutgers University](#) quantifies that Medicaid paid for the health care of 75.1 million low-income adults in 2017 and the largest share of this cost went to 30.0 million children.

[Matthews of Vox in 2017](#) continues that Medicaid often pays for long-term care services for elderly, disabled, and mentally ill patients that cost tens of thousands annually, and are not covered by conventional health insurance, leaving millions of poor and sick people worse off.

The coverage of these millions is critical as [Cecere of Harvard University in 2009](#) corroborates that 45,000 annual deaths are associated with a lack of health insurance and those that are uninsured have a 40% higher risk of death.

Second, Cutting The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program

[The Center on Budget and Policy Priorities in 2019](#) contextualizes that SNAP benefits reduce "food insecurity," which occurs when households lack consistent access to nutritious food because of limited resources, finding that participating in SNAP reduced households' food insecurity by 10 percent.

And participation is significant as [The U.S. Agricultural Department](#) reports that 39.7 million individuals participated in SNAP in an average month of 2018.

Overall, the **CBPP 19'** concludes that SNAP also lifts millions of households out of poverty because SNAP is an important part of a low-income household's budget. Impacting that in just one year SNAP kept 7.3 million people out of poverty, including 3.3 million children.

Contention 2: Inequality

Replacing means-tested welfare programs with a UBI would be redistributing money upwards, increasing poverty and income inequality.

[Greenstein of the CBPP in 2019](#) finds that if you take the dollars targeted on people in the bottom fifth or two-fifths of the population and convert them to universal payments to people all the way up the income scale, you're redistributing income upward. That would increase poverty and inequality rather than reduce them.

[Sarris of The Medium in 2017](#) corroborates that basic Income takes money out of the pot currently reserved for the needy and disabled, and distributes it to able-bodied people. Removing all welfare to create UBI to give everyone the same amount is a de facto pay decrease to anyone with needs outside their control. After cost-to-stay-alive is factored in, they get less money than you do from UBI. In this way, giving everyone the same amount results in its own kind of inequality starting from the very first check.

There are two main impacts

First, economic growth

[Ingraham of The Washington Post in 2018](#) writes that inequality hurts economic growth by undermining education opportunities for children from poor socio-economic backgrounds, lowering social mobility and hampering skills development.

Which is why [The OECD in 2014](#) quantifies that rising inequality in the United States from 1990 to 2010 knocked about five percentage points off cumulative GDP per capita over that period.

Second, violent crime

Ingraham cites The World Bank who concludes that there is a strong correlation between inequality and rates of violent crime because high levels of inequality create a permanent underclass forced to compete, sometimes violently, either with itself or with other classes for scarce resources.

This is detrimental as [Szalavitz of The Guardian in 2017](#) continues that inequality is the number one driver of murder rates.

Because a UBI is an unbelievably bad idea we proudly negate.

Cards (some of them lol):

Welfare Cuts:

Greenstein, The Center for Budget and Policy Priorities, 06/13/19

<https://www.cbpp.org/poverty-and-opportunity/commentary-universal-basic-income-may-sound-attractive-but-if-it-occurred>

“Would we terminate support for children in foster care, for mental health services, and for job training? Ed **Dolan, who favors UBI, has calculated that we could finance it by using the proceeds from eliminating all means-tested programs** outside health care — including Pell Grants, job training, Head Start, free school lunches, and the like, as well as refundable tax credits, SNAP, SSI, low-income housing programs, etc. **The result, Dolan found, would be an annual UBI of \$1,582 per person, well below the level of support most low-income families (especially working-poor families with children) now receive. The increase in poverty and hardship would be very large.[3] That’s why the risk is high that under any UBI that could conceivably gain traction politically, tens of millions of poor people would likely end up worse off.** To further understand the risks, consider how working-age adults who aren’t working would fare. In our political culture, there are formidable political obstacles to providing cash to working-age people who aren’t employed, and it’s unlikely that UBI could surmount them.”

“A UBI that’s financed primarily by tax increases would require the American people to accept a level of taxation that vastly exceeds anything in U.S. history. It’s hard to imagine that such a UBI would advance very far, especially given the tax increases we’ll already need for Social Security, Medicare, infrastructure, and other needs.”

Rutgers University

<http://raw.rutgers.edu/docs/Big%20Data/The%20Six%20Major%20U.pdf>

“**Medicaid paid for the health care of 75.1 million low-income adults in 2017. The largest share, of this cost (40 percent) went to 30.0 million children.** In 2014, Medicaid also paid health expenses for 9.8 million blind and disabled people. The smallest category of beneficiary was 5.4 million low-income seniors. Medicaid pays for any health costs that Medicare does not cover. The Affordable Care Act increased Medicaid coverage by 28 percent. The act also raised the qualification income level and allowed single adults to qualify.”

Matthews of Vox, 07/17/17

<https://www.vox.com/policy-and-politics/2017/7/17/15364546/universal-basic-income-review-stern-murray-automation>

“The other categories, however, cannot be replaced with a basic income. Social Security and unemployment insurance are, well, insurance programs: They’re supposed to replace wages forgone due to retirement, disability, or unemployment. As such, they often provide benefits far exceeding Murray’s proposed \$13,000-per-adult benefit. Social Security’s average annual benefit to retired workers is \$16,400 a year; Murray’s plan would offer them a benefits cut of more than 20 percent. **Medicaid and Medicare often pay for long-term care services for elderly, disabled, and mentally ill patients that cost tens of thousands of dollars annually, and are not covered by conventional health insurance.** Murray **[UBI] would require everyone to spend \$3,000**

of their grant on health care, but that would pay for far skimpier insurance at best, with considerable cost sharing. \$13,000 a year in UBI doesn't mean much if you lose insurance that was paying \$60,000 a year on chemotherapy. Murray's basic income plan **[UBI] would leave millions of poor and sick people, especially seniors, worse off.** It's doubtful such a plan would even cut poverty. So why do it? In his opening statement to the Intelligence Squared debate on basic income, Murray made his motivation very clear: He wants to make it easier for Americans to socially pressure their neighbors, to push them out of being "complete screw-ups":

Cecere of Harvard University, 09/17/09

<https://news.harvard.edu/gazette/story/2009/09/new-study-finds-45000-deaths-annually-linked-to-lack-of-health-coverage/>

"Nearly **45,000 annual deaths are associated with lack of health insurance**, according to a new study published online today by the American Journal of Public Health. That figure is about two and a half times higher than an estimate from the Institute of Medicine (IOM) in 2002. **The study, conducted at Harvard Medical School and Cambridge Health Alliance, found that uninsured, working-age Americans have a 40 percent higher risk of death than their privately insured counterparts**, up from a 25 percent excess death rate found in 1993. "The uninsured have a higher risk of death when compared to the privately insured, even after taking into account socioeconomics, health behaviors, and baseline health," said lead author Andrew Wilper, M.D., who currently teaches at the University of Washington School of Medicine. "We doctors have many new ways to prevent deaths from hypertension, diabetes, and heart disease — but only if patients can get into our offices and afford their medications."

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U.S. Agricultural Department 2018

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/pd/supplemental-nutrition-assistance-program-snap>

"The U.S. Agriculture Department (USDA) reports that 39.7 million individuals participated in SNAP in an average month of 2018. This figure understates SNAP participation by approximately 1 million individuals, however, because it excludes data for Rhode Island in all months and for North Carolina in most months of the year. These states have temporarily stopped reporting SNAP participation data."

Income Inequality:

Greenstein, The Center for Budget and Policy Priorities, 06/13/19

<https://www.cbpp.org/poverty-and-opportunity/commentary-universal-basic-income-may-sound-attractive-but-if-it-occurred>

"But consider what UBI's supporters on the right advocate. **They generally propose UBI as a replacement for the current "welfare state."** That is, they would finance UBI by eliminating all or most programs for people with low or modest incomes. **Consider what that would mean. If you take the dollars targeted on people in the bottom fifth or two-fifths of the population and convert them to universal payments to people all the way up the income scale, you're redistributing income upward. That would increase poverty and inequality rather than reduce them. Yet that's the platform on which the (limited) support for UBI on the right largely rests. It entails abolishing programs from SNAP (food stamps) — which largely eliminated the severe child malnutrition found in parts of the Southern "black belt" and Appalachia in the late 1960s — to the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC), Section 8 rental vouchers, Medicaid, Head Start, child care assistance, and many others. These programs lift tens of millions of people, including millions of children, out of poverty each year and make tens of millions more less poor."**