

THE WHITE HOUSE  
OFFICE OF DOMESTIC POLICY

CAROL H. RASCO  
*Assistant to the President for Domestic Policy*

To: Breed

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WR-POLLS 2/1995

January 11, 1995

DREW E. ALTMAN, Ph.D.  
PRESIDENT

Ms. Carol H. Rasco  
Assistant to the President  
for Domestic Policy  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Carol:

Enclosed are the results of a new Kaiser Family Foundation/Harvard survey on welfare reform we will be releasing in Washington, D.C. on Thursday, January 12.

We found strong support for time limits, denying additional benefits for women who have children while on welfare, caps on welfare spending, and state flexibility. We also found that support for these policies falls off if people believe that they will be implemented in a way that leaves low-income people without some means of basic support.

We would be happy to provide a detailed briefing to you or your staff if that would be helpful.

Sincerely yours,

Drew E. Altman

DEA:lam  
Enclosures

# News Release

EMBARGOED FOR RELEASE:  
9:00 a.m. EST  
Thursday, January 12, 1995



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MENLO PARK  
CALIFORNIA 94025

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Tina Hoff

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## **SURVEY SHOWS "TWO FACES" OF PUBLIC OPINION ON WELFARE REFORM Americans Support Time Limits and Tough Work Requirements, But Reluctant to Abandon Those In Need**

**Public Defines Welfare Broadly  
Understands Key Details of Welfare Programs**

Menlo Park, CA -- A new Kaiser/Harvard survey of Americans nationwide has found that the public supports strong welfare reform measures, such as time limits and work requirements, but is reluctant to simply cut people off and leave them without some means of basic support.

The survey identifies four core beliefs that shape the public's policy preferences. Two lead the public to support time limits and other strong welfare policies: the belief that welfare causes more harm than good because it discourages work and causes family break up, and the belief that welfare costs the taxpayer too much money. But two other core beliefs make the public concerned that these same strong policies will leave low income people without basic support: the belief that lack of economic opportunity as much as personal responsibility is the reason people need welfare, and the belief that both government and people themselves have a shared responsibility for ensuring that people have a minimum standard of living.

Two-thirds (68%) of Americans favor ending welfare payments after two years for all able-bodied welfare recipients, including women with pre-school children, and requiring them to take a job. But support for cutting off payments drops to 26 percent if the job pays low wages that would make it difficult to support a family, and to only 16 percent if the person is unable to find a job.

Large majorities favor government providing job training (87%) and public service jobs (74%) for people on welfare, and providing child care to low-income mothers who work or are in job training (85%). After education, training, health and child care benefits have been provided, 56 percent believe welfare recipients should be required to do community service work in exchange for continued benefits or have benefits cut off after a specified period of time. Only 10 percent believe the government should end all aid under these circumstances, and 25 percent believe the government should cut recipients off only after guaranteeing they have a job.

-- more --

The public's desire to "do something" about welfare is also reflected in support for limits on welfare. Majorities favor requiring mothers to report the name of a child's father before they can receive welfare (81%), setting limits or denying welfare to non-citizens, including most legal immigrants (64%), denying additional benefits to women who have more children while on welfare (59%), and government limiting how fast welfare programs can grow, regardless of how many people may need assistance (capping welfare) (57%).

Nearly equal proportions of Americans say: 1) "We shouldn't let people who can't get or hold a job go hungry or homeless, and we need to continue welfare payments to these people" (44%), and 2) "We should have a firm limit on how long people can stay on welfare, regardless of the consequences, in order to get them to work" (43%).

"The jury is still out on what the public will support on welfare reform. At the moment they want four things that may be incompatible -- get people off welfare within two years, get them jobs that provide a minimum standard of living, don't let families suffer severe hardship, and don't raise taxes or cut government programs to do these things," said Drew Altman, Kaiser Family Foundation president and former welfare commissioner in New Jersey under Governor Tom Kean.

Two-thirds of Americans (66%) oppose a proposal that would end welfare benefits for unmarried women and their children if that meant some of the children would have to be cared for in group homes or orphanages. If such a proposal were enacted, the public overwhelmingly prefers having the government pay for group homes where mothers and their children live together (56%), rather than providing orphanages for the children (8%) or doing nothing (8%). A fourth of respondents said none of the above.

One important caveat should be added. The public is not prepared to sacrifice very much to see reforms enacted. Only about half are willing to pay more taxes or see other programs cut to provide job training (53% willing to 40% unwilling) and public service jobs (47% to 45%).

#### Awareness of Reform Proposals

At this early stage, the public is not yet following the welfare reform debate closely. In sharp contrast to the 47% who said in October 1993 that they were following news stories and other information about health care reform very closely (Kaiser/Harvard Survey, October 1993), only 13% say in this survey they have been following stories about welfare reform very closely.

Only three in ten Americans say they understand President Clinton's welfare proposals very (5%) or fairly well (25%). A similar proportion understand the Republican proposals very (7%) or fairly well (24%).

"Americans do not yet know the consequences of the various welfare reform proposals," said Dr. Robert J. Blendon, Professor and Chairman of the Department of Health Policy and Management at Harvard University. "As the debate continues and begins to focus on the implications of particular proposals -- whether they be severe negative consequences for individuals and families or increased taxes or cuts in other government programs -- the public is likely to become more cautious."

## Welfare Spending

Asked to choose from a list of six areas which two consumed the largest share of federal spending, only 14 percent correctly named Social Security and 37 percent named defense as one of the top two. Four-in-ten Americans (40%) thought welfare was one of the two largest areas of federal spending.

When asked to define welfare, the public identified the following six major federal government programs from a list of nine as being welfare programs: food stamps (93%), AFDC (Aid to Families with Dependent Children) (85%), public housing (85%), WIC (the Women, Infants, and Children program) (72%), the school lunch program (62%) and Medicaid (60%). Most did not regard Supplemental Security Income (SSI), the federal cash assistance program for the aged, blind, and disabled, as welfare. These six major programs labelled by the public as welfare make up 10.2 percent of the 1993 budget, ranking behind defense (21%) and Social Security (21%), and equal to Medicare (10.2%).

## State and Federal Roles

The public wants to see the states play a major role in welfare reform. Given four choices, a majority (52%) thought government officials should experiment with reform at the state level, compared to 29 percent who preferred reform at the national level, 7 percent who wanted to leave welfare as it is, and 6 percent who would prefer to eliminate all welfare benefits.

But Americans are wary of letting states determine their own policies without some federal guidelines. While 36 percent thought each state should determine the best way to aid poor people, 50 percent believed the federal government needs to set guidelines when it gives money to states, in order to assure they will treat everyone fairly and do the right thing for poor people.

A majority of Americans (58%) also favor a "swap" proposal, where states would be in charge of welfare and the federal government would take responsibility for paying for the health care of poor people, instead of both responsibilities being shared as they are now. Twenty-four percent are opposed, and 18 percent said they didn't know.

## Core Beliefs and Values

Americans' beliefs about what policies and reforms should be enacted can be related back to four core values they hold about welfare and poverty:

1) Americans see the welfare system as doing more harm (56%) than good (33%) because they believe it encourages the breakup of the family and discourages work. The overwhelming majority (81%) think that most welfare recipients are able to work. The idea that welfare discourages people from working was identified by half of Americans (49%) as what bothers them most about the current welfare system ranking far ahead of concerns such as costing taxpayers too much (14%) and causing families to break up (13%). Two-thirds (68%) say that welfare encourages women to have more children than they would have if they were not able to get welfare.

2) Most Americans believe the country spends too much (64%) or the right amount (17%) rather than too little (12%) on welfare. They are somewhat divided in their willingness to pay more taxes or see other programs cut to provide job training (53% willing to 40% unwilling) and public service jobs (47% to 45%). The public is also split nearly evenly on whether people who receive money from welfare could get along without it (46%) or really need this help (44%).

3) Americans perceive a variety of reasons for people being on welfare, some rooted in individual responsibility and others in social conditions and lack of economic opportunities. When questioned about possible reasons people are on welfare, most often rated as major reasons were: welfare pays better than some jobs do (71%); people choose not to work (65%); poor education (64%); and women having babies in order to collect additional welfare benefits (62%). Americans are split on whether welfare recipients really want to work (40%) or choose not to (47%). More broadly, 38 percent believe lack of personal effort is the main reason for poverty in the U.S.; 42 percent lack of opportunities and jobs.

But the public also sees economic and social obstacles that prevent people from leaving welfare. The vast majority of Americans (72%) believe there are jobs for most welfare recipients who really want to work. But only 22 percent believe that most of these jobs pay enough to support a family. While 42 percent say "It's important for a mother with young children to stay at home even if it means having to provide her with welfare," 35 percent believe "We should not pay welfare to mothers with young children because it's so important that people work." The survey suggests that because Americans believe that both individuals and society share in the responsibility for people being on welfare, Americans' support for reform proposals may decline if they think that the reform will not lead to a minimal standard of living or will create severe hardship for families.

4) Most Americans believe that government and welfare recipients have a shared responsibility for ensuring that people have a minimum standard of living. Asked who should be primarily responsible for making sure that non-working low-income people have a minimum standard of living, a majority (57%) said that responsibility should be shared between government and people themselves, friends, and voluntary agencies; 26 percent said people themselves and friends and voluntary agencies; and only 14 percent said government should be primarily responsible. Significantly, however, most of those who believe in shared responsibility want government's role to last only for a limited time (71%). Only 25% said government responsibility should last "as long as it takes." The theme is clear: the public believes that able-bodied people have an obligation to help themselves, but also that government has a role in maintaining a safety net for a reasonable but not unlimited period of time.

#### Public Knowledge

With some significant exceptions, the public is reasonably well informed about the welfare system. For example:

- the public (90%) knows that more women and children are on welfare than men. (In 1992, two-thirds of AFDC recipients, or 9.2 million, were children);

- a majority of the public (57%) knows responsibility for running welfare is shared between federal and state governments. (Federal funds pay on average 55% of AFDC benefits plus 50% of administrative costs);
- a plurality (32%) knows how much public assistance mothers are receiving each month. (The average benefit in 1993 was \$399 per month for a family of three);
- seventy-one percent say that they know what Medicaid is and 43 percent know that it pays not only for hospital and doctor services for poor adults and children, but also for services for the elderly in nursing homes and the blind and disabled. (The public was least knowledgeable about Medicaid financing for the blind and disabled, the program's fastest rising major cost).
- the public overwhelmingly believes most people on welfare are minorities. (In 1992, 39 percent of AFDC recipients were white, 37 percent black, 18 percent Hispanic, 3 percent Asian, 1 percent Native American, and 2 percent unknown);
- when asked how long people stay on welfare, 43 percent said continuously until their children grow up, 26 percent said on and off until their children grow up, and 15 percent said a few years before leaving welfare for good. (Thirty-four percent stay on welfare less than one year and another 44 percent for up to five years. A majority of those who leave welfare return later to the welfare rolls. Welfare dependency is characterized more by repeat spells of dependency than continuous dependency on public assistance.)

#### Methodology

The Kaiser/Harvard Survey was a random-sample, telephone survey of adults nationwide. The national sample consisted of 1,200 adults and was conducted between December 27 and 29, 1994. The survey was designed by the Harvard University School of Public Health's Department of Health Policy and Management and the Kaiser Family Foundation, and was conducted by KRC Communications Research, a national opinion research firm located in Newton, Massachusetts. The margin of error in the national sample is plus or minus 3 percent. The survey is the first conducted under a new program, the Kaiser/Harvard program on the Public and Health/Social Policy, designed to monitor public knowledge, values and beliefs on health and health-related issues.

The Kaiser Family Foundation, based in Menlo Park, California, is a non-profit, independent national health care philanthropy and is not associated with Kaiser Permanente or Kaiser Industries. The Foundation's work is focused on four main areas: health policy, reproductive health, HIV, and health and development in South Africa. The Foundation does not support any particular proposal or approach to welfare reform.



## **KAISER/HARVARD PROGRAM ON THE PUBLIC AND HEALTH/SOCIAL POLICY**

**Survey on Welfare Reform: Basic Values and  
Beliefs; Support for Policy Approaches;  
Knowledge About Key Programs**

**January 1995**

**EMBARGOED FOR RELEASE UNTIL:**

**9:00 A.M. EST, THURSDAY, JANUARY 12, 1995**

**HARVARD UNIVERSITY**  
Robert J. Blendon, Sc.D.  
Director, Kaiser/Harvard Program on the  
Public and Health/Social Policy  
Professor and Chairman, Department of Health  
Policy and Management  
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**KAISER FAMILY FOUNDATION**  
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TABLE 1

**DOES THE WELFARE SYSTEM DO MORE GOOD OR MORE HARM?  
Views of American Adults By Political Party Affiliation**

	<u>Total</u>	<u>Dem.</u>	<u>Rep.</u>
The welfare system does more harm than good, because it encourages the breakup of the family and discourages work	56%	50%	72%
The welfare system does more good than harm, because it provides assistance and training for those who are without jobs and are poor	33%	43%	22%
Don't know/Refused	11%	7%	7%

Source: Kaiser/Harvard Program on the Public and Health/Social Policy Survey, January 1995

TABLE 2

**ARE PEOPLE WHO RECEIVE WELFARE ABLE TO WORK?**  
**Views of American Adults**

More people who receive welfare...

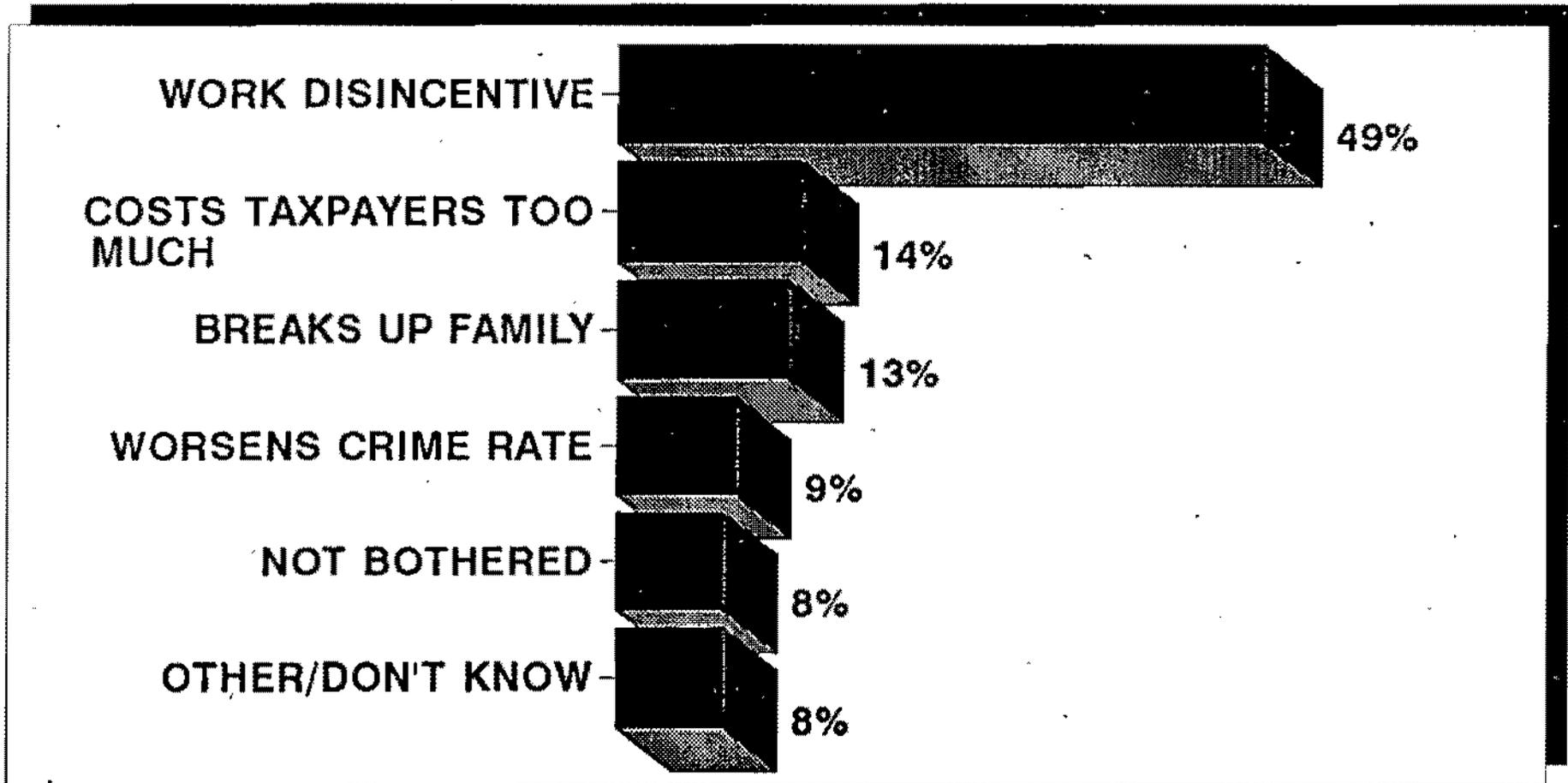
Are able to work	81%
Have disabilities that keep them from working	9%
Other (vol.)	6%
Don't know	4%

Source: Kaiser/Harvard Program on the Public and Health/Social Policy Survey, January 1995

TABLE 3

# WHAT BOTHERS AMERICANS ABOUT THE WELFARE SYSTEM

## VIEWS OF AMERICAN ADULTS

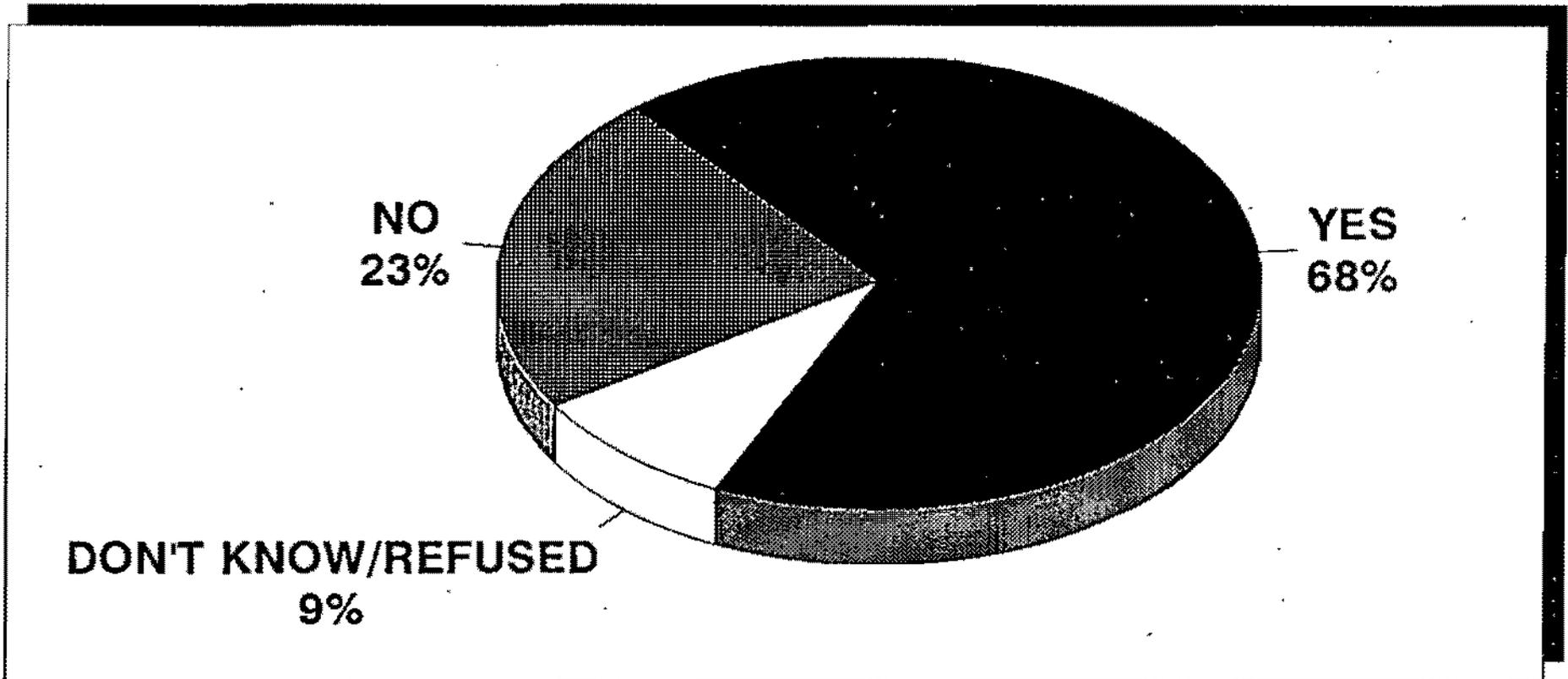


Source: Kaiser/Harvard Program on the Public and Health/Social Policy, January 1995

**TABLE 4**

**DOES WELFARE ENCOURAGE WOMEN TO HAVE MORE CHILDREN THAN THEY WOULD HAVE IF THEY WERE NOT ABLE TO GET WELFARE?**

**VIEWS OF AMERICAN ADULTS**



Source: Kaiser/Harvard Program on the Public and Health/Social Policy Survey, January 1995

TABLE 5

**AMERICANS' VIEWS ABOUT U.S. SPENDING ON WELFARE**  
**Views of American Adults By Political Party Affiliation**

	<u>Total</u>	<u>Dem.</u>	<u>Rep.</u>
Spend Too Much	64%	57%	78%
Spend Too Little	12%	14%	5%
Spend About Right Amount	17%	26%	9%
Don't Know	7%	3%	8%

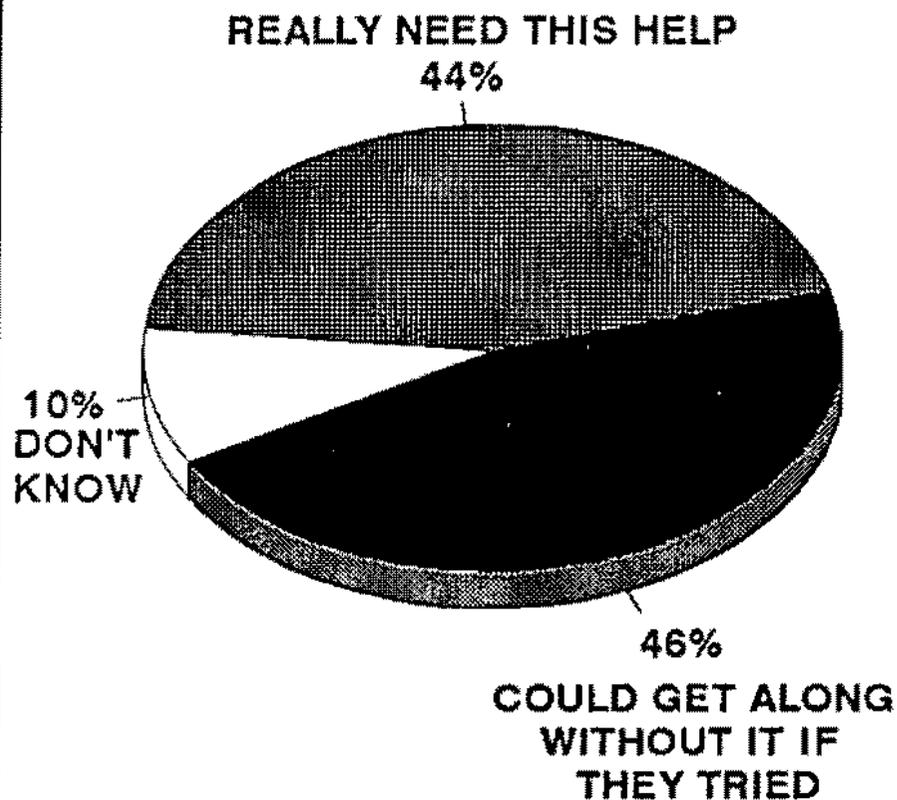
Source: Kaiser/Harvard Program on the Public and Health/Social Policy Survey, January 1995

TABLE 6

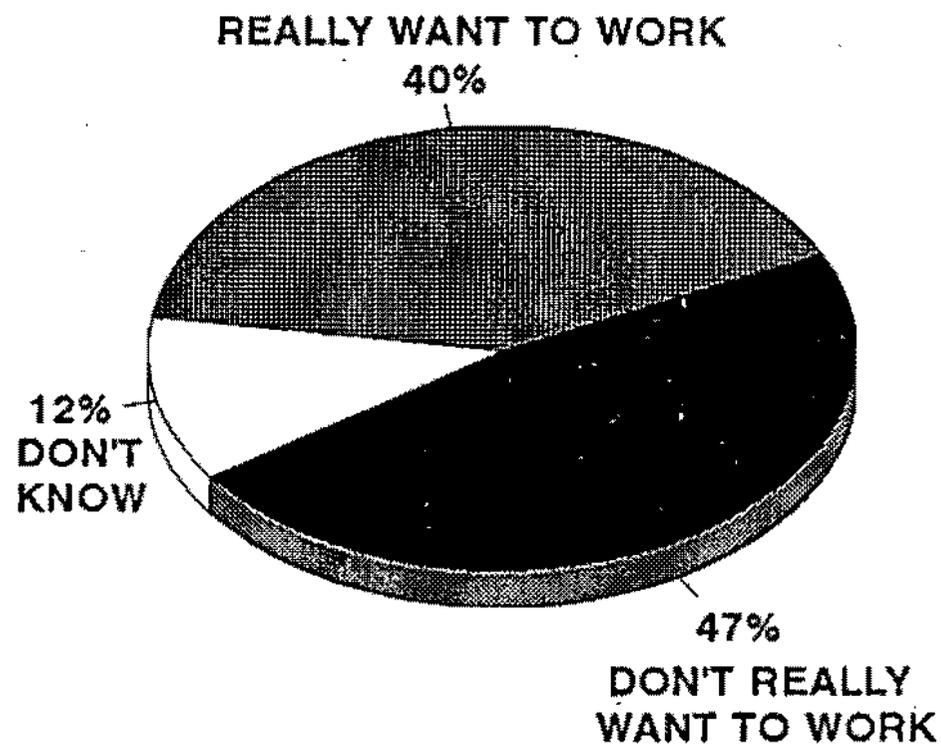
# AMERICANS' VIEWS OF WELFARE RECIPIENTS

## VIEWS OF AMERICAN ADULTS

### *MOST PEOPLE WHO RECEIVE MONEY FROM WELFARE*

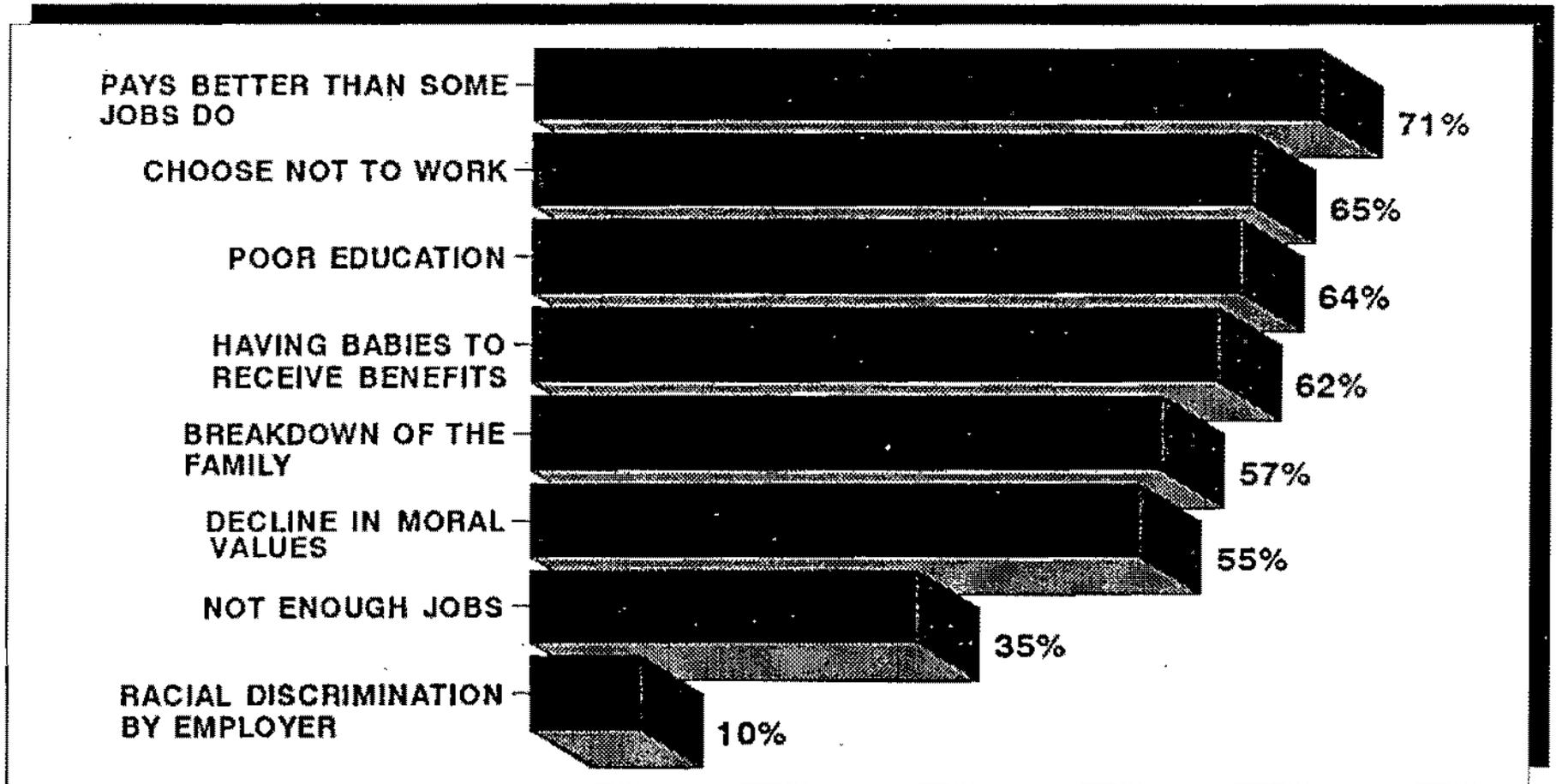


### *MOST WELFARE RECIPIENTS*



Source: Kaiser/Harvard Program on the Public and Health/Social Policy Survey, January 1995

TABLE 7  
MAJOR REASONS WHY PEOPLE  
ARE ON WELFARE  
VIEWS OF AMERICAN ADULTS



Source: Kaiser/Harvard Program on the Public and Health/Social Policy Survey, January 1995

TABLE 8

**AMERICANS' VIEWS OF WELFARE RECIPIENTS**  
**Views of American Adults By Political Party Affiliation**

	<u>Total</u>	<u>Dem.</u>	<u>Rep.</u>
<b>Most people who receive money from welfare...</b>			
Could get along without it if they tried	46%	40%	56%
Really need this help	44%	50%	34%
Don't know/Refused	10%	10%	10%
<b>Most welfare recipients...</b>			
Do not really want to work	47%	46%	58%
Really want to work	40%	44%	30%
Don't know/Refused	12%	10%	13%

Source: Kaiser/Harvard Program on the Public and Health/Social Policy Survey, January 1995

TABLE 9

**AMERICANS' VIEWS ABOUT THE AVAILABILITY  
OF JOBS FOR WELFARE RECIPIENTS**  
Views of American Adults By Political Party Affiliation

	<u>Total</u>	<u>Dem.</u>	<u>Rep.</u>
There are jobs available for most welfare recipients who really want to work	72%	62%	85%
Among all of those who responded to the question:			
And most of these jobs pay enough to support a family	22%	16%	31%
But most of these jobs do not pay enough to support a family	37%	35%	40%
But don't know if they pay enough or depends on family size	12%	11%	14%
Jobs are not available	24%	36%	12%
Don't know if jobs are available	4%	2%	3%

Source: Kaiser/Harvard Program on the Public and Health/Social Policy Survey, January 1995

**TABLE 10**

**AMERICANS' VIEWS OF WELFARE MOTHERS OF YOUNG CHILDREN**  
**Views of American Adults**

<b>It's important for a mother with young children to stay at home even if it means having to provide her with welfare</b>	<b>42%</b>
<b>We should not pay welfare to mothers with young children because it's so important that people work</b>	<b>35%</b>
<b>Other (vol.)</b>	<b>14%</b>
<b>Don't know/Refused</b>	<b>10%</b>

**Source: Kaiser/Harvard Program on the Public and Health/Social Policy Survey, January 1995**

TABLE 11

**AMERICANS' VALUES CONCERNING THE WELFARE SYSTEM**  
**Views of American Adults By Political Affiliation**

	<u>Total</u>	<u>Dem.</u>	<u>Rep.</u>
We shouldn't let people who can't get or hold a job go hungry or homeless, and we need to continue welfare payments to these people	44%	44%	45%
We should have a firm limit on how long people can stay on welfare, regardless of the consequences, in order to get them to work	43%	43%	44%
Other (vol.)	7%	6%	6%
Don't know/Refused	5%	7%	5%

Source: Kaiser/Harvard Program on the Public and Health/Social Policy Survey, January 1995

TABLE 12

**AMERICANS' VIEWS OF WHO SHOULD BE PRIMARILY RESPONSIBLE  
FOR MAKING SURE THAT NON-WORKING LOW-INCOME PEOPLE  
HAVE A MINIMUM STANDARD OF LIVING**  
Views of American Adults

Responsibility should be shared	57%
People themselves, friends, and voluntary agencies should be primarily responsible	26%
Government should be primarily responsible	14%
Don't know	3%

Source: Kaiser/Harvard Program on the Public and Health/Social Policy Survey, January 1995

**TABLE 13**

**PUBLIC KNOWLEDGE ABOUT THE WELFARE SYSTEM**

- **90% know that more women and children are on welfare than men**
- **A majority (57%) knows that responsibility for running welfare is shared between federal and state governments**
- **A plurality (32%) knows how much public assistance mothers are receiving each month**
- **71% say they know what Medicaid is and 43% know it pays not only for hospital and doctor services for poor adults and children, but also for services for the elderly in nursing homes and for the blind and disabled**
- **A majority (57%) know that most people on welfare are minorities**

Source: Kaiser/Harvard Program on the Public and Health/Social Policy Survey, January 1995

TABLE 14

**AMERICANS' VIEWS ABOUT WHICH GOVERNMENT PROGRAMS ARE  
WELFARE PROGRAMS**  
Views of American Adults  
(from a list of 9 programs)

	% saying each of the following is a welfare program
Food stamps	93%
AFDC, or Aid to Families With Dependent Children	85%
Public housing	85%
WIC, or the Women, Infants, and Children program	72%
The school lunch program	62%
Medicaid	60%
SSI, or Supplemental Security Income	43%
Medicare	30%
Social Security	15%

Source: Kaiser/Harvard Program on the Public and Health/Social Policy Survey, January 1995

TABLE 15

**WHAT PUBLIC VIEWS AS WELFARE\***  
(from a list of 9 programs)

<u>Programs</u>	<u>Billions of dollars as of FY 1993</u>
Medicaid	\$76
Food Stamps	\$25
AFDC (Family Support)	\$16
Child Nutrition Programs/WIC	\$ 7
Public Housing Assistance	<u>\$20</u>
Total Federal Spending on These Programs	\$144
Total Federal Outlays	\$1,408
Public's Definition of Welfare as Percentage of Total Federal Outlays	10.2%

Source: Congressional Budget Office, 1994 and House Committee on Ways and Means, 1993

\*Based on the majority of responses provided in the Kaiser/Harvard Program on the Public and Health/Social Policy Survey, January 1995 and correlated to the federal budget FY1993

**TABLE 16**

**AMERICANS' VIEWS OF THE TWO LARGEST  
AREAS OF FEDERAL GOVERNMENT SPENDING**  
Views of American Adults  
(from a list of six programs)

1.	Foreign aid	41%
2(t).	Welfare	40%
2(t).	Interest on the federal debt	40%
4.	Defense	37%
5.	Social Security	14%
6.	Health	8%

Source: Kaiser/Harvard Program on the Public and Health/Social Policy Survey, January 1995

TABLE 17

<b>AMERICANS' VIEWS OF ENDING WELFARE PAYMENTS TO ABLE-BODIED RECIPIENTS AFTER TWO YEARS</b> Views of American Adults	
Favor ending welfare payments to able-bodied welfare recipients, including women with pre-school children, after two years, and requiring them to take a job	68%
Would continue to favor even if the job the person takes pays a low wage that would make it difficult to support a family	26%
Would continue to favor even if the person is unable to get a job	16%

Source: Kaiser/Harvard Program on the Public and Health/Social Policy Survey, January 1995

TABLE 18

<b>AMERICANS' VIEWS ON WHAT SHOULD HAPPEN IF WELFARE RECIPIENTS ARE CUT OFF AFTER A SPECIFIED PERIOD OF TIME AND AFTER EDUCATION, TRAINING, AND HEALTH AND CHILD BENEFITS HAVE BEEN PROVIDED</b> Views of American Adults	
Favor requiring welfare recipients to do <u>community service work</u> in exchange for continued benefits	56%
Favor cutting off benefits and guaranteeing jobs to recipients	25%
Favor cutting off benefits	10%
Don't know/Refused	10%

Source: Kaiser/Harvard Program on the Public and Health/Social Policy Survey, January 1995

TABLE 19

**THE PRINCIPAL GOAL OF WELFARE REFORM**  
**Views of American Adults By Political Affiliation**

	<u>Total</u>	<u>Dem.</u>	<u>Rep.</u>
Get people off welfare, but only if we can get them decent jobs by providing job training and education	63%	66%	60%
Get people off welfare even if it means they have to take a low-paying job	27%	22%	33%
Get people off welfare regardless of the consequences	6%	7%	5%
Provide people on welfare with more money so that they have a higher standard of living	2%	5%	2%
Other (vol.)	2%	1%	1%

Source: Kaiser/Harvard Program on the Public and Health/Social Policy Survey, January 1995

TABLE 20

**PUBLIC SUPPORT FOR PROPOSALS TO CHANGE THE WELFARE SYSTEM**  
**Views of American Adults**

	<u>Favor</u>	<u>Oppose</u>	<u>Don't Know/Refused</u>
<b><u>I. Government Should Provide Training &amp; Support</u></b>			
Government should provide job training for people on welfare	87%	10%	3%
Government should provide child care to low-income mothers who are on welfare who take jobs or are in job training	85%	13%	2%
Government should provide public sector jobs for people on welfare	74%	21%	5%
<b><u>II. Government Should Get Tough</u></b>			
Government should require each mother to report the name of a child's father before she can receive welfare	81%	16%	3%
Government should limit or deny welfare aid to non-citizens. This would include most legal immigrants as well as all illegal immigrants	64%	27%	9%
Women who have additional children while on welfare should not receive additional benefits for those children	59%	34%	8%
Government should set a limit on how fast the cost of welfare programs can grow, regardless of how many people may need them	57%	31%	13%

Source: Kaiser/Harvard Program on the Public and Health/Social Policy Survey, January 1995

TABLE 21

**AMERICANS' WILLINGNESS TO PAY MORE IN TAXES  
OR SEE OTHER PROGRAMS CUT TO PROVIDE JOB TRAINING  
AND PUBLIC SECTOR JOBS SO PEOPLE CAN GET OFF WELFARE**  
Views of American Adults

	<u>Willing</u>	<u>Unwilling</u>	<u>Don't Know/ Refused</u>
Job training	53%	40%	7%
Public service jobs	47%	45%	8%

Source: Kaiser/Harvard Program on the Public and Health/Social Policy Survey, January 1995

TABLE 22

**AMERICANS' VIEWS ABOUT ENDING WELFARE BENEFITS TO  
UNMARRIED MOTHERS AND THEIR CHILDREN  
AND ABOUT CARE IN GROUP HOMES AND ORPHANAGES**  
Views of American Adults

	<u>Favor</u>	<u>Oppose</u>	<u>Don't Know/ Refused</u>
A proposal that would end all welfare benefits for unmarried mothers and their children, even if it means that some of the children would have to be cared for in group homes or orphanages	25%	66%	9%

If such a proposal were enacted, which one of the following three things would you prefer that government do for unmarried mothers with children who cannot support themselves?

The government pays for group homes where mothers and their children live together	56%
The government provides orphanages for the children	8%
The government does nothing	8%
None of the above	23%
Don't know	5%

Source: Kaiser/Harvard Program on the Public and Health/Social Policy Survey, January 1995

TABLE 23

**AMERICANS' VIEWS OF WHO SHOULD BE PRIMARILY RESPONSIBLE  
FOR MAKING SURE THAT NON-WORKING LOW-INCOME PEOPLE  
HAVE A MINIMUM STANDARD OF LIVING**

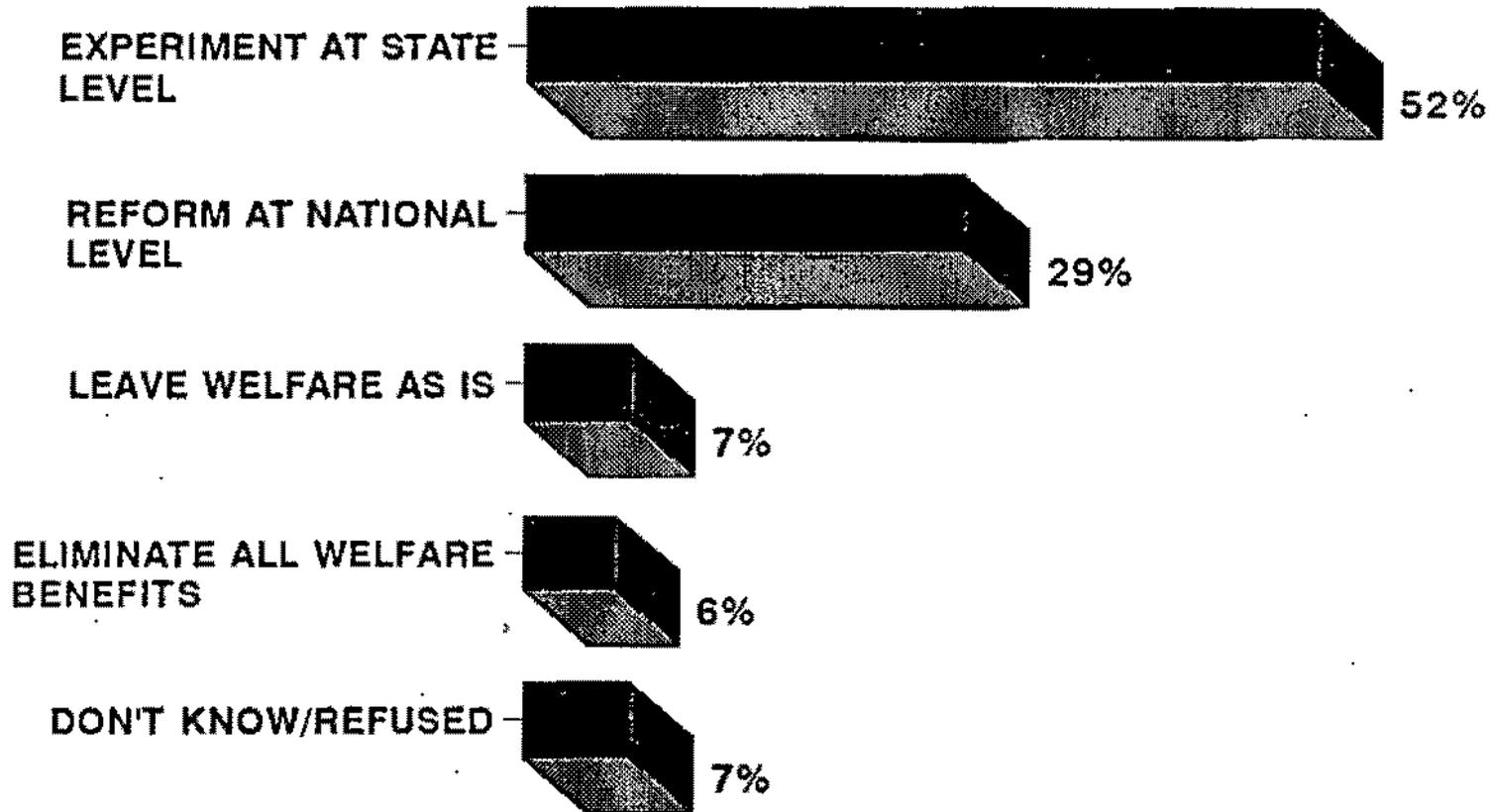
Views of American Adults

	<u>Total</u>	<u>Dem.</u>	<u>Rep.</u>
Government should be primarily responsible	14%	20%	7%
People themselves, friends, and voluntary agencies should be primarily responsible	26%	22%	27%
Responsibility should be shared —	57%	54%	62%
Among those who believe the responsibility should be shared:			
With government role lasting only for a limited time	71%	63%	77%
With government role lasting as long as it takes for the individual to get a job	25%	33%	17%
But don't know how long government role should last	4%	2%	5%
Don't know who should be primarily responsible	3%	4%	4%

Source: Kaiser/Harvard Program on the Public and Health/Social Policy Survey, January 1995

TABLE 24

**STATES VS. FEDERAL GOVERNMENT**  
**QUESTION: REGARDING WELFARE REFORM, DO YOU**  
**THINK THAT GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS SHOULD...**

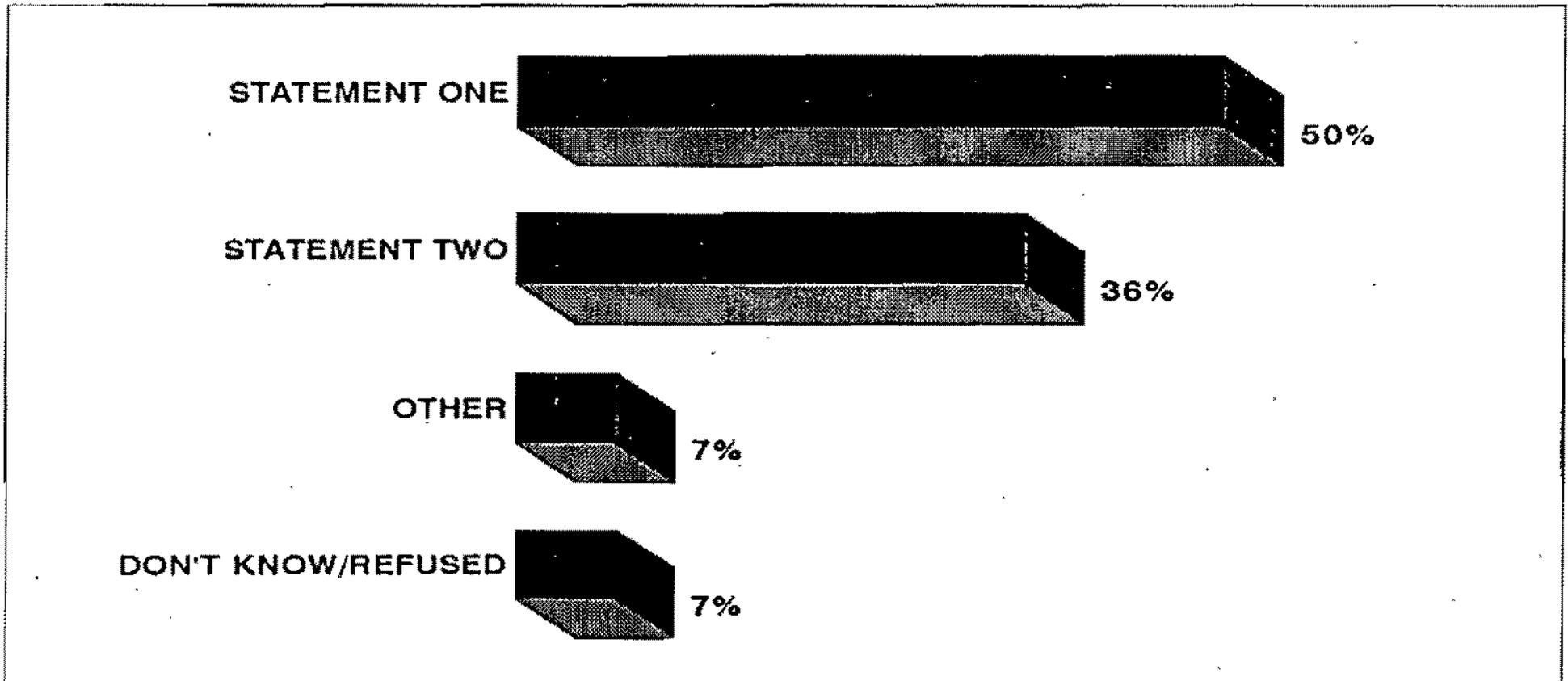


Source: Kaiser/Harvard Program on the Public and Health/Social Policy Survey, January 1995

## TABLE 25 HOW MUCH STATE FLEXIBILITY?

**QUESTION: WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS COMES CLOSER TO YOUR POINT OF VIEW:**

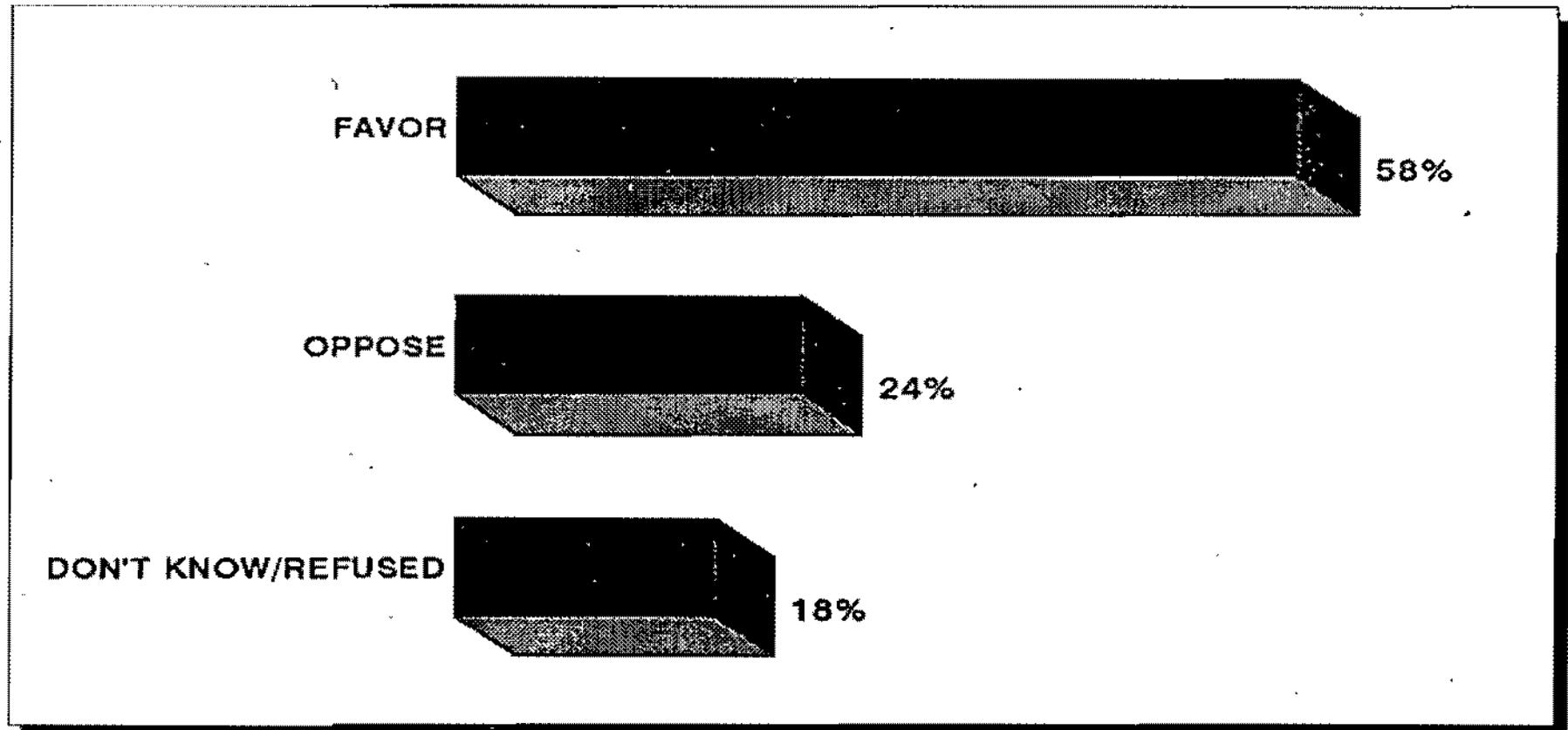
- (1) The federal government has to set guidelines when it gives money to states for welfare in order to assure that the states will treat everyone fairly and do the right thing for poor people.
- (2) Each state should be able to determine on its own the best way to aid poor people and the federal government should just give them the money without telling them what to do.



Source: Kaiser/Harvard Program on the Public and Health/Social Policy Survey, January 1995

## TABLE 26 THE WELFARE/MEDICAID "SWAP"

**QUESTION:** TODAY, THE COSTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES FOR WELFARE AND THE MEDICAID PROGRAM ARE SHARED BY THE FEDERAL AND STATE GOVERNMENTS. RECENTLY SOME PEOPLE HAVE SUGGESTED DIVIDING THESE RESPONSIBILITIES DIFFERENTLY, WITH THE STATES BEING IN CHARGE OF WELFARE AND THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT TAKING THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR PAYING FOR THE HEALTH CARE OF POOR PEOPLE. DO YOU FAVOR OR OPPOSE THIS "SWAP" PROPOSAL?



Source: Kaiser/Harvard Program on the Public and Health/Social Policy Survey, January 1995



# CENTER ON BUDGET AND POLICY PRIORITIES

WR-  
Pills

## PUBLIC ATTITUDES TOWARD WELFARE REFORM

Geoffrey Garin of Peter D. Hart Research Associates and Linda DiVall of American Viewpoint, leading Democratic and Republican pollsters, recently collaborated on a study of public attitudes toward the welfare system and proposals for reform. In the enclosed document by Garin and DiVall, the pollsters summarize their findings from the public opinion research.

The research included eight focus groups as well as a nationally representative telephone survey of 1,020 registered voters conducted in November. The findings provide insights about voters' attitudes, values, and perceptions regarding the upcoming welfare reform debate. The poll also explores voters' opinions about many of the specific legislative proposals that lawmakers will consider.

The research was jointly commissioned by the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, the Center for Law and Social Policy, the Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies, the National Council of La Raza, and the Children's Defense Fund. If you would like further information, please call Susan Steinmetz or Alison Pion at the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities (202-408-1080).



Date: May 20, 1994  
To: The Welfare Reform Group  
From: Joe Goode and Stan Greenberg

RE: Welfare Reform -- Priorities and Funding

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The public is nearly unanimous in their support for a welfare reform program that provides job training and child care, but then requires an individual to go to work after two years. Voters are equally supportive of a variety of ways to pay for these changes, although the most popular funding proposals represent reform themselves, such as enforcement of child support payments and immigrant sponsors taking responsibility for new arrivals. The system is clearly broken and voters are willing to try a variety of measures, both as part of reform and paying for reform, to fix it.

Funding welfare reform by denying benefits to legal immigrants is a popular, but not overpowering, proposal. Almost two-thirds (64 percent) favor this Republican approach. However, when contrasted against Democratic alternatives including cuts in welfare for the wealthy, cuts in other programs, making work pay and especially enforcement of child support payments from deadbeat dads, the Republican funding scheme falls well behind.

There is a definite attraction to the Republican proposal, but most voters are looking for reforms that will reduce the welfare caseload without creating new hungry, homeless and sick people on the streets. Voters are not necessarily sympathetic towards immigrant aliens, but they recognize that cutting them off entirely will just create more problems in the long run. Clear common sense reforms -- cracking down on deadbeat dads, identifying welfare cheats, making sponsors take responsibility for new immigrants -- all attack the problem without creating additional burdens.

Still, voters are fed up with the current system and are willing to embrace some harsh alternatives. While the "two years and work" proposal is clearly the top priority, near majorities are willing to stop additional benefits to women who have new children while on welfare and to require strict measures like fingerprinting to ensure that people do not get benefits in more than one locality. Almost three-quarters (71 percent) favor limiting benefits to individuals who abuse alcohol or drugs. Voters want policies that focus on the individual and require them to take responsibility for their actions.



African-American and Hispanic voters are no less supportive of welfare reform than white voters. Indeed, Hispanics are nearly identical to whites in their priorities for change. Black voters focus more on policies that would help keep people off welfare in the first place – a campaign against teen pregnancy or day care subsidies for low income working families – but they are also strongly supportive of aggressive child support enforcement and "two years and work."

The major findings are set out below:

- **Unanimous support for two years program.** There is virtually no opposition to a welfare reform program that expands job training and day care, but then cuts off welfare benefits after two years and requires people to work. Regardless of whether the plan is introduced as Congress' or President Clinton's, it garners almost unanimous support – 88 percent in favor. There is little difference between races: blacks (82 percent favor), whites (88 percent), and Hispanics (90 percent) overwhelmingly favor the plan.
- **Democratic funding approach runs ahead of Republican alternative.** Voters are more supportive of Democratic plans to cover reform costs with a combination of reduction in welfare rolls by making work pay more, cuts in welfare for the wealthy, and a crackdown on welfare fraud. When compared to the Democrats, the Republican approach of barring benefits to legal immigrants maintains support only among core Republican constituencies.
- **Child support payments key to reform and financing.** The public's top priority in welfare reform is a program of aggressive child support enforcement (65 percent single highest or top few priorities). They are much more likely to back a Democratic funding proposal that includes "strict enforcement of child support payments" (61 percent) than an alternative without such a program (51 percent). Republican women abandon the Republican financing proposal when the Democratic alternative includes a child support provision.
- **Responsibility, individual accountability important to reform.** There is little about the current system that voters want to maintain, and they are particularly supportive of reforms and funding proposals that promote responsibility and accountability – such as sponsors taking responsibility for new immigrants or limiting benefits to drug and alcohol abusers. Minorities are strongly supportive of a national campaign against teen pregnancy.



- **Perot voters eager for reforms.** Welfare reform is popular with most voters, but Perot supporters are especially enthusiastic. Three quarters place "two years and work" in their top few priorities, compared to 63 percent of Bush voters and 59 percent of Clinton voters. Perot voters are supportive of almost every type of reform, resembling Democrats on day care subsidies but looking like Republicans on denying additional benefits to women who have children while on welfare.

Priorities for Welfare Reform

Voters are clear in their top priorities for welfare reform -- they want fathers to take responsibility for their children and they want people off the welfare rolls and into work. Other components of reform are grouped together, but there is a clear desire to eliminate the fraud voters associate with welfare and a call for individuals to take responsibility for their own lives:

	Percent Top Few
Aggressive child support enforcement	65
Expand job training and day care but cut off benefits after 2 years and require people to go to work	63
Strict measures like fingerprinting to make sure that people don't receive benefits in more than one locality	51
National campaign against teen pregnancy	48
Stop additional benefits to women who have new children while on welfare	48
Day care subsidies for low income working families	48
Require teen-age parents to finish school and live at home with parent or responsible adult	45

Child support enforcement is universally popular. There is almost no gender or partisan variation, although independents (71 percent top few priorities) and Republicans (67 percent) are somewhat more supportive. The two years/ job training initiative is also strong among almost every group. Interestingly, Perot voters place it much higher in their top priorities (75 percent) than either Bush (63 percent) or Clinton voters (59 percent).

Perot voters in general are more supportive of every reform, looking like Clinton supporters on day care subsidies (53 percent each top few priorities, compared to 42 percent of Bush voters), but looking like Bush supporters on denying additional benefits to welfare mothers who have new children (54 percent each, compared to 41 percent of Clinton voters). They are open to almost any type of reform that will change the system, including a program to stop teen pregnancy.



Black and Hispanic voters have different top priorities than whites, but their overall agendas are similar. Blacks place the single highest priority on a campaign to end teen pregnancy (21 percent single highest priority) followed by child support enforcement (18 percent). Hispanics split between two years/ job training (22 percent), a teen pregnancy initiative (20 percent) and fingerprinting (20 percent). Whites place their top initiatives as two years/ job training (20 percent) and child support enforcement (17 percent).

Blacks vary somewhat in their overall rankings of the "two years and work" initiative. Child support enforcement is by far ranked number one (67 percent single highest or top few priorities), with day care subsidies (54 percent), finger printing (52 percent), teen pregnancy (52 percent) and "two years" (51 percent) essentially tied for second.

Funding Alternatives

There is strong support for all funding alternatives tested, including denying benefits to legal immigrants. Tested individually, most of the Democrat alternatives run ahead of the Republican plan -- except the welfare for the wealthy provisions. But eliminating these tax breaks and subsidies is more popular with Democratic voters, and will help to consolidate support for the overall plan. Most of the other proposals are more popular with independent and Republican voters than they are with Democrats, although Democrats provide at least majority support for each one. The proposals rank as follows:

	Percent Favor
Require gamblers to pay withholding tax	83
Require immigrant sponsors to take responsibility for those immigrants for 5 years	77
Deny benefits to new immigrants until they become citizens	73
Limit benefits to drug and alcohol abusers	71
Eliminate benefits to legal immigrants	64
Eliminate tax breaks for annuities	62
Cut farm subsidies for wealthy farmers	61



Eliminating benefits for legal immigrants is an attractive alternative for many swing voters. Indeed, more independents favor the proposal (71 percent) than Republicans (69 percent). Even a majority of Democrats support the idea (56 percent).

While voters find the GOP scheme attractive, they do not stay with it when contrasted with a Democratic alternative. When asked to choose between two approaches, the Democratic approach wins a majority each time. A Democratic alternative that includes aggressive child support enforcement runs far ahead of the Republican plan:

Welfare for Wealthy/ Work Contrast	Fraud/ Deadbeat Dad Contrast
<i>The Democrats pay for their reforms by cutting welfare for the wealthy in the form of tax breaks and subsidies, and reducing the welfare rolls by making work pay with more tax breaks for the working poor.</i> 51 percent	<i>The Democrats pay for their reforms with spending cuts in other programs, by cracking down on welfare fraud and with strict enforcement of child support payments from deadbeat dads.</i> 61 percent
<i>The Republicans pay for their reforms by barring further welfare benefits to legal immigrants who are not American citizens.</i> 34 percent	<i>The Republicans pay for their reforms by barring further welfare benefits to legal immigrants who are not American citizens.</i> 27 percent

The first approach (welfare for wealthy) breaks out largely along partisan lines, although nearly one-third of Republicans back the Democratic alternative. A bare majority of Perot voters also sides with the Democrats. When the Democratic approach includes a crackdown on welfare fraud and deadbeat dads, a plurality of Republicans back the Democratic approach. Most of this movement comes from Republican women -- 53 percent back the Democratic plan (compared to just 27 percent on the first alternative). Perot voters back the deadbeat dad proposal by 62 to 24 percent.

Voters are most concerned about the effects of denying benefits to legal aliens. The strongest arguments against the funding proposal focus on the costs of dealing with these people when they get sick (62 percent serious doubts) and the possibility of more hungry and homeless people in their communities (60 percent). Arguments dealing with constitutionality and the legal status of immigrants are strong but less effective. Groups that are most responsive to the arguments against denying benefits to legal immigrants are mostly non-college (74 percent, 46 percent high school or less) and disproportionately older (47 percent). A plurality (40 percent) are older non-college voters.

WR Polls

April 22, 1994.

NOTE TO RAHM EMANUEL  
BRUCE REED  
FROM: JODY GREENSTONE *JH*  
SUBJECT: WELFARE REFORM

FYI - I have attached recent Times/Mirror polling information on welfare and Pete Wilson's attack on using legal immigrant benefits to fund welfare reform. The poll, consistent with other polling data, finds that although welfare is not a top priority issue (less than 2% list it as a major problem), it is uniformly considered "odious." As I am sure you have already determined, this suggests that, in addition to improving the welfare system, this issue will be significant for other reasons which are arguably even more important:

- 1) Follow Through - Welfare Reform allows the President to follow through on perhaps his most memorable campaign promise.
- 2) Values - Welfare Reform gives the President a platform to reinforce the values of family, community, opportunity and responsibility -- reinforcing his New Democrat credentials.
- 3) Reinventing Government - Welfare Reform will be another tangible example of reinventing government.

The Wilson comments could prove useful vis-a-vis the Republican plan and as yet another way in which we are thinking about California, Texas and Florida's best interests.

cc: Melissa Skolfield

# ATTITUDES TOWARD WELFARE

Welfare barely registers as a top priority issue, certainly far below crime, health care and jobs on the consciousness of Americans. Only 2% said welfare was a top national problem, and it was not mentioned as a community problem.

Yet people have strong views about it. Fully 60% said the nation is losing ground on the issue, for example, which was not far below the response on crime and considerably above the responses on unemployment and health care. At the local level, 49% said their communities were losing ground on the welfare problem.

but  
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issue  
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## Relevance

Welfare concerns come up less often than the other issues in private conversation. Those who do talk about welfare issues are mostly women, older Americans, and those with marginally lower incomes (between \$20,000 and \$30,000 a year).

This relative silence is not because Americans do not know welfare recipients. Almost one in four respondents (24%) had a family member who was a current recipient (8%) or a past recipient (16%). The poor, non-white, and less educated were disproportionately represented among the recipients.

A striking finding is that welfare is considered odious by every demographic subgroup in the survey. Fully 75% of respondents said the current welfare system changes things for the worse by making the recipient dependent on the government. Only 12% said it creates change for the better by helping those unable to support themselves, a figure that is less than the percentage of those who are now or were recipients of welfare.

The highest pro-welfare responses recorded -- those who believe welfare is good -- was 28% among non-whites, 20% among those with less than high school education, and 19% among Democrats. Among those who said welfare should be a top priority for Clinton, 90% said welfare makes things worse rather than better.

## Confidence

Welfare appears to be regarded even by its recipients as a failed government program, and the public has little confidence that its elected officials can reform the system. Respondents expressed only marginally more confidence in Clinton (48%) than no confidence (45%), and the same with Congressional Republicans (45% and 43%, respectively). They voiced marginally no confidence in Democrats (47% no confidence, 42% confidence) and in local government officials (49% and 41%, respectively).

## Solutions

The public takes a hard line for the most part, on what should be done about welfare. It would require everyone on welfare, even mothers of young children, to do some kind of work for their

checks. It would forbid women on welfare to get a larger check when she has another child. It would put a two-year limit on receiving welfare.

Specifically, a total of 89% said the welfare situation would be improved to some degree (62% said improved a lot, another 27% said improved a little) if all welfare recipients worked. A total of 74% said it would be improved (51% said a lot, 23% said a little) by barring larger checks for additional babies. A total of 78% said it would be improved (50% said a lot, 28% said a little) by putting a two-year limit on welfare benefits.

Among the demographic groups favoring a solution that would require all to work were above-average percentages of women, Bush voters, Perot voters, respondents over 50 years old and those with income over \$50,000 a year. Those favoring no checks for extra children were particularly women, the older group, Bush voters and rural Americans. Those favoring the two-year limit were again older Americans, Perot voters, and respondents in the south.

But the public was not exclusively remorseless. A total of 92% supported new government programs for job training and public service jobs for welfare recipients; 61% said these would help a lot, 31% said help a little. Similarly, a total of 75% said guaranteed health insurance would help (46% said a lot, 29% said a little).

The demographic groups favoring both of these relatively softer measures were disproportionately women, youth under 30, Democrats, Clinton voters and respondents in the east. In addition, non-whites were highly attracted to the training and public service job option, while Perot voters leaned toward the guaranteed health insurance.

A final instructive correlation is that among those who felt welfare was a top priority issue, 70% want to require all recipients to work and 70% also want no bigger check for welfare mothers who bear more children. But only 57% would support job training and public service jobs to get people off welfare.

### *Sacrifice*

Somewhat surprising, in view of the wide-spread antipathy to welfare, was that a majority of respondents (56%) said they were willing to pay higher taxes for job training and public service jobs to help people get off welfare. A significant minority, 39%, said it was not willing to pay more for such reform.

Among those who in above-average numbers would pay higher taxes were college graduates, youth, Democrats, Independents, non-whites, Clinton supporters, and big city residents.

chances appear slight given that he was scratched from consideration" the last time. "As described, the list would appear to meet Clinton's stated objectives of racial and gender diversity, with its two women and three minority candidates. Cabranes would be the first Latino on the high court; Kearse would be the first black woman. Days is also black. "But several officials said that, at least for now, the selection appears likely to develop as Mitchell vs. everybody else." A legal opinion from the DoJ legal counsel Walter Dellinger is expected later this week on whether appointment Mitchell "can be squared with the constitutional clause barring appointment of a member of Congress to a job for which the salary has been increased during the member's term" (Lauter/Ostrow, L.A. TIMES, 4/12). Clinton is expected to meet with Mitchell "quickly" (BOSTON GLOBE, 4/12).

COMMENT: An ATLANTA CONSTITUTION editorial argues against Mitchell serving concurrently as Court nominee and Maj. Leader (4/10). N.Y. NEWSDAY's Nelson writes the nominee should not be an atty: "Insane! you will say. Why, why, why, I might just as well propose that the next chief of brain surgery at Mt. Sinai Hospital not be a doctor. ... Lawyers should be clerks. They shouldn't have a monopoly on running the country" (4/10). W. POST's Dionne argues for naming a politician: "My guess is that a politician, even a liberal politician, would be especially wary of getting the courts that deeply involved in matters that ought to be settled by politicians" (4/12).

\*3 MAJORITY LEADER: BREAUX EXIT INCREASES ODDS OF FORD RUN  
Louisville COURIER-JOURNAL's Brown reports, in the wake of Sen. John Breau's (D-LA) decision not to run to succeed retiring Senate Dem leader George Mitchell, "the odds appeared to increase" that Sen. Maj. Whip Wendell Ford (D-KY) will run. Both Breau and Ford "would have competed for votes from the party's Southern wing, and Breau's departure presumably improves Ford's chances." Ford "said he is still undecided about the race" and a Ford aide said Breau's decision is "unrelated to Ford and should not be seen as a sign that the Kentuckian has decided to seek the top party job" (4/12). W. POST's Dewar notes Ford "is regarded as a potentially strong contender, particularly among senators . . . who are drawn to the idea of an interim leader to serve while younger contenders are tested in less critical positions." Breau's move leaves Sen. Tom Daschle (D-SD) as the only announced candidate in a field "that may not take final shape for weeks if not months." Daschle, who co-chairs the Dem Policy and Steering Cmte with Mitchell, "said he believed he had lined up at least half the votes necessary to win" (4/12). Lafayette ADVERTISER's Radelat reports Hill sources "speculated that Breau realized he could not beat Daschle" and said Breau "is likely" to support Ford (4/12). Sen. Bennett Johnston (D-LA), who backed Breau, "said he was surprised only by the timing of Breau's announcement": "I was not surprised by the decision" (N.O. TIMES-PICAYUNE, 4/12). Other possibles: Jim Sasser (D-TN), David Pryor (D-AR), Harry Reid (D-NV) and John Kerry (D-MA)

\*4 IMMIGRATION: FLORIDA LEADS CHALLENGE TO FEDS FOR COSTS  
Gov. Lawton Chiles (D-FL) filed a lawsuit against the federal gov't in U.S. district court in Miami 4/11 demanding more than \$1 billion "for the schooling, medical care and other services for undocumented immigrants." The complaint "challenges the nation's failure to protect its borders" and says states like

FL bare an "unprecedented and grossly disparate economic burden." This "failed immigration policy" not only allows "but actually encourages" a "continuing influx of undocumented immigrants." Chiles: "The people of Florida are saying, 'enough,' to paying an unfair share of providing services to illegal immigrants. We refuse to pick up Washington's tab any longer." The suit asks that the federal gov't pay FL for past services provided to undocumented immigrants -- estimated at \$1.5 billion since '88 -- as well as those costs it "will continue to bear." Defendants named are AG Janet Reno, HHS Sec. Donna Shalala and INS Commis Doris Meissner. INS estimates that 85% of all undocumented immigrants in the U.S. live in FL, CA, NY, TX, IL and NJ (Silva, MIAMI HERALD, 4/11).

CUOMO, WILSON TO JOIN? NY Gov. Mario Cuomo (D) "said he hopes to order New York to join" the lawsuit. Cuomo Press Sec. Anne Crowley said a decision is expected "fairly quickly," after Cuomo reviews the legal papers filed Monday. Cuomo officials said undocumented immigrants cost NY \$970 million last year (Birnbaum, N.Y. POST, 4/12). The suit is also being "closely watched" by CA Gov. Pete Wilson (R). Wilson spokesperson Leslie Goodman said Wilson will soon file his own suit against the federal gov't: "The governor has said all along, it's not a question of whether we will sue it's a question of when." FL officials conferred with CA and TX state attys while preparing the suit. FL Asst. AG Chris Martinez: "They are interested in filing similar lawsuits and we discussed general approaches" (Rojas, S.F. CHRONICLE, 4/12).

WELFARE REFORM IMPACT: CA lawmakers and officials also argue that the "funding mechanism" for Pres. Clinton's welfare reform plan, which could include a reduction in benefits for legal immigrants, "unfairly punishes" CA for "a phenomenon over which it has no control: the large number of needy immigrants who choose to live in the state." The "still-to-be-released" admin. proposal and competing measures in Congress "would divert money from benefits for low-income legal immigrants to job-training and child-care programs for all welfare recipients." Frosh Rep. Xavier Becerra (D-CA): "The federal government is abdicating its responsibility to legal immigrants. One of the reasons it has support in Congress is that it (the funding plan) only hurts a few states." CA officials fear they would be "overwhelmed by the numbers of indigent immigrants" applying for services if they lost federal aid. CA currently "receives more than 40% of federal dollars spent on immigrant programs; the state is likely to receive less than 20% of the job-training and child-care dollars." Center on Budget and Policy Priorities' Robert Greenstein: "California would be financing welfare reform for much of the rest of the country" (Shogren, L.A. TIMES, 4/12).

\*5 ANTI-GAY RIGHTS INITIATIVES: BATTLES BREW IN 7 STATES  
Initiatives are currently being circulated in NV, AZ, ID, MI, MO, OR, and WA to repeal or block laws prohibiting discrimination against homosexuals. LAS VEGAS REVIEW-JOURNAL's Morrison reports that "little common ground exists" in the debate in NV. Las Vegas school board candidate Jack Levin, NV's first openly gay political candidate, noted that the proposed name of the NV initiative is Minority Status and Child Protection Act. Levin: "Every fool will sign it. It's called the child protection act. Anybody that reads that will sign it." If initiative supporters collect the 51,339 signatures to get it on the ballot and it is approved by voters, the initiative would

WR-Polls

TO: Joe Goode  
FROM: Bruce Reed  
SUBJECT: Welfare Reform  
DATE: April 20, 1994

I'm sending along a summary of the key components of our welfare reform plan. Call me if you have any questions about any parts of it you would like to test.

As we discussed on Monday, the most interesting questions include:

**1. The Republican Financing Scheme Vs. Ours:** Congressman A wants to require people on welfare to work, and pay for it by eliminating welfare benefits (Medicaid, AFDC, food stamps, SSI) for legal immigrants. Congressman B wants to require people on welfare to work, and pay for it by cutting welfare for the wealthy, requiring people who bring their immigrant parents in this country to take responsibility for them, and reducing some entitlement programs for the poor and veterans.

NOTE: If you need to be more specific, our financing plan includes: 1) cutting farm subsidies for those with more than \$100,000 in annual non-farm income, eliminating the tax break for annuities that pay out more than \$100,000 per year, and requiring high-stakes gamblers to pay withholding tax on winnings over \$50,000 (welfare for the wealthy); 2) requiring people who bring their immigrant parents to this country to take care of them for at least 5 years; 3) making it more difficult for states to pass the costs of their emergency assistance programs (which pay for general relief, foster care, the homeless) onto the federal government; and 4) extending cuts made in last year's budget that affect housing and other subsidies for veterans.

**2. Vulnerabilities in the Republican Plan:** The best arguments against the Republican plan to pay for welfare by eliminating all benefits for legal immigrants are probably: 1) it would put a considerable financial burden on the states, forcing them to pick up billions of dollars in health care costs for legal immigrants; and 2) it would deny health coverage to legal immigrants with green cards who are working here legally. I doubt that either argument has much impact, but it might be worth a try.

**3. Charles Murray/Jack Kemp Plan vs. Ours:** Senator A favors ending welfare by eliminating all benefits to all young unwed mothers under 21, and requiring them to live in

orphanages instead. Senator B favors ending welfare by requiring young mothers on welfare to work for any benefits they receive.

**4. Fraud:** I assume that any measure to reduce welfare fraud will get high marks, so it may not be worth asking the question. Here are the possible anti-fraud provisions:

- \* A national anti-fraud and deadbeat data base to track people whenever and wherever they go on welfare or fail to pay child support.

- \* Fingerprinting of applicants to prevent people from receiving welfare in more than one state or county.

**5. Teen Pregnancy:** It would be interesting to know whether people think anything we have in mind will succeed in reducing teen pregnancy. You might ask them to weigh the following ideas:

- \* A national campaign to reduce teen pregnancy that targets the 1,000 schools with the highest teen pregnancy rates.

- \* A series of teen pregnancy demonstration programs to test what works and what doesn't.

- \* Requiring unwed teen mothers to live at home and finish school.

- \* Eliminating welfare benefits for unwed teen mothers, and making them live in group homes and orphanages instead.

#### **6. Other Interesting Questions:**

- \* Should states be able to stop giving additional benefits to women who have additional children while on welfare?

- \* Would you favor a program that requires fathers who owe child support to work off the money they owe?

- \* In cases where the father fails to pay child support, should the government step in and pay it for him? [This is a truly stupid idea that we are only going to allow on a minor demonstration basis. You probably don't have to ask -- we can predict the answer.]

That's all I can think of for now. If you have any questions, call me at 456-6262.

GREENBERG  
RESEARCH  
INC



515 SECOND STREET NE  
WASHINGTON DC 20002  
TEL: 202 547-5200  
FAX: 202 544-7020

*WR Polls*

FACSIMILE TRANSMITTAL FORM

Date 4/22

Number of pages (excluding transmittal form) \_\_\_\_\_

To:

Name	Organization	Fax	Code
<u>BRUCE REED</u>		<u>456-6515</u>	<u>175</u>
<u>RAHM EMANUEL</u>		<u>456-7431</u>	<u>175</u>

From:

NAME: JOE GOODE

*RAHM: CRIME QUESTIONS*

*WILL BE ADDED*

Greenberg Research Fax# (202) 544-7020

*LATER.*

NOTES

1st DRAFT OF WELFARE QUESTIONS. WE WANT TO  
GO IN TUESDAY NIGHT, SO IF YOU COULD CALL ME WITH  
COMMENTS ON MONDAY, I'D APPRECIATE IT.

Please call (202) 547-5200, if you do not receive entire document or have any trouble receiving this transmittal.

This message is intended only for the use the individual or entity to which it is addressed and may contain information that is privileged, confidential and exempt from disclosure under applicable law. If the reader of this message is not the intended recipient, you are hereby notified that any dissemination or copying of this communication is strictly prohibited.

**Date:** April 22, 1994

**To:** Rahm Emanuel  
Bruce Reed

**From:** Joe Goode

**Re: Welfare Questions -- 1st Draft**

---

A first cut at the welfare questions follows. I'd like you two to take a look at them before I circulate it to anyone else. We want to go in Tuesday night, so if you can call on Monday with comments, changes, etc. it will make it easier to distribute to others who need to see it.

Rahm -- I will add the crime questions you asked for on Monday.

Poll will be two nights (Tues-Weds) with oversample of black and Hispanic voters.

National Survey 11: April 25-27, 1994

As you may know, President Clinton and the Republicans and Democrats in Congress are considering ways to change the welfare system. I'm going to mention a few things that may be included in a new welfare reform bill, and I'd like to find out how high a priority you think each one should receive from the President and Congress this year. For each welfare reform measure I mention, tell me if you think it should be (a) the single highest priority, (b) one of the top few priorities, but not the highest, (c) near the top of the list, (d) in the middle of the list, or (e) toward the bottom of the list of priorities for the President and Congress?

[READ EACH ITEM AND ASK]: Where would you rank that -- the single highest priority, one of the top few priorities, near the top of the list, in the middle of the list, or toward the bottom of the list of priorities?

[ROTATE Qxx-Qxx]	Single Highest	Top Few	Near Top	Mid List	Toward Bottom	(Don't know)
41. A national campaign against teen pregnancy to make sure that women and children don't have to get on welfare in the first place. Where would you rank that -- the single highest priority, one of the top few priorities, near the top of the list, in the middle of the list, or toward the bottom of the list of priorities for welfare reform? . . .	1	2	3	4	5	6
42. Strict measures like fingerprinting to make sure that people don't receive welfare benefits in more than one state or county . . . . .	1	2	3	4	5	6
43. Day care subsidies for low income working families who are <u>not</u> on welfare so that work pays more than welfare. . .	1	2	3	4	5	6
44. Requiring teen-age parents on welfare to finish school and live at home with a parent or responsible adult . . . . .	1	2	3	4	5	6
45. Expand job training and day care but cut off welfare benefits after two years and require people to work, either in private sector or community service. . .	1	2	3	4	5	6
46. Stop additional benefits to women who have new children while on welfare. . .	1	2	3	4	5	6
47. Aggressive child support enforcement that requires fathers to work off the child support money they owe. . . . .	1	2	3	4	5	6

National Survey 11: April 25-27, 1994

Welfare reform will include new ways of financing welfare benefits to ensure that reforms do not increase the budget deficit. I am going to read you a number of proposals to pay for welfare reform. Please tell me whether you favor or oppose each one.

	Str	Smwht	Smwht	Str(Don't
	favor	favor	oppose	opposeknow)

48. Cut farm subsidies for farmers and ranchers with more than \$100,000 in annual non-farm income. Do you favor or oppose that specific proposal to pay for welfare reform?

[FOLLOW UP] Is that strongly or somewhat (favor/oppose)? . . . . . 1 2 3 45

49. Eliminate welfare benefits like Medicaid and food stamps for all alien immigrants in the United States. . . . . 1 2 3 45

*No* 50. Eliminate welfare benefits for children living with non-parents -- like grand parents or other relatives. The proposal would only apply to non-parents whose income was above the poverty line. . . . . 1 2 3 45

51. Require families who sponsor new immigrants to take responsibility for those immigrants for at least 5 years and not allow them to be eligible for welfare until they become citizens. . . . . 1 2 3 45

52. Limit welfare benefits to individuals disabled by alcohol or drug abuse. . . . . 1 2 3 45

53. Require gamblers to pay a withholding tax on winnings over \$50,000. . . . . 1 2 3 45

54. XXXXXXXXXXXX

*Amortis?*  
*meals deduction > 250k*

National Survey 11: April 25-27, 1994

10

55. Both the Democrats and the Republicans in Congress support reforms that limit welfare to two years, to move people from welfare to work. But they differ on how to pay for these reforms and job training:

[Do not rotate]

The Democrats pay for their changes by asking for shared sacrifice: there are cuts in tax breaks and subsidies for the wealthy, and reductions in entitlement programs for veterans and the poor -- including cuts in the Child Care Food Program and emergency assistance to welfare families in crisis. *- Some immigrant cuts -*

The Republicans say the Democrats always talk about cutting programs, but they are never specific about which programs and they never actually do it. Republicans pay for their reforms up front by barring further welfare payments to immigrant aliens. *American citizens shouldn't have to pay welfare benefits for non-U.S. citizens. have legally.*

Which financing proposal do you prefer: the Democrats and shared sacrifice or the Republicans by barring payments to non-U.S. citizens.

Democrats/ Shared sacrifice . . . . .	1
Republicans/ bar payments to non citizens . . . . .	2
(Neither) . . . . .	3
(Don't know) . . . . .	4

Let me read you what the Democrats say about eliminating welfare to non-U.S. citizens.

*split sample next 2 to rotate*

56. The Republicans want to deny all welfare benefits, including Medicaid, to all alien immigrants -- whether they are here legally or illegally. But when these people get sick or injured, they are still going to go to the hospital, and states and counties will end up paying the bill.

If true, Does that statement raise very serious doubts, serious doubts, minor doubts or no real doubts about paying for welfare reform by barring welfare payments to non-U.S. citizens?

Very Serious doubts . . . . .	1
Serious doubts . . . . .	2
Minor doubts . . . . .	3
No real doubts . . . . .	4
(Don't know) . . . . .	5

*Not housing*

National Survey 11: April 25-27, 1994

11

57. The Republicans want to deny all welfare benefits, including food stamps and housing assistance, to all alien immigrants -- whether they are here legally or illegally. This will result in more homeless and hungry people in our communities, and town and cities will end up paying the bill.

If true, Does that statement raise very serious doubts, serious doubts, minor doubts or no real doubts about paying for welfare reform by barring welfare payments to non-U.S. citizens?

Very Serious doubts . . . . .	1
Serious doubts . . . . .	2
Minor doubts . . . . .	3
No real doubts . . . . .	4
(Don't know) . . . . .	5

58. Let me ask you one more time, both the Democrats and the Republicans in Congress support reforms that limit welfare to two years, But they differ on how to pay for these reforms:

[do not rotate]

The Democrats say cutting benefits to non-U.S. citizens sounds easy, but we can't ignore people who are already here especially those who are here legally. The Democrats pay for their changes by asking for shared sacrifice: there are cuts in tax breaks and subsidies for the wealthy, and reductions in entitlement programs for veterans and the poor. *Some immigrant cuts*

The Republicans pay for their reforms by barring further welfare payments to non-U.S. citizens.

Democrats/ Shared sacrifice . . . . .	1
Republicans/ bar payments to non citizens . . . . .	2
(Neither) . . . . .	3
(Don't know) . . . . .	4

WR-POLLS

GREENBERG  
RESEARCH  
INC



315 SECOND STREET NE  
WASHINGTON DC 20002  
TEL 202 547-5200  
FAX 202 544-7020

FAX TRANSMITTAL FORM

DATE: 4/26

NUMBER OF PAGES (excluding cover page): 5

TO: NAME: Bruce Reed

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

FAX Number: 456-7431 (project #)

FROM: NAME: Joe Goode

Greenberg Research Fax # (202) 544-7020

NOTES

p. 12 is same as before

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National Survey 11: April 26-27, 1994

Now for something different. President Clinton and the Republicans and Democrats in Congress are considering ways to change the welfare system. I'm going to mention a few things that may be included in a new welfare reform bill, and I'd like to find out how high a priority you think each one should receive from the President and Congress this year. For each welfare reform measure I mention, tell me if you think it should be (a) the single highest priority, (b) one of the top few priorities, but not the highest, (c) near the top of the list, (d) in the middle of the list, or (e) toward the bottom of the list of priorities for the President and Congress?

[READ EACH ITEM AND ASK]: Where would you rank that -- the single highest priority, one of the top few priorities, near the top of the list, in the middle of the list, or toward the bottom of the list of priorities?

[ROTATE Qxx-Qxx]

	Single Highest	Top Few	Near Top	Mid List	Toward Bottom	(Don't know)
--	----------------	---------	----------	----------	---------------	--------------

56. A national campaign against teen pregnancy to make sure that women and children don't have to get on welfare in the first place. Where would you rank that -- the single highest priority, one of the top few priorities, near the top of the list, in the middle of the list, or toward the bottom of the list of priorities for welfare reform? . . .	1	2	3	4	5	6
--	---	---	---	---	---	---

57. Strict measures like fingerprinting to make sure that people don't receive welfare benefits in more than one state or county . . . . .	1	2	3	4	5	6
--	---	---	---	---	---	---

58. Day care subsidies for low income working families who are <u>not</u> on welfare so that workers are better off than people on welfare. . . . .	1	2	3	4	5	6
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

59. Requiring teen-age parents on welfare to finish school and live at home with a parent or responsible adult . . . . .	1	2	3	4	5	6
--	---	---	---	---	---	---

60. Expand job training and day care but cut off welfare benefits after two years and require people to work, either in the private sector or community service. . .	1	2	3	4	5	6
--	---	---	---	---	---	---

61. Stop additional benefits to women who have new children while on welfare. . .	1	2	3	4	5	6
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

62. Aggressive child support enforcement that requires fathers to work off the child support money they owe. . . . .	1	2	3	4	5	6
--	---	---	---	---	---	---

National Survey 11: April 26-27, 1994

**Split Sample A**

63. There is a welfare proposal before Congress that would expand job training and day care for people who receive welfare but that cuts off welfare benefits after two years and requires that people go to work. Do you favor or oppose this proposal? [follow up: strong/somewhat]

- Strongly favor
- Somewhat favor
- Somewhat oppose
- Strongly oppose
- (Don't know)

**Split Sample B**

64. President Clinton has proposed a welfare reform program that would expand job training and day care for people who receive welfare but that cuts off welfare benefits after two years and requires that people go to work. Do you favor or oppose this proposal? [follow up: strong/somewhat]

- Strongly favor
- Somewhat favor
- Somewhat oppose
- Strongly oppose
- (Don't know)

ALL

65. Let me describe two approaches being considered in Congress to address the welfare problem in America. Tell me which you tend to favor [check wording of intro]

**[ROTATE]**

The Democrats support welfare reform legislation that limits welfare to 2 years, to move people from welfare to work. They support tax credits for low wage, full-time workers and universal health coverage so that work pays better than welfare. They support increased job training and child care, but then require that people go to work in the private sector or in a community service job if necessary 1

The Republicans support welfare reform legislation that limits welfare to 2 years, to move people from welfare to work. They would also bar increased welfare payments to women who have children while on welfare. They support some additional job training and child care to help people go to work . . . . . 2

- (Both) . . . . . 3
- (Neither) . . . . . 4
- (Don't know) . . . . . 5

National Survey 11: April 26-27, 1994

The welfare reform proposals under consideration will create new short term costs as a result of additional training, education and child-care programs and subsidized community jobs. I am going to read you a number of proposals to pay for welfare reform. Please tell me whether you favor or oppose each one.

[ROTATE QXX-QXX]	Str favor	Smwht favor	Smwht oppose	Str (Don't oppose know)
66. Cut farm subsidies for farmers and ranchers with more than 100 thousand dollars in annual non-farm income. Do you favor or oppose <u>that specific proposal</u> to pay for welfare reform? [FOLLOW UP] Is that strongly or somewhat (favor/oppose)? . . . . .	1	2	3	4 5
67. Eliminate welfare benefits like Medicaid and food stamps for legal immigrants who are not American citizens. . . . .	1	2	3	4 5
68. Require gamblers to pay a withholding tax on winnings over 50 thousand dollars. . . . .	1	2	3	4 5
69. Require families who sponsor new immigrants to take responsibility for those immigrants for at least 5 years . . . . .	1	2	3	4 5
70. Limit welfare benefits to individuals who have abused alcohol or drugs . . . . .	1	2	3	4 5
71. Eliminate tax breaks for retirement annuities held by people who make over \$100,000 a year. . . . .	1	2	3	4 5
ask bruce: or annuities that pay out more than \$100,000 a year.				
72. Deny welfare benefits to new immigrants until they become U.S. citizens . . . . .	1	2	3	4 5

National Survey 11: April 26-27, 1994

15

**Split Sample A**

73. Both the Democrats and the Republicans in Congress support reforms that limit welfare to two years. But they differ on how to pay for these reforms and job training:

[rotate]

The Democrats pay for their reforms by cutting welfare for the wealthy in the form of tax breaks and subsidies, and by making work pay with less generous welfare benefits and more tax breaks for the working poor.

The Republicans pay for their reforms by barring further welfare benefits to legal immigrants who are not American citizens.

Which financing proposal do you prefer: cutting welfare for the wealthy and making work pay or barring welfare payments to non-American citizens.

Democrats/ cut welfare wealthy/ make work pay	1
Republicans/ bar payments	
to non citizens . . . . .	2
(Neither) . . . . .	3
(Don't know) . . . . .	4

**Split Sample B**

74. Both the Democrats and the Republicans in Congress support reforms that limit welfare to two years. But they differ on how to pay for these reforms and job training:

[rotate]

The Democrats pay for their reforms with spending cuts in other programs, by cracking down on welfare fraud and with strict enforcement of child support payments from deadbeat dads.

The Republicans pay for their reforms by barring further welfare benefits to legal immigrants who are not American citizens.

Which financing proposal do you prefer: spending cuts and welfare fraud or barring welfare payments to non-American citizens.

Democrats/ spending cuts/fraud . . . . .	1
Republicans/ bar payments	
to non citizens . . . . .	2
(Neither) . . . . .	3
(Don't know) . . . . .	4

**All Respondents**

President Clinton has opposed funding welfare reform by barring welfare payments to legal immigrants who are not American citizens. Let me read you a number of his arguments against the Republican funding proposal and for each one tell me if it raises very serious doubts, serious doubts, minor doubts or no real doubts in your mind about funding welfare reform by barring welfare payments to non-American citizens.

	Very Serious doubts	Serious doubts	Minor doubts	No real doubts	(DK)
<b>[ROTATE Qxx-Qxx]</b>					
1. The Republicans want to deny all welfare and health benefits, including Medicaid, to legal immigrants. But when these people get sick or injured, they are still going to go to the hospital, and states, counties and local taxpayers will end up paying the bill	1	2	3	4	5
2. The constitution guarantees benefits to children born in the United States. The Republican proposal would deny benefits to the children of legal immigrants, and is unconstitutional.	1	2	3	4	5
3. The Republicans want to deny all welfare benefits, including food stamps, to legal immigrants. This will result in more hungry and homeless people in our communities, and towns, cities and local taxpayers will end up paying the bill	1	2	3	4	5
4. The Republican proposal denies benefits to legal immigrants who have a green card and are trying to find work just like millions of other immigrants who have come here to pursue the American dream. These are not illegal aliens, these are people who are trying to achieve U.S. citizenship	1	2	3	4	5

# Survey of Blacks

## Problems Facing Black Families

Princeton Survey Research Associates for Newsweek, Aug. 12-15, 1993.  
N=600 black adults nationwide

"Now I have some questions about black families in this country today. Do you think black families are better off or worse off than they were 10 years ago?"

	%
Better off	50
Worse off	29
Same (vol.)	13
Don't know	8

"Which one of the following do you think can do most to improve the situation for black families today?"

	%
"Black families themselves"	41
"Churches"	25
"Government"	14
"Community organizations"	14
Don't know	6

"In general, how much of a problem do you think each of the following is for black families today? [See below.] Is this a big problem for black families today, somewhat of a problem or not a problem?"

	Big Problem %
"Drugs and alcoholism"	86
"Too many teen-age girls having children"	81
"Not enough jobs paying decent wages"	79
"People not following moral and religious values"	67
"People depending too much on welfare"	62
"The government not spending enough on social programs"	52
"Public schools not providing a good education"	49
"Too many parents never getting married"	43
"Not enough successful blacks for young people to look up to"	41

"Next I will read you some possible reasons why so many young black people today don't get married. Please tell me if you think each is a very important reason they don't get married, a somewhat important reason, or not an important reason."

	Very Important %	Somewhat Important %	Not Important %	Don't Know %
"Women can't find enough eligible men they would want to marry."	51	28	17	4
"They don't have enough money between them to set up a household."	49	31	19	1
"They don't see enough examples of successful marriages."	46	30	20	4
"Men don't want to be tied down."	41	30	25	4
"It's easier to support a child with welfare if the woman stays single."	34	21	37	8
"It's easier just to live together."	34	30	31	5
"Marriage gets in the way of education and career."	27	21	49	3

"Now I will read you some possible reasons why young black people who are not married are having children today. Please tell me if you think each is a very important reason they have children, a somewhat important reason, or not an important reason."

# Rethinking Welfare

The Associated Press Poll taken by ICR Survey Research Group, July 28-Aug. 1, 1993. N=1,004 adults nationwide:

"Now a few questions about public assistance to the poor. Do you think the government should spend much more money, spend much less money or keep spending about the same on welfare?"

	%
Spend much more	13
Spend much less	46
Spend about the same	34
Don't know	7

"One proposal that's being discussed would require all able-bodied people on welfare, including women with preschool children, to do work for their welfare checks. Do you favor or oppose this requirement?"

	%
Favor	84
Favor, but not for women with preschool children (vol.)	4
Oppose	11
Don't know	2

"Do you think the government should cut off a single mother's welfare benefits after two years if she refuses to take a job, or do you think the welfare benefits should continue as long as she has children to support?"

	%
Cut off benefits after two years	47
Benefits should continue	32
Depends on circumstances (vol.)	17
Don't know	3

"Suppose a single mother is on welfare and the father of her children says he can't pay child support because he doesn't have a job. Just your best guess: Will the taxpayers spend less in the long run if welfare pays the child support or if the government pays for programs to put the father to work and make him pay child support?"

	%
Making father work costs less	82
Welfare costs less	11
Depends on circumstances (vol.)	2
Don't know	5

"Do you personally have a friend or relative who is receiving welfare or food stamps?"

	%
Yes	26
No	72
Myself (vol.)	1
Don't know	1

	Very Important %	Somewhat Important %	Not Important %	Don't Know %
"They don't understand sex or birth control."	53	23	21	3
"They won't use birth control or have abortions for personal or religious reasons."	48	27	19	6
"They want something all their own."	36	30	28	4
"They want to prove they are adults."	37	28	31	4
"They are following the example of older people they know."	35	29	32	4



MELLMAN-LAZARUS-LAKE

RESEARCH-BASED STRATEGY

WR-Pauls

FAX COVER SHEET

DATE: Dec-7

TO: Bruce Reed

FAX #: 456-7739

FROM: Celinda Lake

FAX #: (202)625-0371

NUMBER OF PAGES (INCLUDING COVER PAGE): 11

NOTES: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

IF THIS TRANSMISSION IS UNCLEAR OR IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS PLEASE CALL (202)625-0370.





MELLMAN-LAZARUS-LAKE

RESEARCH-BASED STRATEGY

Dear Bruce,

I thought you would also be interested in this recent data on welfare reform.

I would be very interested in talking with you and the White House folks about this and the APWA work. Please, let me know how we can help.

Yours,  
Celinda Lake

Now, thinking about the welfare program which is called Aid to Families with Dependent Children or AFDC --

9. Lately there has been a lot of discussion about reforming the welfare system in the United States. In general, do you think that government officials should 1) leave welfare as it is, 2) experiment with welfare reform at the state level, 3) reform welfare at the national level, or 4) eliminate all welfare benefits?

Leave alone . . . . .	24
Experiment at state . . . . .	30
Reform at national level . . . . .	0
Eliminate all benefits . . . . .	0
UNSURE (DNR) . . . . .	46

And --

10A. Do you think that reforming welfare will cost the government more or less in the short term?

IF CHOICE MADE, ASK:  
And is that strongly or somewhat (more/less)?

More/strongly . . . . .	20
More/somewhat . . . . .	20
UNSURE (DNR) . . . . .	30
NO DIFFERENCE (DNR) . . . . .	1
Less/somewhat . . . . .	1
Less/strongly . . . . .	1

And --

10B. Do you think that reforming welfare will cost the government more or less in the long term?

IF CHOICE MADE, ASK:  
And is that strongly or somewhat (more/less)?

More/strongly . . . . .	10
More/somewhat . . . . .	10
UNSURE (DNR) . . . . .	20
NO DIFFERENCE (DNR) . . . . .	1
Less/somewhat . . . . .	2
Less/strongly . . . . .	0

Still thinking about this issue --

11. If welfare reform were to be enacted, by what percentage do you think the welfare rolls need to shrink by the year 2000 in order for reform to be a success?

(i.e. Record 25 percent as 0 2 3)  
(Record UNSURE/REFUSED AS 9 9 9)  
(Record ALL as 1 0 0)

(Record percent)

*MS*

And -

12. From what you know about welfare, what percentage of AFDC or welfare recipients do you think are children under the age of 18?

(i.e. Record 25 percent as 0 2 3)  
(Record UNSURE/REFUSED AS 9 9 9)

(Record percent)

Still thinking about this issue --

13. Do you favor or oppose limiting the time families can be in the welfare or Aid For Families with Dependant Children program?

<u>IF CHOICE MADE, ASK:</u>	Favor/strongly (TO 14-1)	...
And do you strongly	Favor/somewhat (TO 14-1)	...
or somewhat (favor/oppose) that?	UNSURE (DKR) (TO 14-2)	...
	IT DEPENDS (DKR) (TO 14-2)	...
	Oppose/somewhat (TO 14-2)	...
	Oppose/strongly (TO 14-2)	...

IF "FAVOR" IN QUESTION 13, THEN ASK:

14-1. How long would you allow families to be on welfare, or what actual time limit do you think should be set on receiving these benefits? (READ LIST)

Six months	.....
One year	.....
Two years	.....
Five years	.....
Longer than five years	.....
NO WELFARE AT ALL (DKR)	.....
IT DEPENDS (DKR)	.....
OTHER (DKR)	.....
UNSURE (DKR)	.....

(TO QUESTION 15)

IF "UNDECIDED" OR "OPPOSE" IN QUESTION 13, THEN ASK:

Suppose the government provided the head of a family on welfare with education, job training, health insurance and subsidized child care during the first two years they received welfare.

14-2. Would you then favor or oppose limiting the number of years families can be on welfare?

<u>IF CHOICE MADE, ASK:</u>	Favor/strongly	.....
And do you strongly	Favor/somewhat	.....
or somewhat (favor/oppose)	UNSURE (DKR)	.....
that?	IT DEPENDS (DKR)	.....
	Oppose/somewhat	.....
	Oppose/strongly	.....

(\*\* ASK OF EVERYONE \*\*)

Now, I am going to read you a list of different groups of welfare recipients. For each one, please tell me whether you think time limits on collecting welfare, or AFDC, benefits should apply or should not apply to this group. Here is the first one... (ROTATE LIST)

	<u>APPLY</u>	<u>NOT APPLY</u>	<u>UNSURE (DNR)</u>
15A. Single parents with children under one year of age	<u>54%</u>	<u>28%</u>	<u>8%</u>
16A. Single parents with children under three years of age	<u>54%</u>	<u>27%</u>	<u>9%</u>
17A. Single parents with drug or alcohol problems	<u>54%</u>	<u>24%</u>	<u>12%</u>
18A. Any family the government cannot find a job and provide child care for	<u>53%</u>	<u>36%</u>	<u>9%</u>
19A. Any family where the parent has a significant physical or mental disability	<u>18%</u>	<u>56%</u>	<u>6%</u>
20A. Any family that cannot find a job where jobs are hard to find	<u>57%</u>	<u>32%</u>	<u>10%</u>

(END ROTATION)

Now, I am going to read you a list of different groups of welfare recipients. For each one, please tell me whether you think a work requirement in order to collect welfare, or AFDC, benefits should apply or should not apply to this group. Here is the first one... (ROTATE LIST)

	<u>APPLY</u>	<u>NOT APPLY</u>	<u>UNSURE (DNR)</u>
15B. Single parents with children under one year of age	<u>41%</u>	<u>54%</u>	<u>5%</u>
16B. Single parents with children under three years of age	<u>37%</u>	<u>37%</u>	<u>6%</u>
17B. Single parents with drug or alcohol problems	<u>54%</u>	<u>26%</u>	<u>10%</u>
18B. Any family the government cannot find a job and provide child care for	<u>56%</u>	<u>33%</u>	<u>11%</u>
19B. Any family where the parent has a significant physical or mental disability	<u>34%</u>	<u>50%</u>	<u>7%</u>
20B. Any family that cannot find a job where jobs are hard to find	<u>53%</u>	<u>36%</u>	<u>11%</u>

(END ROTATION)

Still, thinking about the issue of welfare reform --

21. If the government is to cut off AFDC or welfare benefits to families after a specific period of time and after it provides education training, health benefits and child care to those families, should it... (READ LIST AND ROTATE)
- 1) Simply end the families' benefits, including Aid for Families with Dependent Children,
  - 2) Make the parent or parents do community service work in exchange for welfare benefits, or
  - 3) Guarantee jobs to the parent or parents after they are cut off welfare?

End it . . . . .  
 Community service . . . . .  
 Guarantee job . . . . .  
 UNSURE (DKR) . . . . .

73  
 640  
 211  
 58

Now, I am going to read to you a number of suggestions of ways to reform the welfare system that are being talked about today. Please listen as I read each one and tell me if you favor or oppose the suggestion. (READ AND ROTATE) IF CHOICE MADE, ARE: Is that strongly (agree/disagree) or somewhat (agree/disagree)?

	FAVOR		NO		OPPOSE	
	Strongly	Somewhat	UNSURE	DIFF.	Somewhat	Strongly
	(DKR)	(DKR)	(DKR)	(DKR)	(DKR)	(DKR)
22A. Require job training for those on welfare, and after two years require them to work in government jobs if necessary. (PROMPT: DO YOU AGREE OR DIS-AGREE WITH THIS SUGGESTION?)	561	261	35	*	89	79
22B. Require job training for those on welfare, and after two years require them to work.	761	171	21	*	31	11
23A. Require unemployed fathers of children on welfare to work.	821	121	21	*	21	21
23B. Replace welfare benefits with tax credits and strengthen child support enforcement.	401	271	111	11	121	91
24. Have government help pay for child care and transportation for welfare recipients who work or are in job training or education courses.	411	361	51	*	91	51
25A. Deny welfare to legal immigrants until they become citizens.	541	151	51	11	111	141
25B. Deny welfare to legal immigrants.	231	141	81	*	281	271
26. Do not increase welfare benefits when people on welfare have additional children.	481	171	71	*	131	151
27A. Limit welfare benefits to two years and do not allow people to get back on welfare for at least five years.	121	181	111	11	231	151

27B. Limit welfare benefits to two years and do not allow people to get back on welfare ever. 121 101 51 \* 381 151



**TO:** U.S. News and World Report

**FROM:** Celinda Lake, Mellman • Lazarus • Lake, Inc.

**RE:** Welfare Survey

**DATE:** December 6, 1993

---

### Major Reform

Voters want to reform welfare. During the Presidential campaign, we saw that middle class voters frequently mention welfare as one of their major frustrations. Voters overwhelmingly believe that welfare does not work. No one gets off and it does not reinforce the right values of work, effort and responsibility. Voters question the benefits less than the values and incentives welfare creates. If anything, voters believe that welfare keeps people in poverty rather than helping them get off. Nationally, everyone from conservative Republicans to liberal Democrats and African Americans agree that welfare today does not work. In a recent national survey, Perot voters rated welfare reform as a higher priority than health care reform.

Other research shows that voters do not want minor reform, but a major overhaul. Only 6% think welfare should be left alone, including only 4% of liberal Democrats, and only 17% of African Americans. Voters believe that welfare is broken and needs a complete overhaul.

By a slight margin, 43% to 37%, voters prefer reform at the national level. African Americans, by a margin of over 2 to 1, favor national reform. At the same time, only 8% say we should eliminate all benefits. Voters want welfare to be a second chance, not a way of life. They want it to be transitional help. The greatest violation of the original intent of welfare, in their mind, is that welfare has become multi-generational. Southern voters and Perot voters are most anti-welfare -- 11% and 14% respectively would eliminate benefits. (Surprisingly, 11% of all blacks would also eliminate benefits.) Independents, Bush voters, voters in the Mid West and West, baby boomers, and college graduates are split between favoring national

reform and reform in the states. Black voters strongly favor national reform (51% to 19%).

Limits and Work

Questions: "Now I am going to read you a list of different groups of welfare recipients. For each one, please tell me whether you think time limits on collecting welfare, or AFDC, benefits should apply or should not apply to this group."

	Apply	Not Apply	Unsure
Single parents with drug or alcohol problems	84	24	12
Single parents with children under three years of age	84	27	9
Single parents with children under one year of age	64	28	8
Any family that cannot find a job where jobs are hard to find	57	32	10
Any family the government cannot find a job and provide child care for	55	38	8
Any family where the parent has a significant physical or mental disability	38	58	8

The major reforms that voters want to see are requiring people on welfare to work and setting time limits. Almost 90% of voters support welfare reform that would provide time limits combined with jobs or community service and/or education and job training before the work requirement. These reforms, voters believe, would move welfare away from being a program that rewards the wrong behavior and creates the wrong incentives. Most fundamentally, voters overwhelmingly believe that welfare discourages

people to find work (82%) rather than encourages them. Two-thirds of voters (67%) support time limits on AFDC (48% strongly favor.) A majority of minority voters, including 62% of black voters, support time limits. Over two-thirds of every other demographic group supports time limits. Forty-six percent of all voters would set a limit at two years or less. In addition, two thirds of those who are undecided oppose limits, would support them if accompanied by providing the heads of households with education, job training, health insurance and subsidized care. Less than 3% of all voters are hard core opponents of time limits!

Voters have much more ambivalence about permanent time limits. 50% support not allowing people to get back on welfare for 5 years, while 38% oppose this and 12% are undecided. Moreover, voters oppose limiting welfare benefits to two years and never telling people to get back on welfare ever (35% strongly oppose).

73% oppose). Voters are still committed to having welfare as a helping hand -- a safety net for people in trouble. Even 68% of conservative Republicans oppose not allowing people ever to go back on welfare. Voters would overwhelmingly apply limits to everyone but families who have a parent with a significant physical or mental disability. As more families have had to put both parents to work, voters have changed their mind about limiting benefits and requiring work for single parents with children. Over 60% of voters support applying time limits to single parents with children including children under one year of age, and requiring time limits for parents with substance abuse problems. Over 60% of blacks, families with children, young homemakers, and young women support applying time limits to single parent families with a child under one. Voters want welfare to be a helping hand, but not a handout, and not a lifetime source of income. Voters are also willing to help people in trouble, but want those people to have to live by the same rules that the rest of the middle class America and the working poor are living with.

Questions: "Now I am going to read you a list of different groups of welfare recipients. For each one, please tell me whether you think a work requirement in order to collect welfare, or AFDC, benefits should apply or should not apply to this group."

	Apply	Not Apply	Unsure
Single parents with drug or alcohol problems	64	28	10
Single parents with children under three years of age	57	37	6
Any family the government cannot find a job and provide child care for	58	33	11
Any family that cannot find a job where jobs are hard to find	53	38	11
Single parents with children under one year of age	41	54	5
Any family where the parent has a significant physical or mental disability	34	59	7

Jobs and Work

Voters want to require welfare recipients to work, although they temper their judgements with real world assessments of job availability and job readiness. Our focus groups show that voters believe good jobs are in short supply, but they believe that even in hard hit areas, minimum wage jobs like McDonald's jobs exist. Moreover, voters strongly support community service work as a substitute for jobs. Almost two thirds of voters (64%) would make the parent or parents do community service work in exchange

welfare benefits, 24% would guarantee jobs, and 7% would end welfare. A majority would require work of single parents with children ages three years and older (57%), single parents with drugs and alcohol problems (64%), and even families who

find jobs (53%). Voters have more reservations about requiring work for single parents with children under one year of age (41% favor, 54% oppose) and for parents who have a disability (34% favor, 58% oppose). Interestingly, men have more reservations about applying a work requirement to single parents of a one-year old (37% favor) than women, (44% favor). Similarly, whites have more reservations (39%) than blacks (46%). Finally, Perot voters feel particularly intense about work requirements. It is one of their fundamental values.

Voters favor a work requirement (53% favor, 36% oppose) and a linked time limit (57% to 32%) even for families who live in areas where jobs are hard to find. Even voters who have first hand experience with difficulty finding jobs -- voters in California and the Northeast support such limits and requirements for all. Some male Democrats, and voters in South Central and Rocky Mountain states have more reservations about requiring people in hard hit areas to find a job, but have fewer reservations about limiting benefits for such people.

	FAVOR				OPPOSE	
	Strongly	Somewhat	Unsure	No Diff	Somewhat	Strongly
Require unemployed fathers of children on welfare to work	82	12	2	0	2	2
Require job training for those on welfare, and after two years require them to work.	78	17	2	0	3	1
Require job training for those on welfare, and require them to work in government jobs if necessary	56	26	2	0	8	7
Deny welfare to legal immigrants until they become citizens	54	15	5	1	11	14
Do not increase welfare benefits when people on welfare have additional children	48	17	7	0	13	16
Have government help pay for child care and transportation for welfare recipients who work or are in job training or education courses	41	38	5	0	9	5
Replace welfare benefits with tax credits and strengthen child support enforcement	40	27	11	1	12	8
Limit welfare benefits to two years and do not allow people to get back on welfare for at least five years	32	18	11	1	23	16
Deny welfare to legal immigrants	23	14	8	0	28	27
Limit welfare benefits to two years and do not allow people to get back on welfare ever	12	10	6	0	39	26

Reforms

Voters support a broad range of reforms. They feel most strongly about requiring job training and work after two years (76% strongly favor, 93% support). While voters strongly favor community service as an alternative, they have slight more reservations about government jobs (56%, 82%). However, a whopping 91% of Clinton voters strongly support this proposal. Voters also intensely support requiring unemployed fathers of children on welfare to work (82% strongly, 91% favor).

Welfare and anti-immigration sentiments combine in a way that has strong appeal to voters. Voters also strongly favor denying welfare to legal immigrants until they become citizens (54% strongly, 69% favor), and strongly favor not increasing welfare benefits when people on welfare have additional children (48%, 65%). Voters also favor replacing welfare benefits with tax credits (40%, 67%) and having government pay for child care if a welfare recipient is in job training or education courses (41%, 77%). While voters favor denying welfare to legal immigrants until they become citizens, most oppose denying welfare to legal immigrants (37% favor, 56% oppose). Perot voters who are most nationalistic, however, support denying benefits to immigrants even if they are citizens (56% favor). They are the only group to favor this reform.

Success: Cost and Numbers

Voters measure success in changing practices more than dollars and cents. We have seen in this poll and in focus groups that voters believe welfare reform will cost more in the short term (56% more, 29% less). Even 59% of Perot voters and Republicans agree welfare will cost more in the short term. However, they hope to think reform should lead to lower costs in the long term (28% more, 57% less). Voters also believe that welfare reform should shrink welfare rolls over the long term. They do not want this to become an expanded entitlement program. On average, voters say that shrinking the rolls by 50% by the year 2000 would mean success in their minds. Only 1 in 6 think that the more realistic goal of a 25% cut or less would be a success. However, many voters evaluate welfare reform less in terms of numbers than values and goals. A third of all voters and almost half of Democratic women and seniors are unsure what kind of reduction would spell success.

March 30, 1994

MEMORANDUM FOR STAN, MANDY

SUBJECT: Key Questions in Welfare Reform

I. HOW TO PAY FOR WELFARE REFORM

Our welfare reform plan is expected to cost about \$10 billion over 5 years and \$30 billion over 10 years. Both the House Republican and Mainstream Forum bills will cost more than this (perhaps \$12 billion over 5 and \$40 billion over 10), but they save so much money from eliminating benefits for non-citizens that they will actually reduce the deficit even in the short run.

We are considering a number of financing options, none of them particularly attractive. How we pay for welfare reform will be a key decision not only nationally but in Congress, where our coalition is deeply divided. Liberals want us to spare low-income programs and raise revenues. Moderates want to cut low-income programs or place the entire burden on immigrants. There is the potential for support from both groups for a gambling tax, but many in the White House think that battle would be harmful to health care.

Here are the alternatives:

1. Immigrants: The Republicans sell their proposal as a way to deny welfare benefits to illegal immigrants, but in fact it only affects legal ones. Their proposal would raise \$21 billion over 5 years by denying any means-tested benefits (AFDC, Medicaid, SSI, Food Stamps) to non-citizens, including refugees, asylees, immigrants who are here with green cards, etc. The option we're considering would raise between \$3 and \$6 billion by requiring families who sponsor new immigrants to take responsibility for those immigrants for at least 5 years, and perhaps until they become citizens. Is there any way to persuade anyone that our proposal is more reasonable and theirs is harsh and draconian?

2. Other entitlement cuts: We're likely to propose a few other obscure entitlement cuts in the Emergency Assistance program (which states use to shift their costs for homeless and foster care programs onto the feds) and the Child Care Feeding program (which currently subsidizes a number of child care programs that are not low-income). These cuts are relatively uncontroversial, even on the left.

3. Social Security: One cut under consideration has some appeal but also some risk, since it is technically part of Social Security. We would like to eliminate the so-called Late Baby Bonus, which gives older men a 50% increase in Social Security benefits for having a child late in life (after 47). This benefit is not means-tested, so that when a Clint Eastwood or a Donald Trump or a Stan Greenberg has a child, they get a bonus when they retire. No one has figured out why this benefit exists — but because it is connected with Social

Security, it may be risky to go after. (Moynihan is not a big fan of this option, and we initially ruled it out for that reason.)

4. Welfare for the wealthy: We would like to find at least one tax expenditure or subsidy that benefits the wealthy that we could time-limit or eliminate. (Putting a time limit on welfare for the wealthy would help a great deal with the left.) There are no easy candidates here, either, but possibilities include subsidies to farmers who make over \$100,000, or tax breaks for annuities held by people who make over \$100,000.

5. Revenues: We think it will be extraordinarily hard to sell a tax increase for welfare reform. The one possible option seems to be a gambling tax, which would impose a 4-5% excise tax on casino revenues (not state lotteries). This has raised opposition from Nevada, New Jersey, and Indian country, but a number of moderates including Moynihan and Breaux have said this is one tax they might consider. We have been asked to put this proposal on hold, however, because of concerns that we could not fight a tax battle at the same time we're fighting on health care and other fronts.

## II. HOW TO TALK ABOUT WELFARE REFORM

We know from past surveys and focus groups what the most popular buzzwords are – “end welfare as we know it”, “make welfare a second chance, not a way of life”, “break the cycle for the next generation”, “governments don't raise children, people do”, “people who bring children into this world should take responsibility for them,” etc.

We would like to know which specific policies deserve the most emphasis, and which of the many popular phrases we use on this subject have the most credibility.

The key elements of our plan will include:

\* Target the next generation: We plan to phase in our work requirements starting with young people who are 25 and under, on the grounds that it's most important to end welfare for the next generation. The Republicans phase in faster and hit all applicants within 10 years, whereas we'll only hit 2/3 by then.

\* Parental responsibility/prevention: Our plan will include a number of elements aimed at reducing teen pregnancy and preventing people from going on welfare in the first place: a national campaign against teen pregnancy, aggressive child support enforcement, denying additional benefits for additional children born on welfare, requiring minor mothers to live at home, not giving them a separate check for setting up a separate household.

\* Work, not welfare: Our plan will change the culture of welfare by requiring people who apply to go through upfront job search, making them sign a personal responsibility contract that lays out what is expected of them and gives them no more than 2 years on welfare before they have to go to work, providing skills to those who need it, and at the end of two years, providing work for those who need it.

WR Polls

TIME/CNN Poll - 503 African-American adults surveyed 2/16-17 by  
Yankelovich

Partners; margin of error +/- 4.5% (Yankelovich release, 3/1).

MOST PEOPLE WHO RECEIVE WELFARE ARE ...

Genuinely in need of help 39%

Taking advantage of the system 49

CUTTING PAYMENTS TO WELFARE RECIPIENTS AFTER 2 YRS UNLESS THEY  
FIND A JOB OR TAKE ONE OFFERED BY THE GOVT?

Favor 72%

Oppose 20

Source: Hotline, March 2, 1994

| \*

WR - Polls

September 27, 1993

TO: Carol H. Rasco  
Bruce Reed

FROM: Bill Galston

SUBJ: Welfare reform and public opinion

I thought the attached might be useful. Three findings stand out:

1. Citizens care much more about building self-sufficiency than they do about cutting programs.

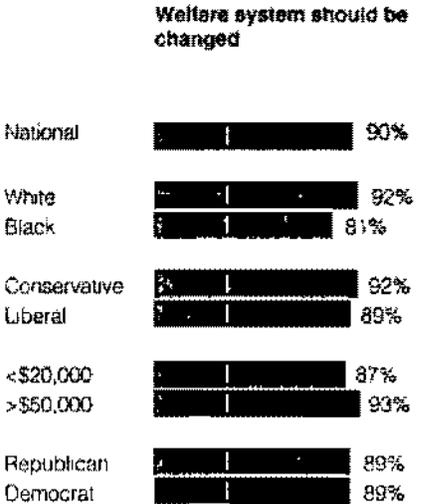
2. There's very little difference between white and black attitudes, across the board.

3. There is a surprisingly low level of public approval for child support assurance.

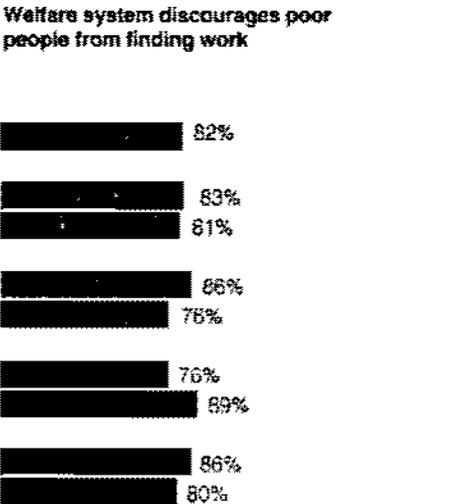
# REFORMING WELFARE

Bill Clinton's promise to "end welfare as we know it" has strong support among Americans, rich and poor, black and white, Republican and Democrat. While majorities agree the system isn't working, few want to cut or eliminate it entirely. Making people self-sufficient is more important than cutting welfare's cost by removing people from its rolls.

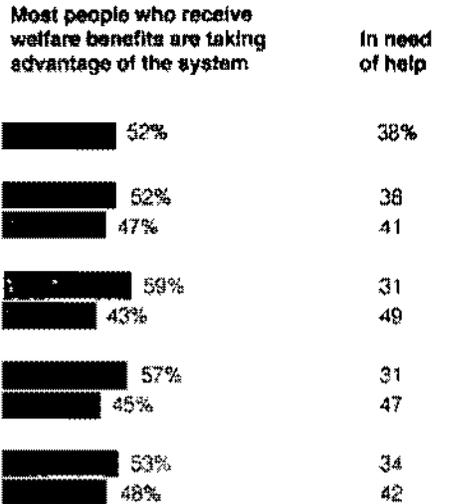
Question: Do you think the welfare system is working well in its current form or should the welfare system be changed?



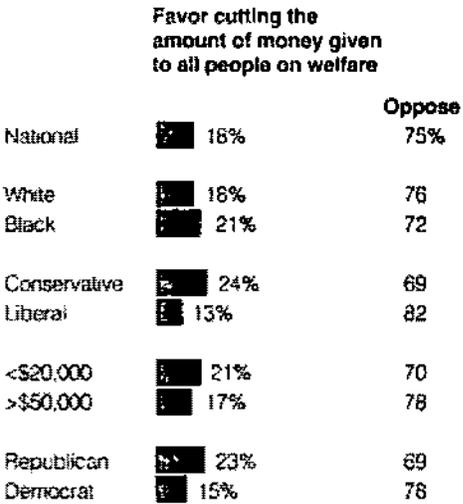
Question: Do you think the current welfare system encourages poor people to find work or discourages them?



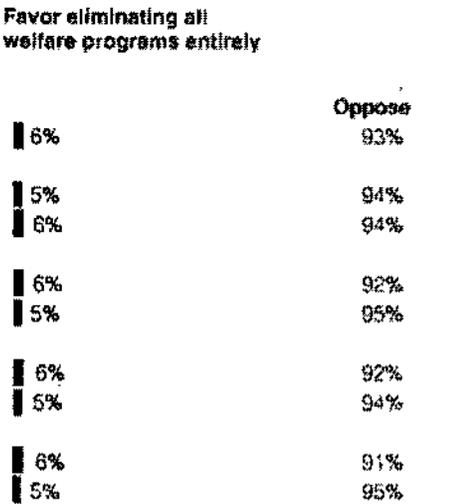
Question: In your view, are most people who receive welfare payments genuinely in need of help or are they taking advantage of the system?



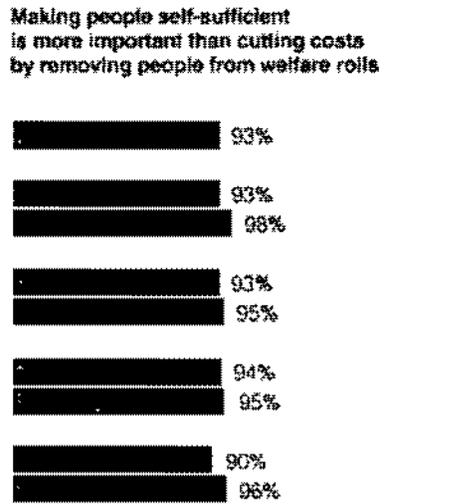
Question: Here is a list of changes many people would like to make in the current welfare system. For each idea I read, please tell me whether you favor or oppose that change?



Question: Here is a list of changes many people would like to make in the current welfare system. For each idea I read, please tell me whether you favor or oppose that change?



Question: Which of the following goals of welfare reform is most important to you: cutting the cost of welfare programs by removing people from the welfare rolls, or giving poor people the skills they need to become self-sufficient?

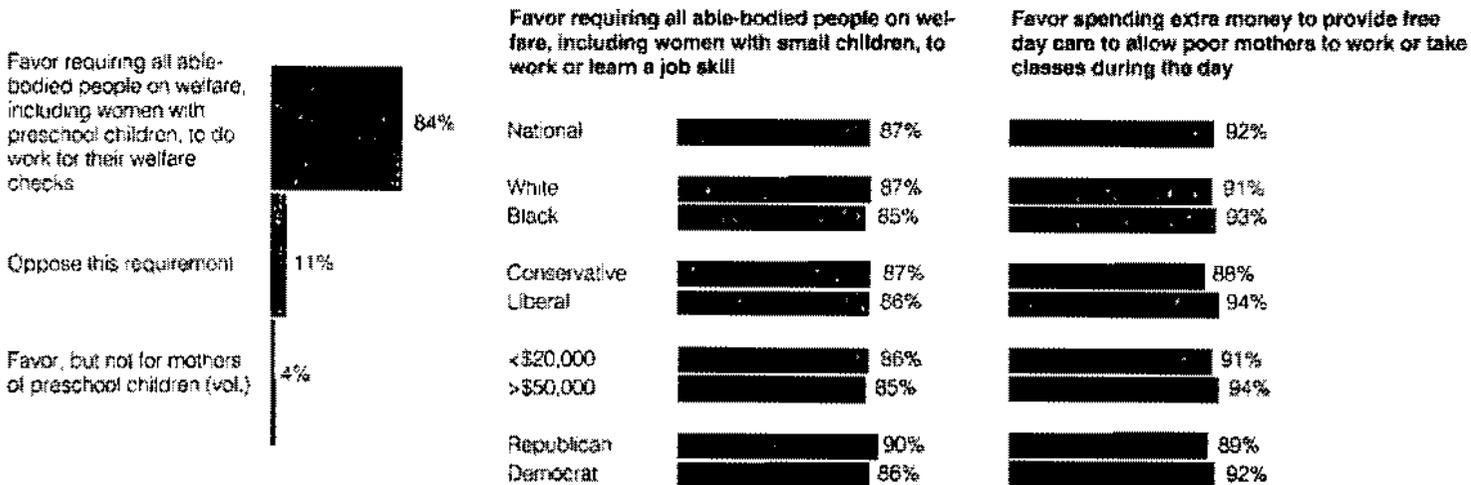


Note: In an August AP poll, 13% of respondents said "The government should spend much more money" on welfare, 34% said "spend about the same," and 46% said "spend much less."  
Source: Survey by Yankelevich Clancy Shulman for Time and CNN, May 13-14, 1992

Americans strongly support a work requirement for welfare recipients, even for those with young children. They also support tougher child support enforcement efforts. Majorities oppose paying child support out of public funds if fathers don't pay up and giving more money to unwed mothers on welfare who marry.

Question: One proposal that's being discussed would require all able-bodied people on welfare, including women with preschool children, to do work for their welfare checks. Do you favor or oppose this requirement?

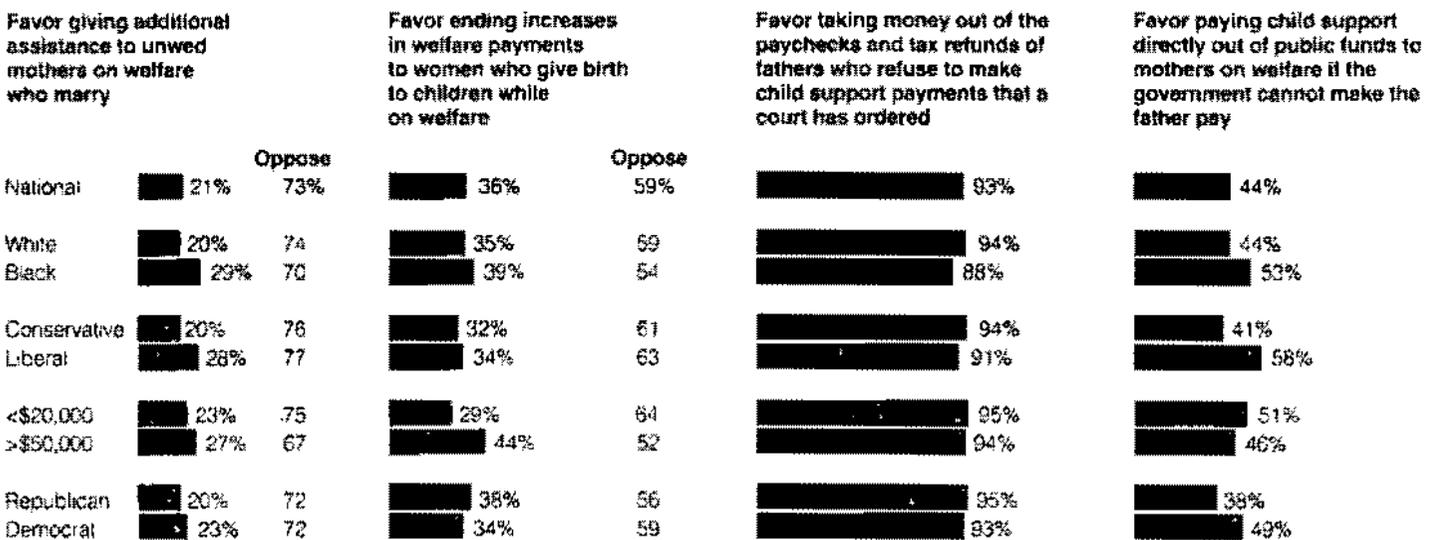
Question: Here are a list of changes many people would like to make in the current welfare system. For each idea I read, please tell me whether you favor or oppose that change....



Source: Survey by ICR Survey Research Group for the Associated Press, July 28-August 1, 1993.

Source: Survey by Yankelovich Clancy Shulman for Time and CNN, May 13-14, 1992.

Question: Here is a list of changes many people would like to make in the current welfare system. Do you favor or oppose that change?



Source: Survey by Yankelovich Clancy Shulman for Time and CNN, May 13-14, 1992.



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

ADMINISTRATION FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES  
Office of the Assistant Secretary, Suite 600  
370 L'Enfant Promenade, S.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20447

*File:  
WR-Polls*

August 24, 1993

To: Mary Jo Bane  
David Ellwood  
Bruce Reed ✓  
Wendell Primus  
Ann Rosewater  
Kathy Way

From: Jeremy Ben-Ami *[Signature]*

Subject: Public Opinion on Welfare Reform

The attached material was prepared by Allan Rivlin and will be presented to us in more detail at a meeting with Allan on August 30th in room 415-F in HHW at 10:30.

Attachment

# **Public Opinion on Welfare Reform**

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Notes on remarks of Allan Rivlin  
Director of Special Initiatives  
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs  
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services  
August 5, 1993

# Public Opinion on Welfare Reform

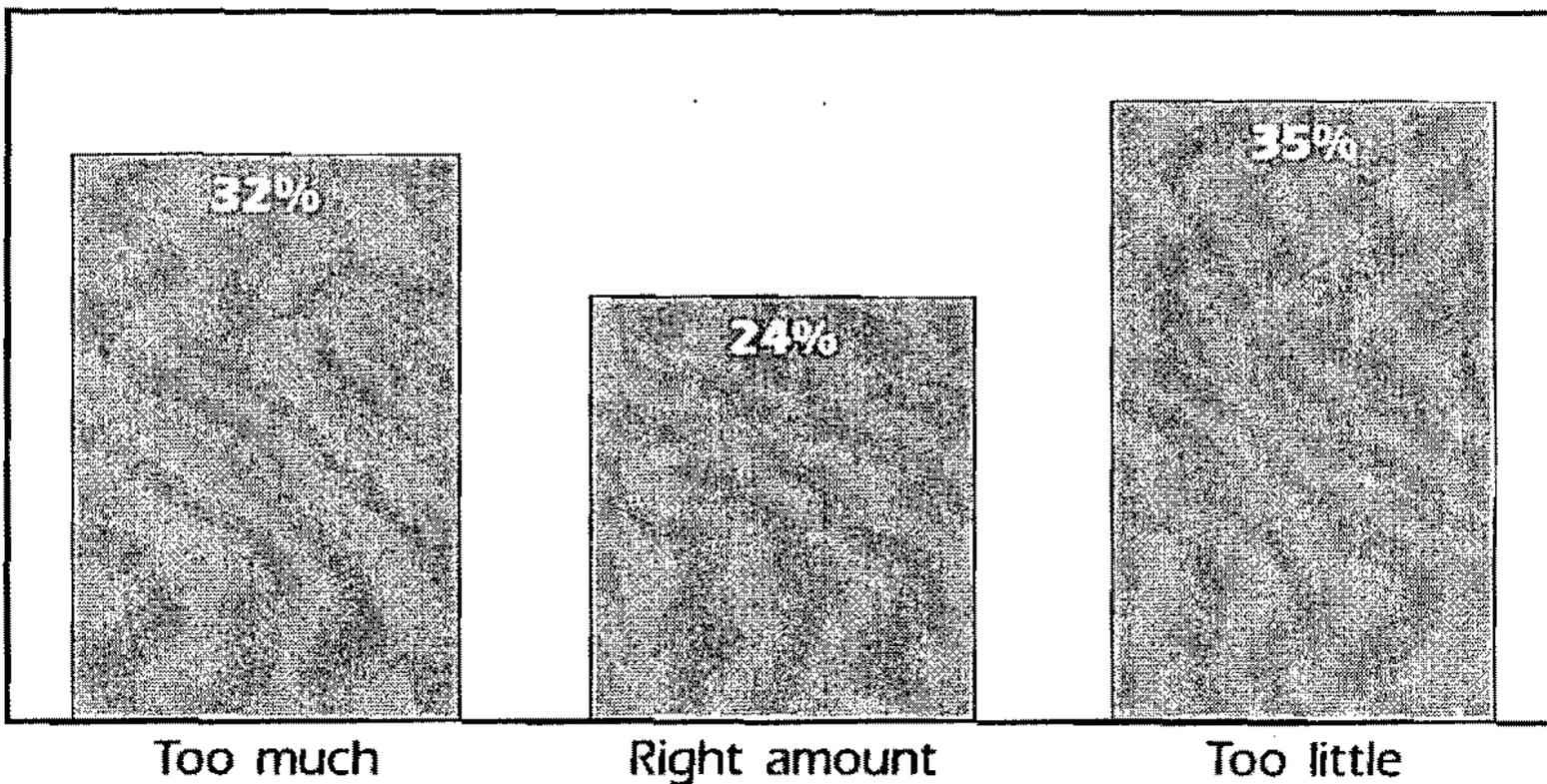
Publicly available survey results give us a fairly complete view of popular perceptions of the problems with the current welfare system, but they also leave many strategically important questions unanswered. The survey results, collected from the Roper Center of the University of Connecticut and from other sources, give us a relatively clear picture of the **past** history of support and criticism for federal assistance programs, as well as **present** views of many potential reform proposals. However, in looking toward the **future**, there is little to go on. Far more sophisticated research techniques would have to be employed if we are to attempt to gain insight into the likely dynamics of the political battle to reform the welfare system.

## **Complete Overhaul**

The public is somewhat ambivalent over the amount of money that is spent to help the poor. While people are pessimistic about the federal assistance programs, they nonetheless see a need to spend money for effective programs that help poor people make a transition to self-reliance. In recent snapshots of public opinion, voters overwhelmingly call for "major changes" or even "a complete overhaul" of the welfare system, but as we have seen in surveys of views on health care reform, this sort of mandate for change can quickly disappear when the real choices are faced, and opposition-sponsored reform alternatives are presented.

# Voters Are Split Over Welfare Spending Levels

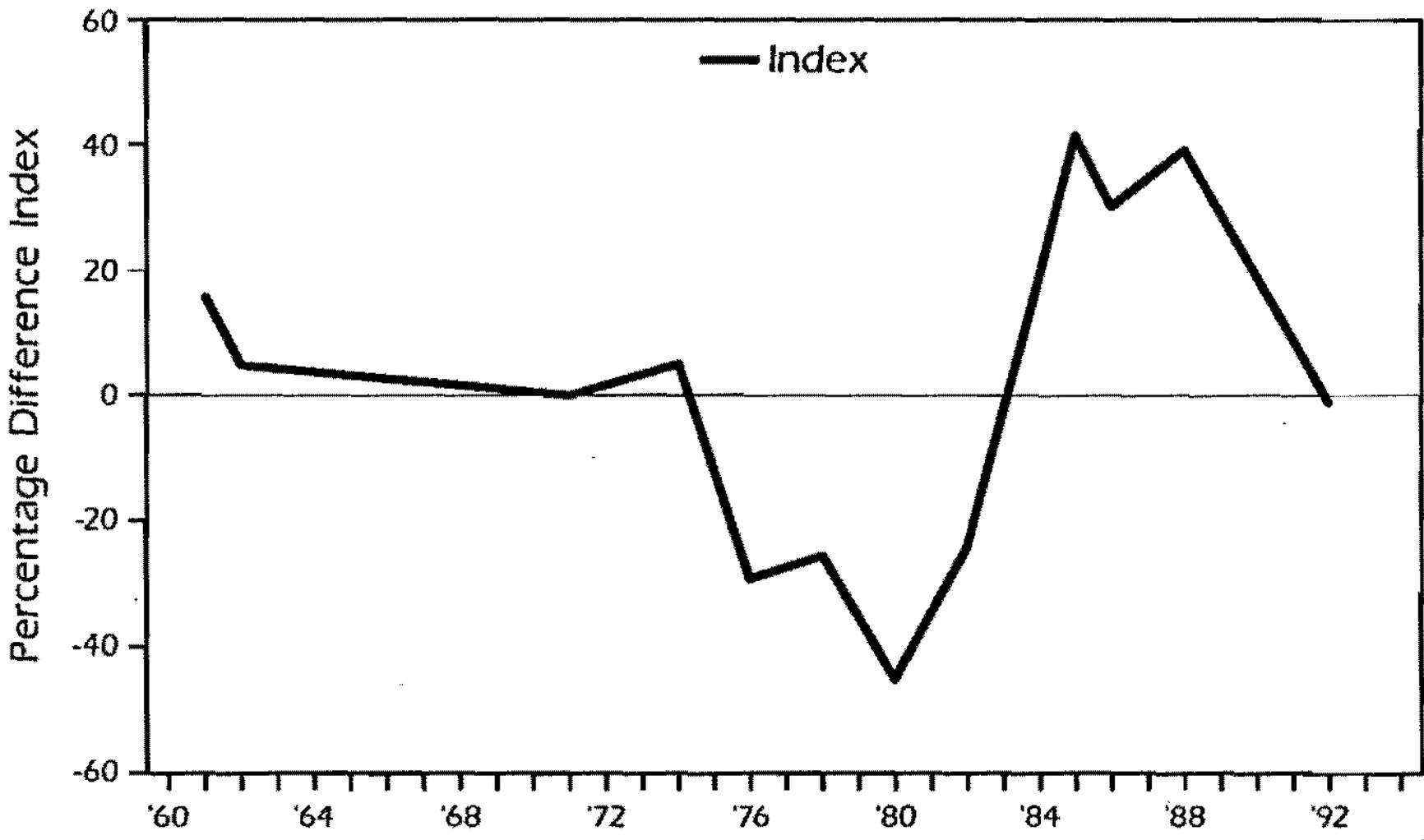
Right now, do you think the government is spending too much money, too little money, or about the right amount of money on welfare?



**Source:** Time/CNN/Yankelovich Clancy Shulman  
1250 National Adults - May 1992

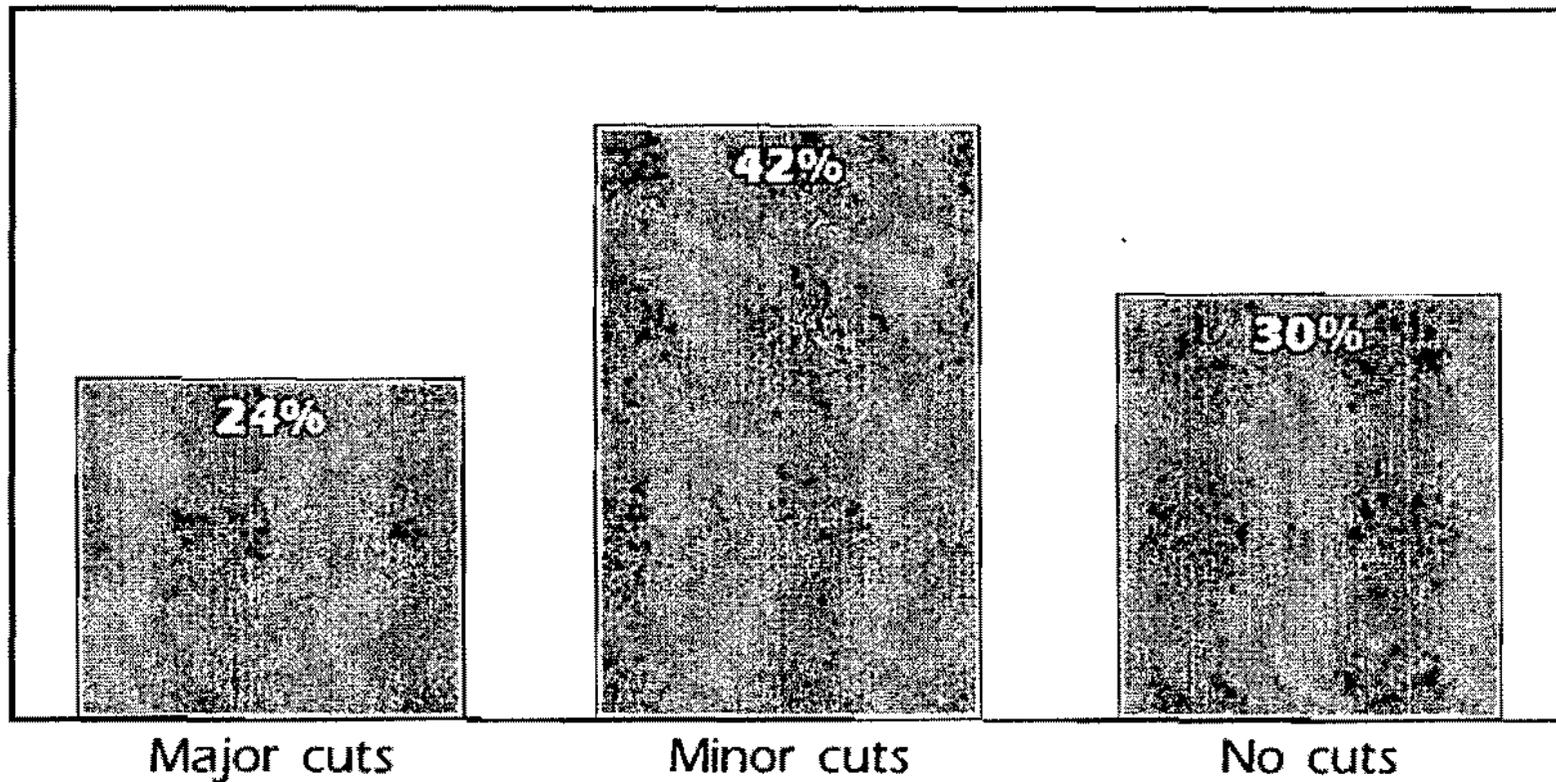
# A Hazy View of the History of Public Support for Welfare Spending

Answers to many different poll questions



# A Plurality for "Minor Cuts"

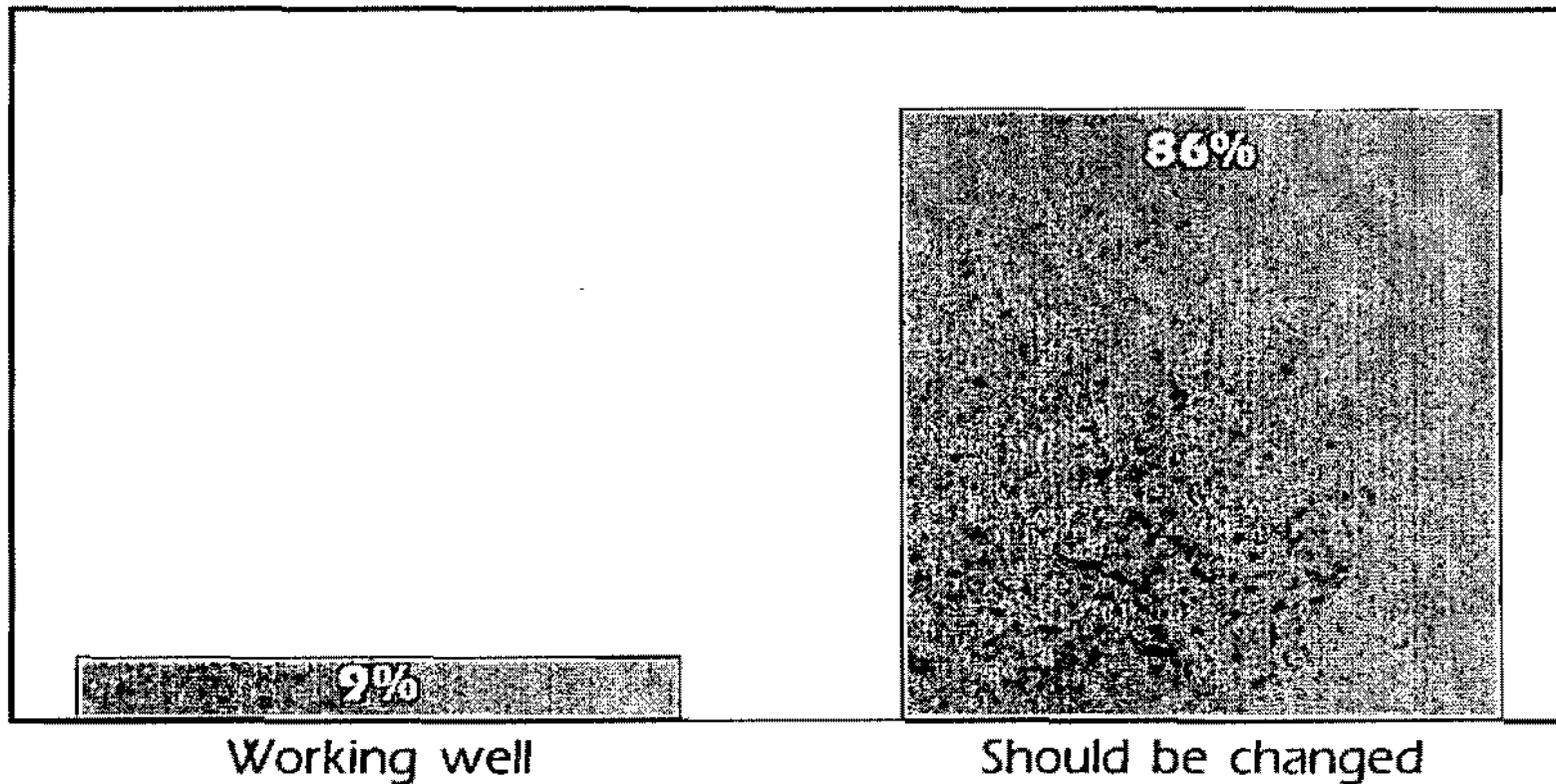
Would you favor making major spending cuts, minor spending cuts, or no spending cuts in welfare assistance to families with dependent children?



**Source:** NBC News/Wall Street Journal, Peter Hart and Teeter Research Companies  
1503 National Adults - March 1993

# America Has the Courage To Change Welfare

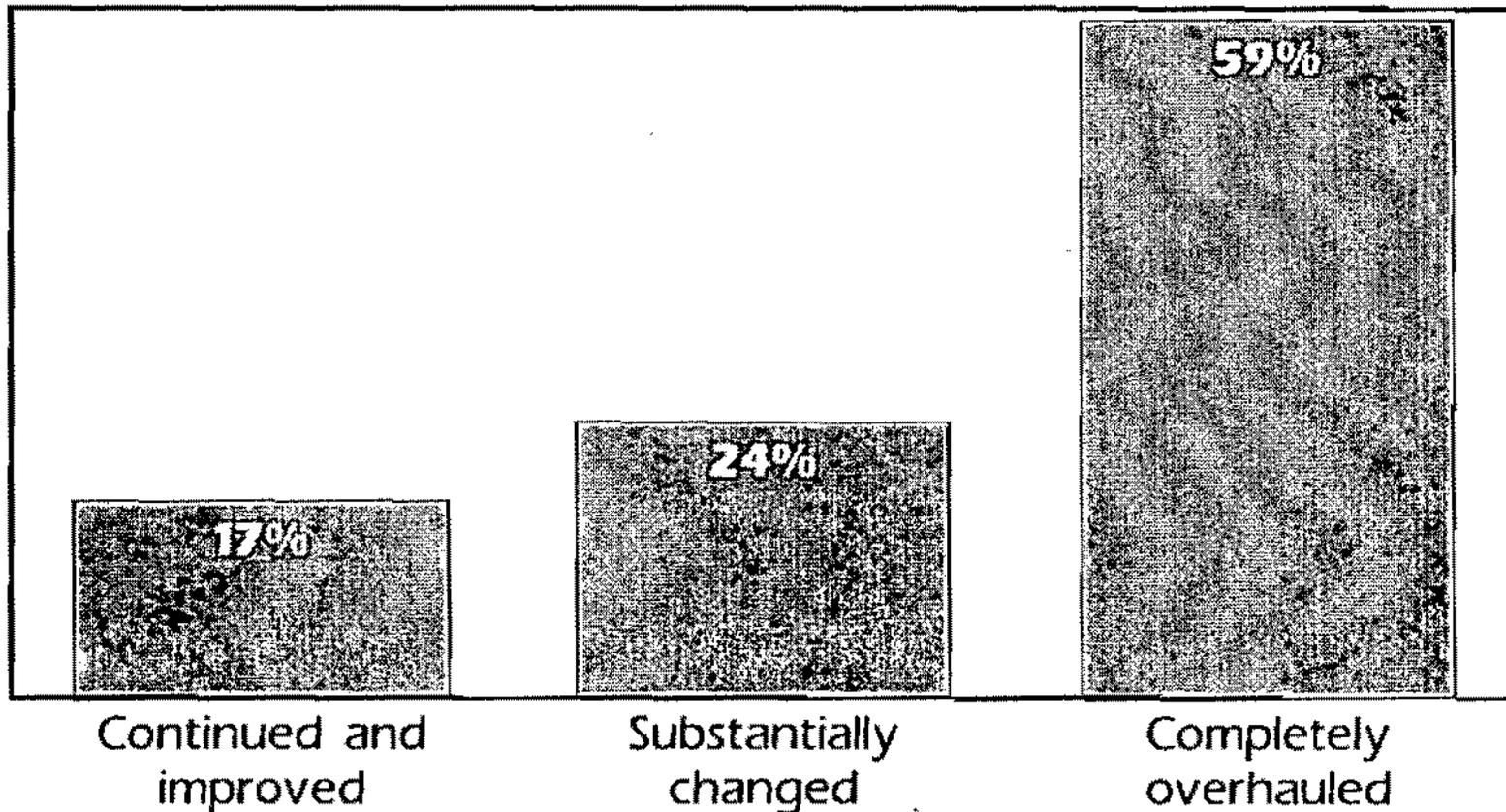
Do you think the welfare system is working well in its current form or should the welfare system be changed?



**Source:** Time/CNN/Yankelovich Clancy Shulman  
1400 National Adults - March 12, 1992

# A Majority Says: The Welfare System Needs an Overhaul

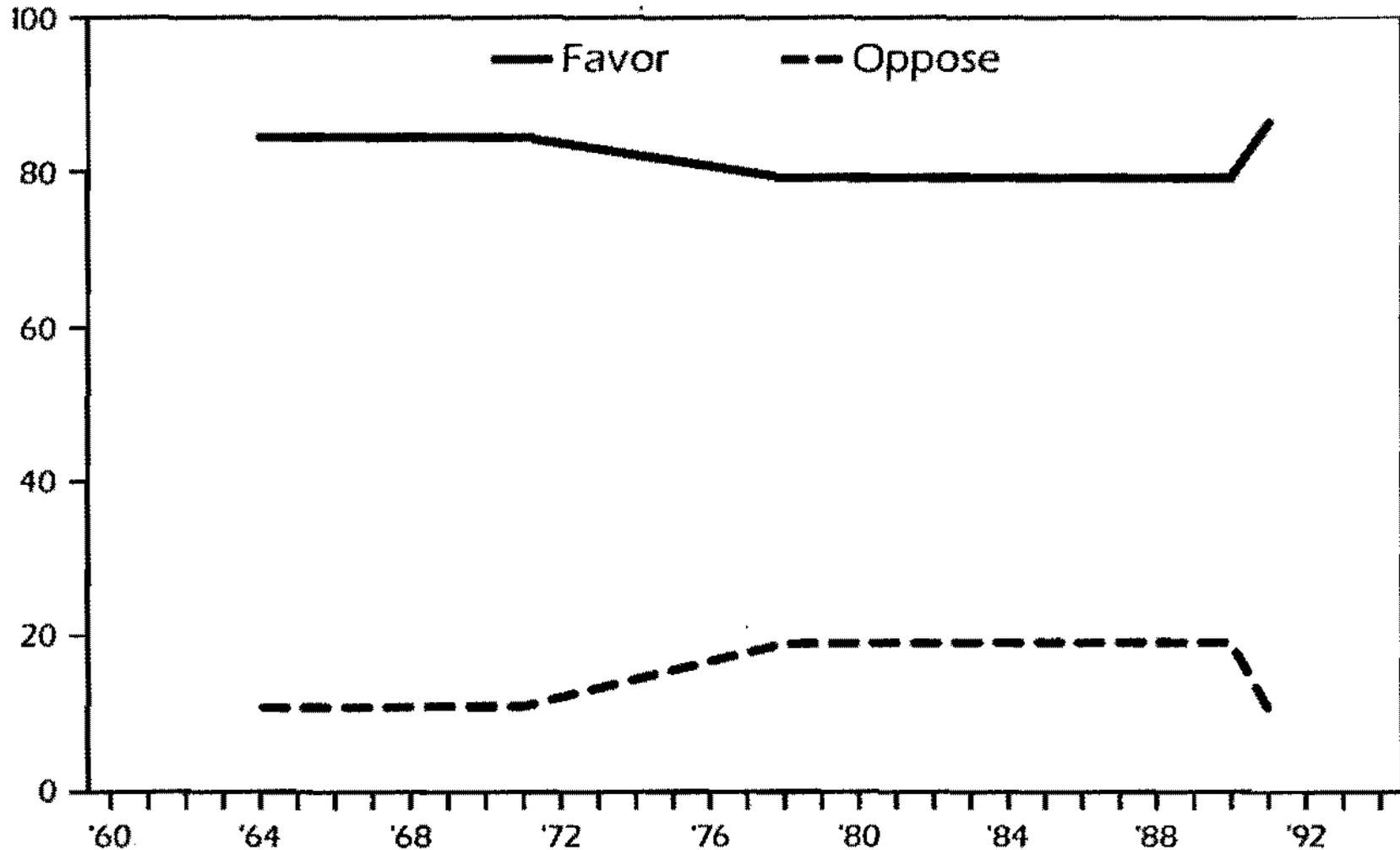
For each of the following areas of federal government policy, please tell me whether you think the current policy should be continued and improved upon, changed substantially, or completely overhauled . . . the welfare system.



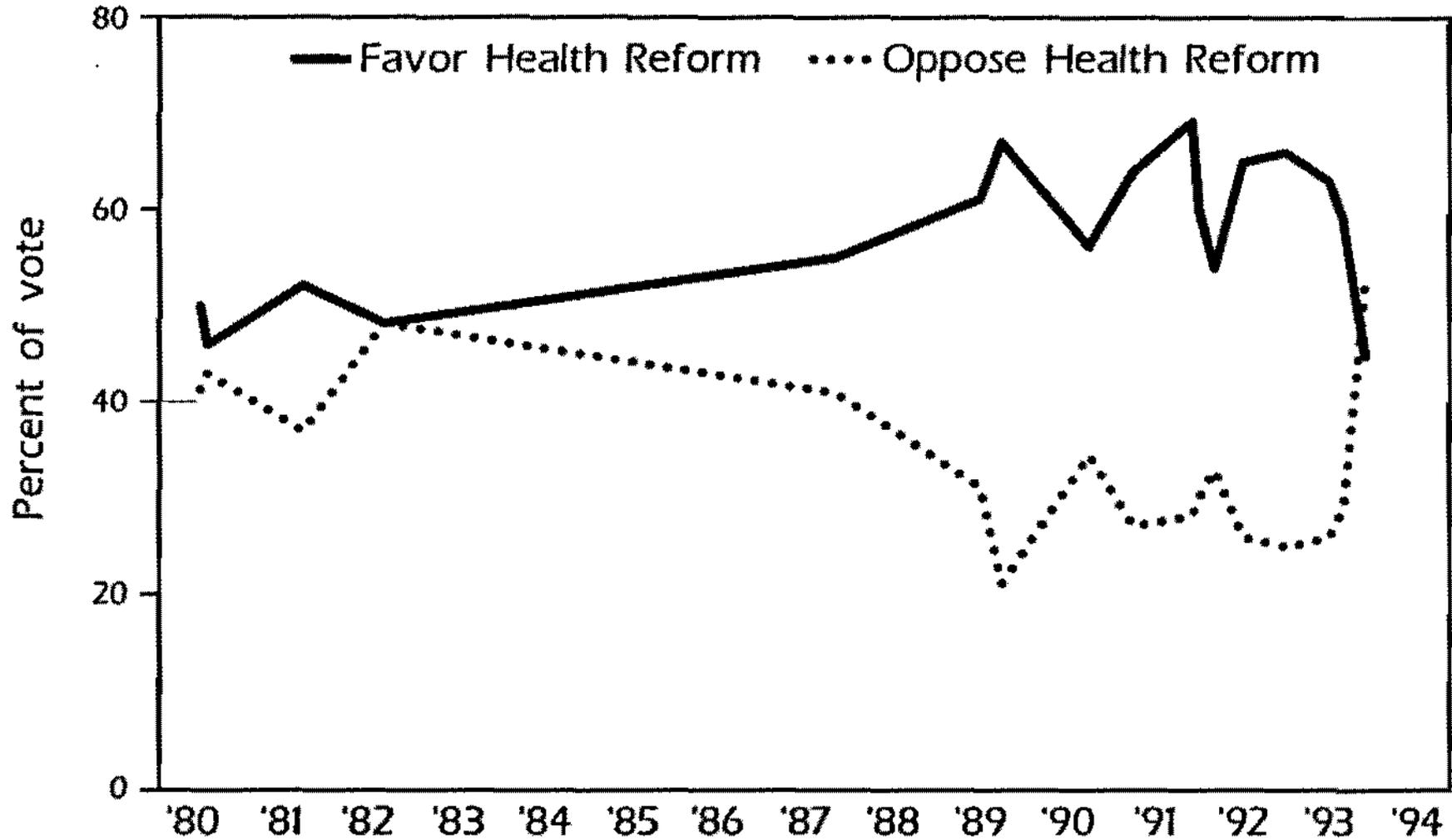
**Source:** The Politics of American Discontent, Gordon S. Black Corporation  
1604 likely voters - May 1992

# Consistent Support for Mandated Work or Job Training

Responses to different questions



# A Growing Mandate for Health Reform?



Sources: CBS News/New York Times, NBC News/Wall Street Journal, Fingerhut/Granados, ABC/Washington Post

## **Public Compassion**

The public believes the goal of government assistance programs should be to help unfortunate people make a transition to self-support. However, they believe "welfare" is a complete failure in this mission. People believe there are many good people who have had difficult times. Following the dictum, "there but for the grace of God go I," they believe it is critical that there be effective programs to help people who have the desire, but not the ability, to support themselves. For this reason, the public opposes deep cuts in welfare, fearing across-the-board cuts in support programs will hurt these people who can least afford cuts.

## **Public Anger**

Nevertheless, the public believes most of the money spent on "welfare" is wasted due to bureaucratic inefficiency and payments to people who are merely taking advantage of the system. The public's anger is as much directed toward the welfare system as to the welfare cheaters. They believe more than half of the people on welfare are taking advantage of the system, but they largely blame the system that allows, or even encourages, outright fraud. The public not only has concluded that welfare itself creates long-term dependency, they also conclude that welfare encourages larger families and families headed by unwed mothers.

## **Appealing to the Compassion And the Anger**

Thus there are two great emotional forces behind public opinion on welfare: compassion and anger. To a varying degree each emotion is present in nearly every American voter. The old liberal approach has been to seek ways to appeal to the compassion while almost entirely ignoring the anger. This is one of the reasons why many people grew angry with liberals in the late seventies and eighties. (Anger can be heard and acknowledged, channeled, or rebuffed, but anger "will not be ignored.")

Conservatives, on the other hand, have had great success in appealing to voter anger, but voters fear and oppose their lack of compassion.

As we develop our strategy to explain welfare reform we will be on strategically advantageous ground if we are able to find a message that appeals to both emotions. Rather than pitting a message of compassion against our opponents' appeals to anger, we are in a far stronger position if our communications program appeals to both the anger and the compassion almost all Americans feel toward the poor.

For example, we can test whether we gain an advantage with the strategic message:

**We have reformed welfare to be able to distinguish between people who are taking advantage of the system, and those who are using our help to help themselves. Those who cheat will go to jail, and those who are dependant will get the help they need to make a transition to independence, self-support, and a better life.**

## **Numbers Games**

Experts and voters agree that there are some people who are taking advantage of federal assistance programs and some people who desperately need these programs to help themselves make a transition to independence. Voters have little doubt that most people are in the former category, while experts have statistical proof that most people use assistance for short periods of time. This raises many questions that further research can address.

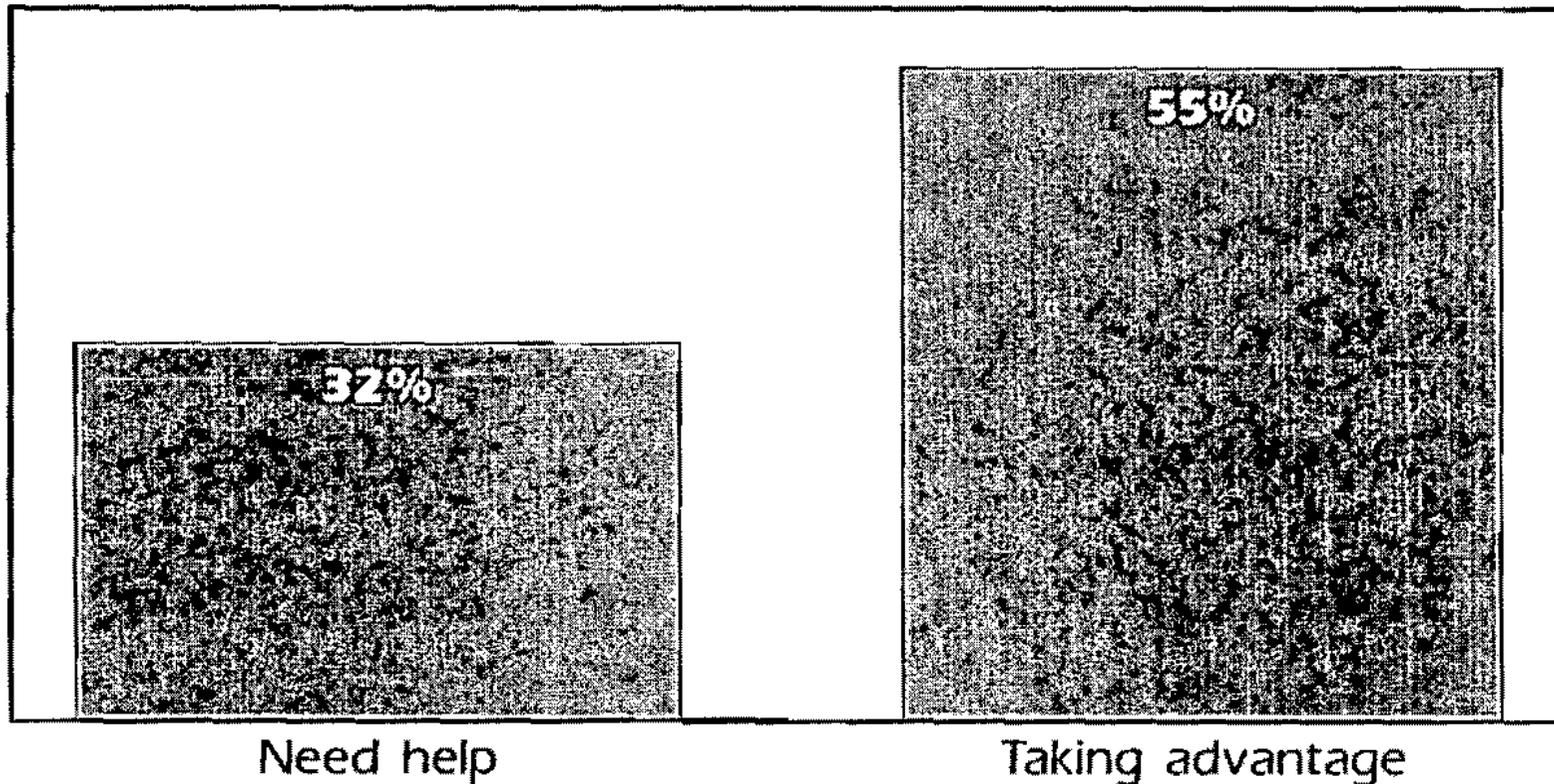
The most basic question is whether it is possible to reverse the widely held view that welfare cheaters are a large proportion of recipients. The next logical question is to assess the persuasiveness of possible arguments to make this case. However, a third important question should also be asked; is it necessary or advantageous to take on this task.

It is entirely possible that there is a greater loss than gain in attempting to convince voters they are wrong when they conclude that "more people who are receiving welfare payments . . . are taking advantage of the system." Voters may defend their perceptions and doubt whether the "experts" know cheating when they see it.

Further, it may not be necessary to reverse this view. If welfare reformers and the public agree that the reform proposal properly distinguishes between the two groups, and gives each the appropriate treatment, then it may not be necessary that they agree on the relative sizes of the groups.

# People Believe Most Poor Are Undeserving

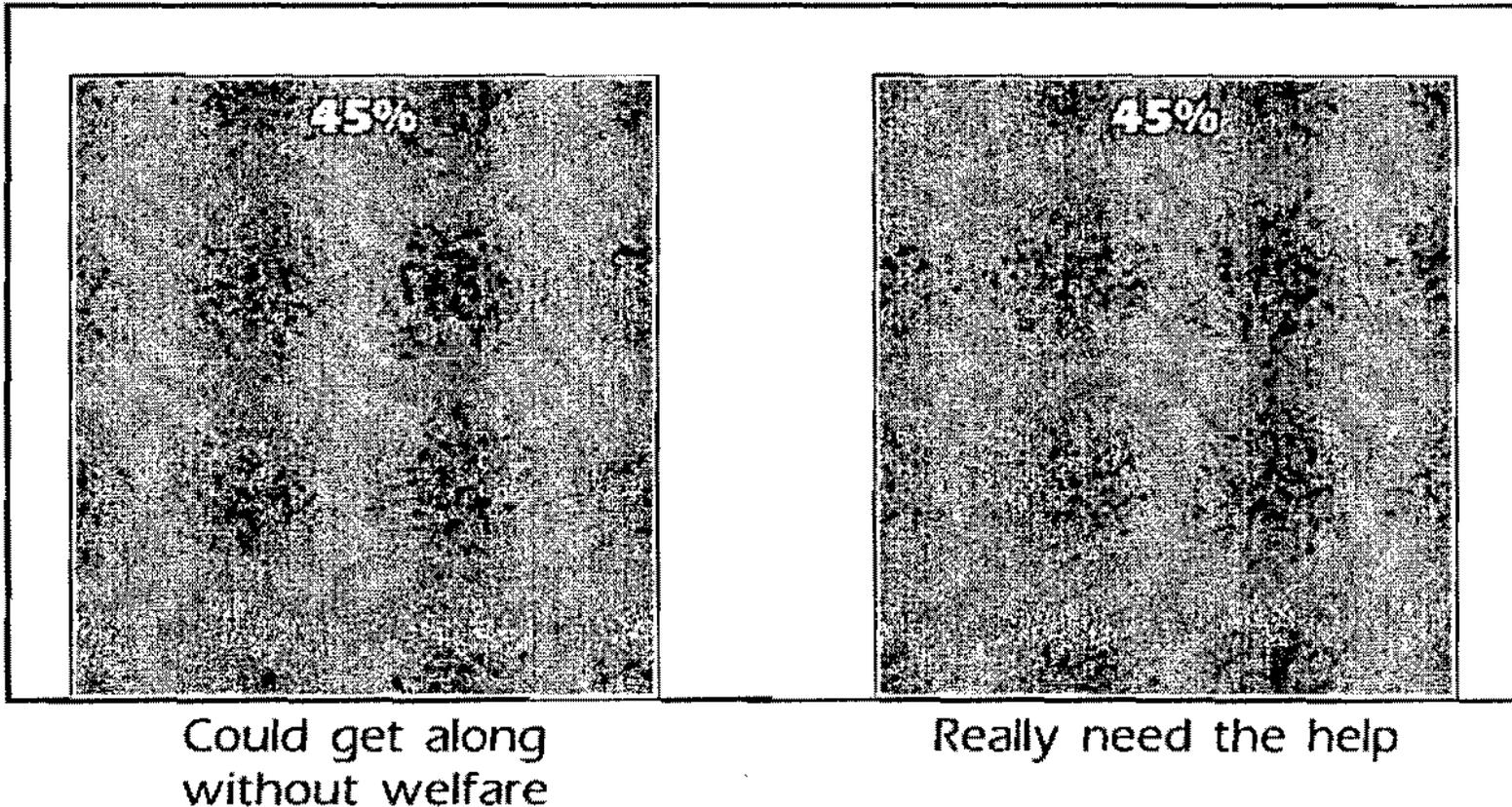
In your view, are more people who receive welfare payments genuinely in need of help or are they taking advantage of the system?



**Source:** Time/CNN/Yankelovich Partners Inc.  
1000 National Adults - February 1993

# Voters Are Divided On Whether Welfare Is Needed

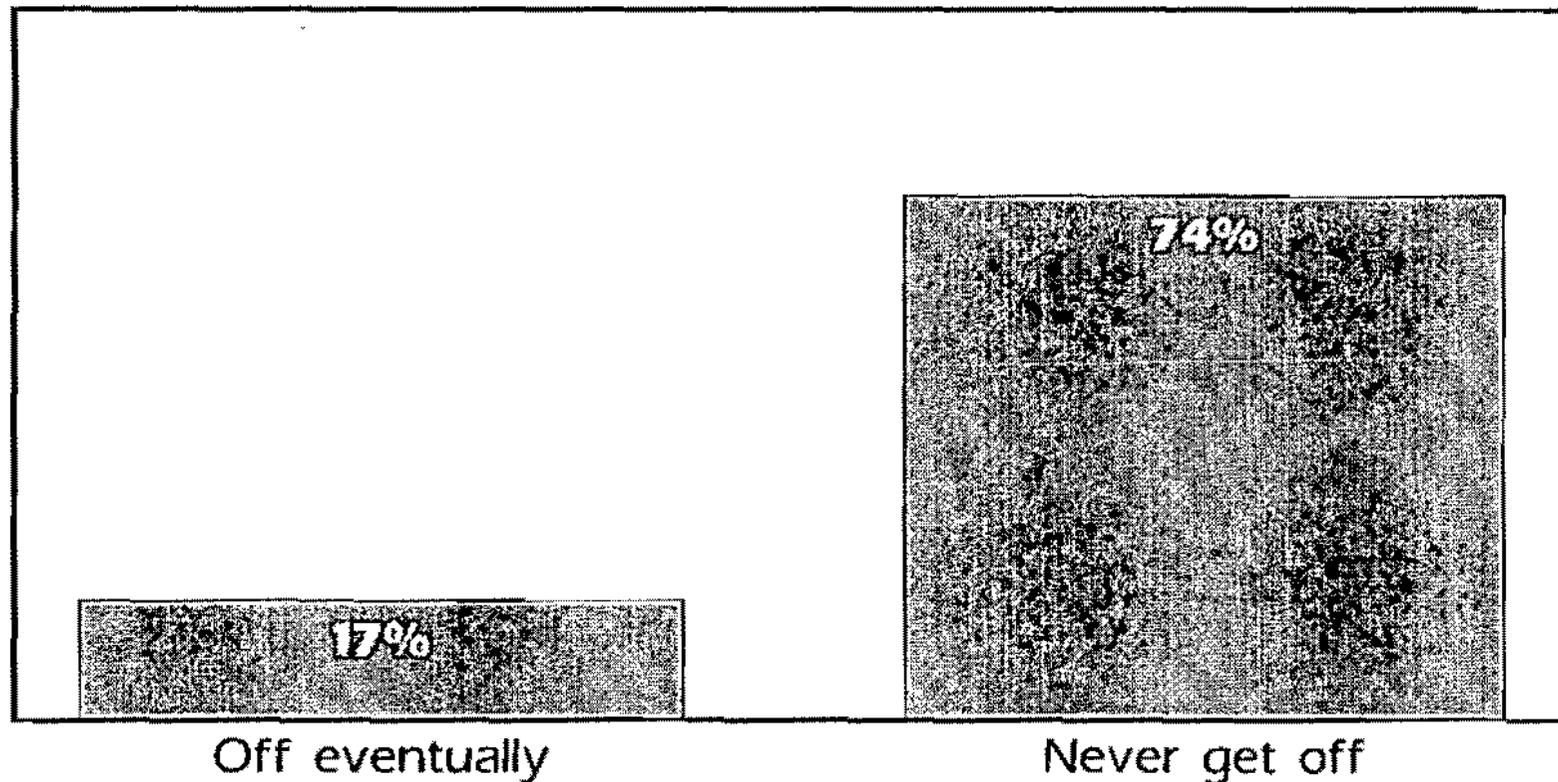
Do you think that most people who receive money from welfare could get along without it if they tried, or do you think they really need the help?



**Source:** NBC News/Wall Street Journal, Peter Hart and Vince Breglio  
1118 National Registered Voters - May 1992

# People Believe Welfare Is Failing As a Transitional Program

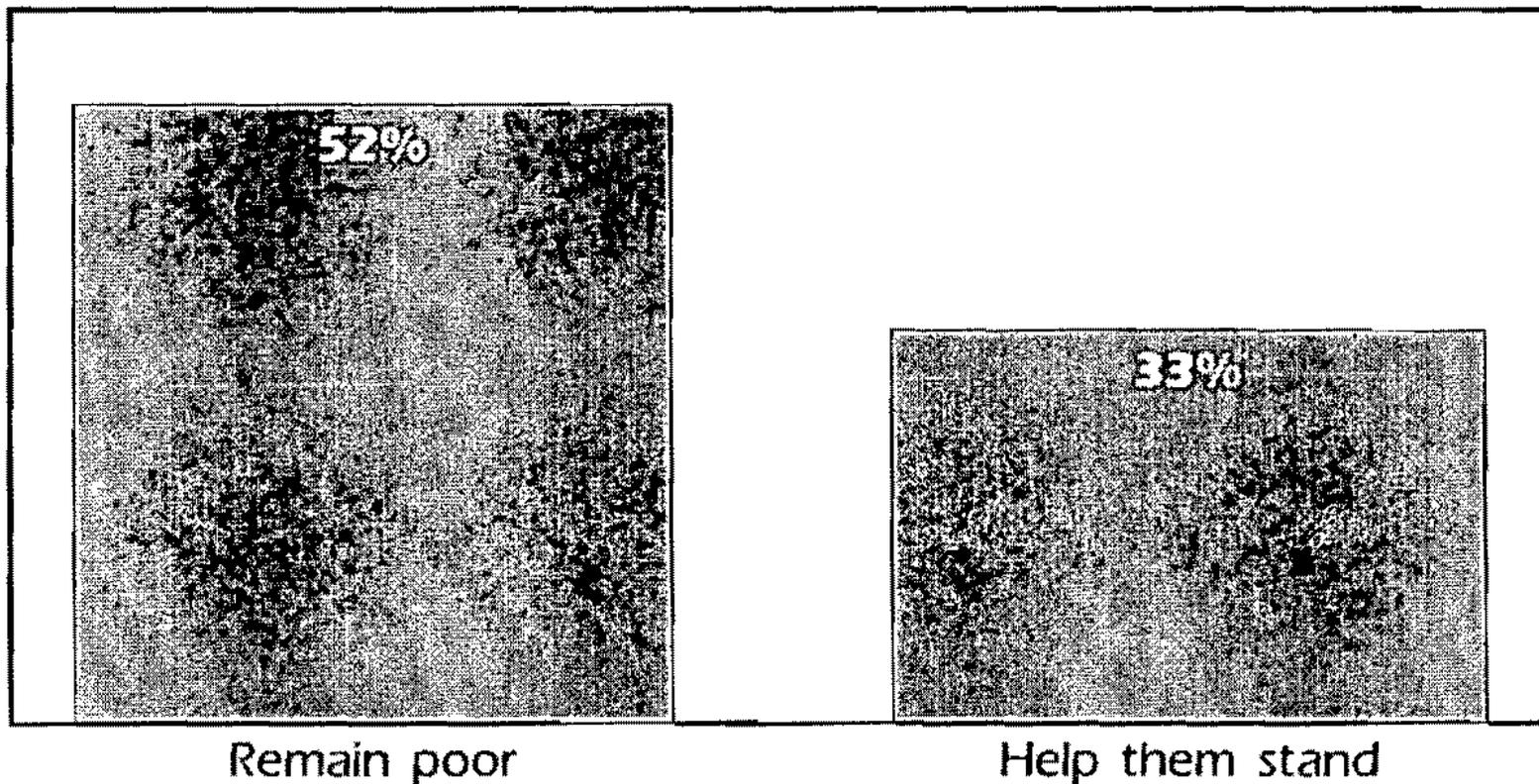
Do you think that most people on welfare are using welfare for a short period of time and will get off it eventually, or do you think most people on welfare are so dependent on welfare that they will never get off it?



Source: CBS News/New York Times  
1347 National Adults - May 1992

# A Majority Believe Government Benefits Keep People In Poverty

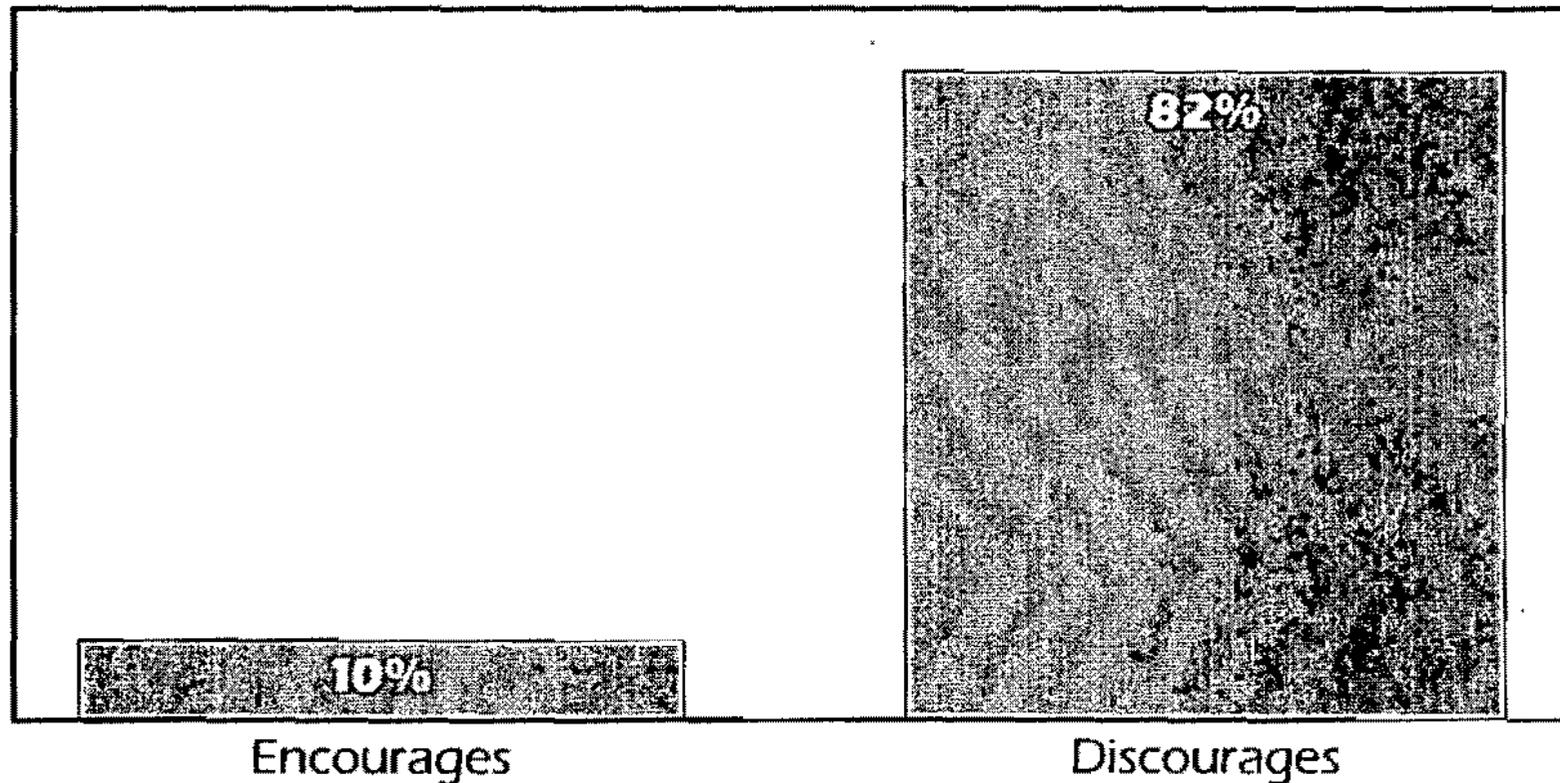
Does providing government benefits to poor people such as welfare encourage them to remain poor, or does it help them until they begin to stand on their own?



**Source:** New York Times  
1347 National Adults - May 1992

# People Believe Welfare Discourages Work

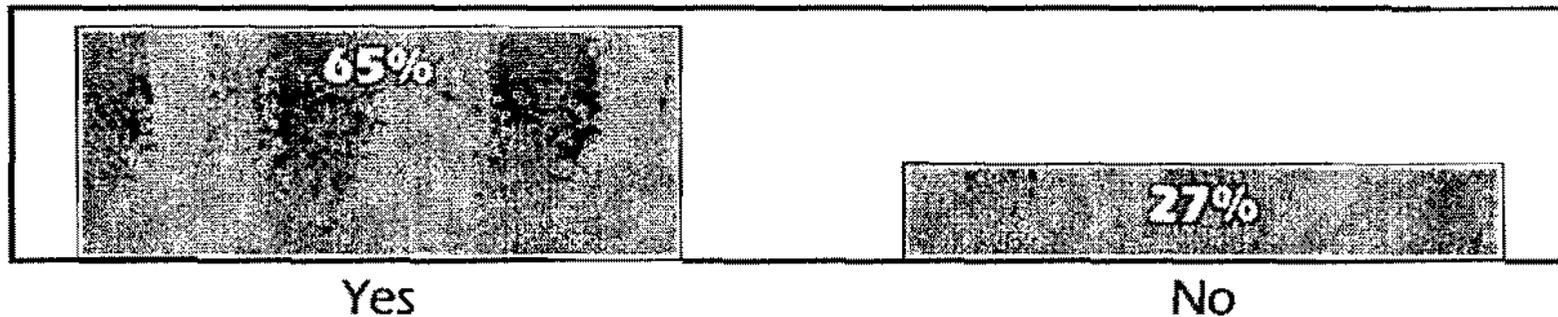
Do you think the current welfare system encourages poor people to find work or discourages them?



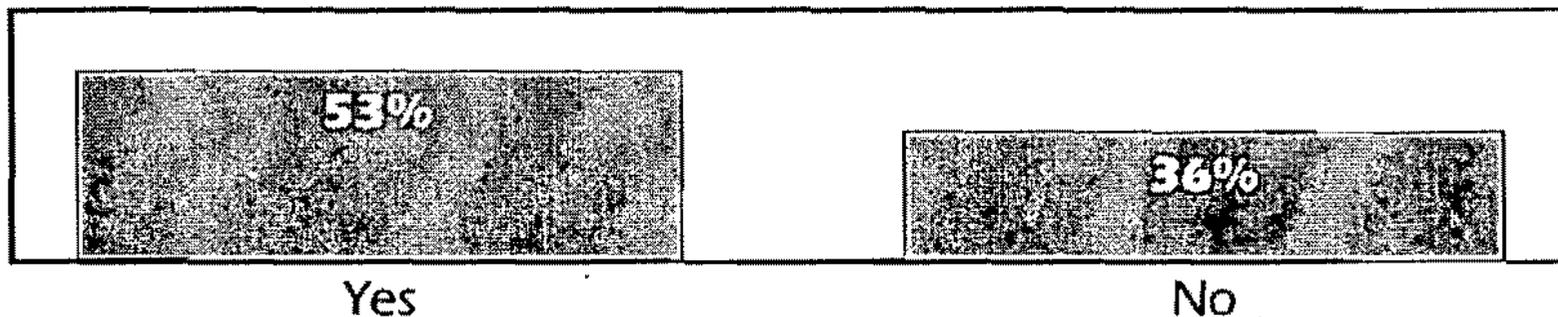
**Source:** Time/CNN/Yankelovich Clancy Shulman  
1250 National Adults - May 14, 1992

# Voters Believe Welfare Encourages Large Families and Unwed Mothers

Do you think the welfare system encourages people to have larger families than they would have otherwise?



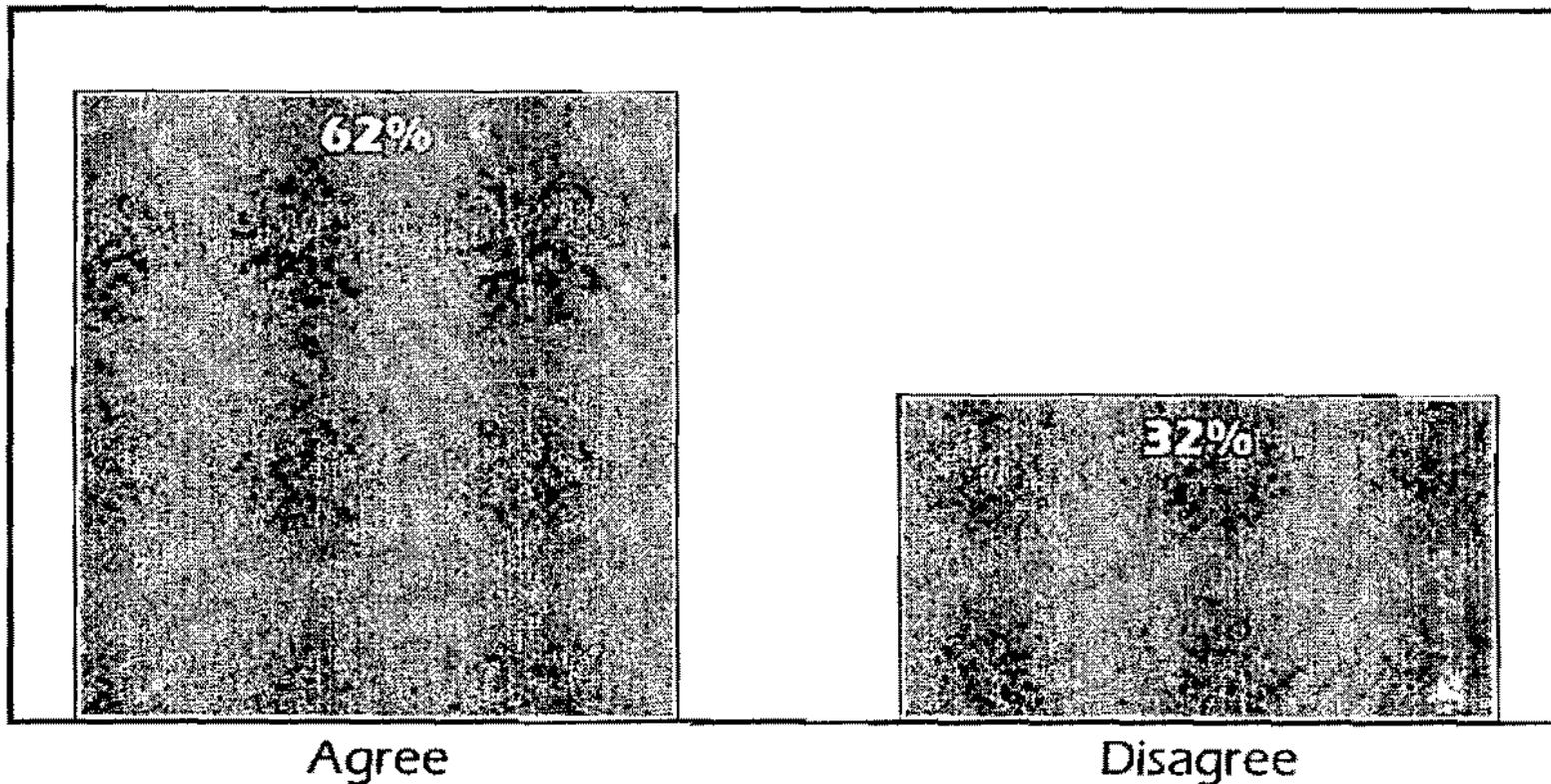
Do you think the welfare system discourages pregnant women from getting married when they otherwise would have?



Source: New York Times  
1347 National Adults - May 1992

# Most Feel Immigrants Use More Than Their Share

For each statement, please tell me if you agree or disagree . . . Immigrants use more than their fair share of government services such as welfare, medical care, and food stamps?



**Source:** Business Week, Lou Harris & Associate  
1418 National Adults - June 1992

## **One Set of Rules**

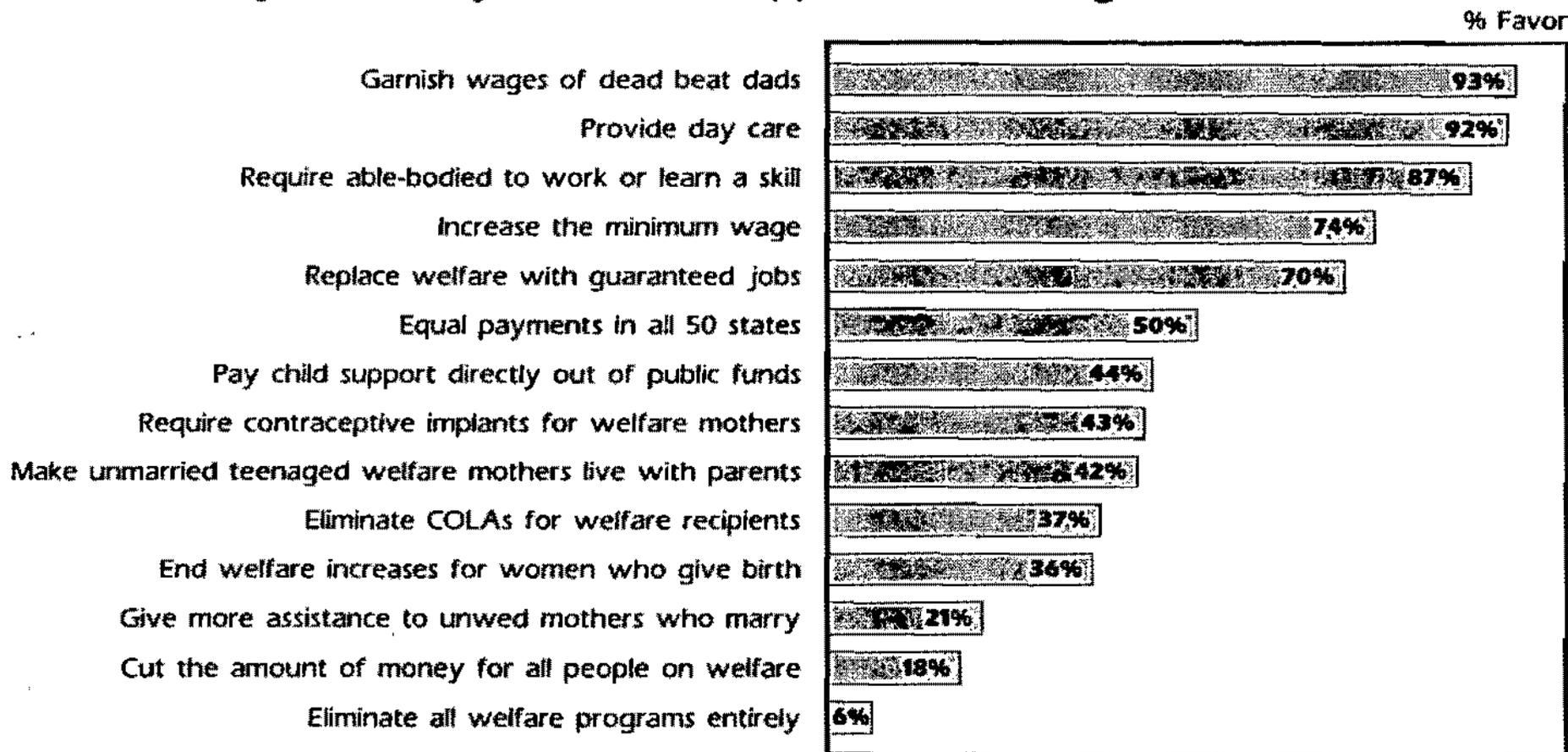
Beneath the surface, middle class voters want to extend the comforts of middle class life to everyone. At the same time, they insist that everyone be forced to play the game by the same set of rules they face. Voters want welfare programs that can distinguish between people who are using assistance for a period of time in order to become self-supporting and people who are taking advantage of the public dole. Voters want to cut benefits for the undeserving and increase benefits that are investments in helping people get self supporting jobs. For this reason, the public supports increased spending for education, job training, and child care, as well as a cutoff of benefits after two years.

## **Support for Reform**

Voters offer strong support for a number of other specific proposals to reform the system. Roughly 9 out of 10 say they support proposals to garnish the wages of fathers who owe child support; to spend tax money to provide day care for working welfare mothers; and to make work, education, or job training a requirement. Three out of four would support an increase in the minimum wage. On the other hand, voters reject punitive changes and changes that would simply cut welfare without making allowances to provide transitional aid to help the poor.

# Voters Support Many Reform Proposals

Here is a list of changes many people would like to make in the current welfare system. Do you favor or oppose that change?



**Source:** Time/CNN/Yankelovich Clancy Shulman  
1400 National Adults - March 12, 1992 and 1250 National Adults - May 14, 1992

# Voters Support Many Reform Proposals

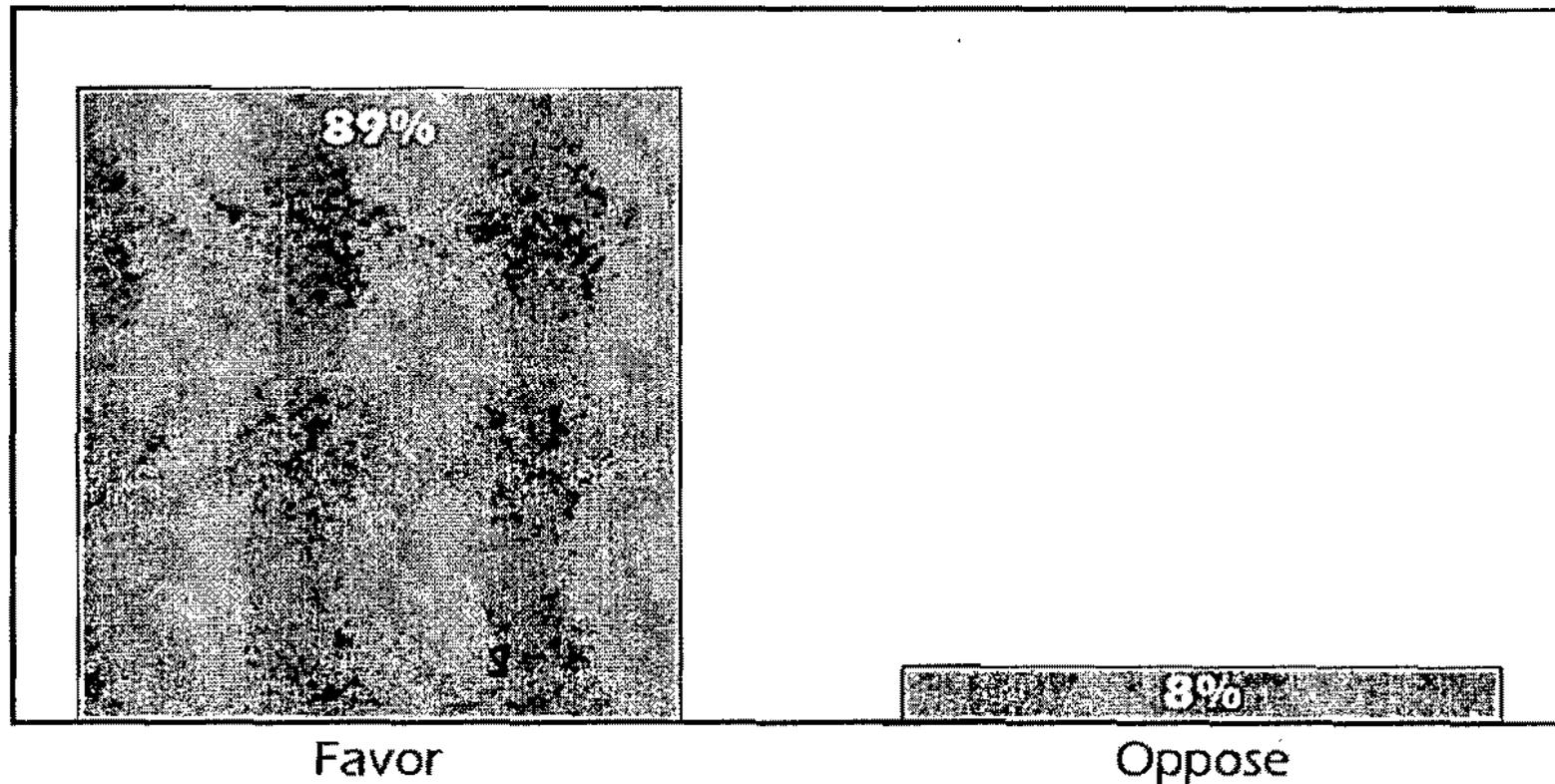
Here is a list of changes many people would like to make in the current welfare system. Do you favor or oppose that change?

	% Favor
Take money out of the paychecks and tax refunds of fathers who refuse to make child support payments that the court has ordered	93%
Spend extra money to provide day care to allow poor mothers to work or take classes during the day	92%
Require all able-bodied people on welfare, including women with small children, to work or learn a job skill	87%
Increase the minimum wage to make work a more attractive alternative to welfare	74%
Replace Welfare with a system of guaranteed jobs	70%
Guarantee that welfare pay the same amount to poor people in all 50 states, even if this requires some states to increase or decrease the amount they spend on welfare	50%
Pay child support directly out of public funds to mothers if the government cannot make the father pay	44%
Require welfare mothers to accept contraceptive implants	43%
Require teenaged mothers who are unmarried to live with their parents in order to receive welfare	42%
Eliminate automatic cost-of-living increases to welfare recipients	37%
End increases in welfare to women who give birth to children while on welfare	36%
Give additional assistance to unwed mothers who marry	21%
Cut the amount of money given to all people on welfare	18%
Eliminate all welfare programs entirely	6%

Sources: Time/CNN/Yankelovich Clancy Shulman; 1400 National Adults – March 12, 1992 and 1250 National Adults – May 14, 1992

# Strong Support for "Two Years and Out"

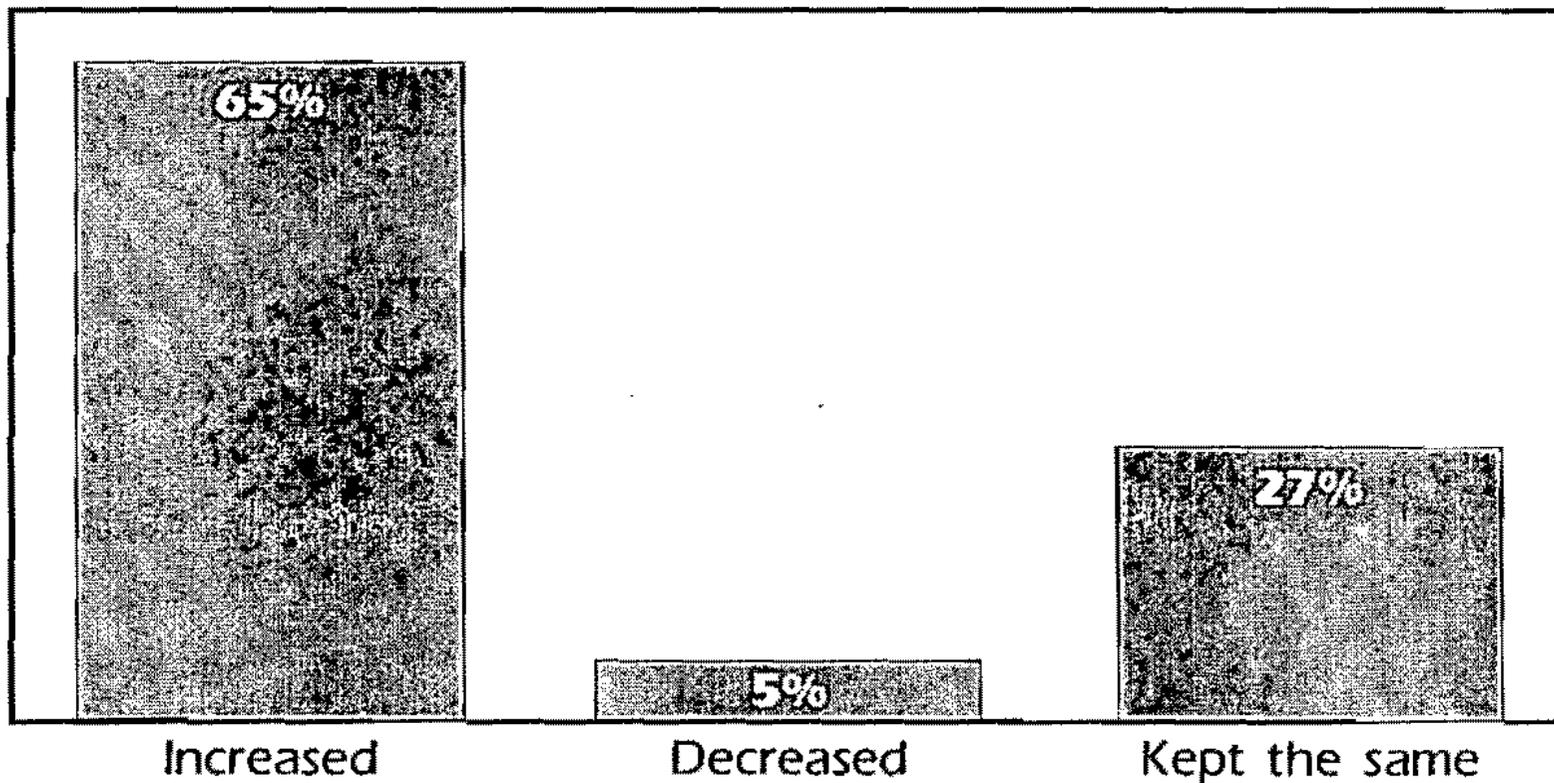
Do you favor or oppose cutting off welfare payments to able bodied people after two years but providing government services to help them find work?



**Source:** CNN/USA Today/Gallup  
1441 National Adults - September 1992

# A Majority Supports Increases for Job Training

Do you think spending on job training programs for people on welfare should be increased, decreased, or kept the same?

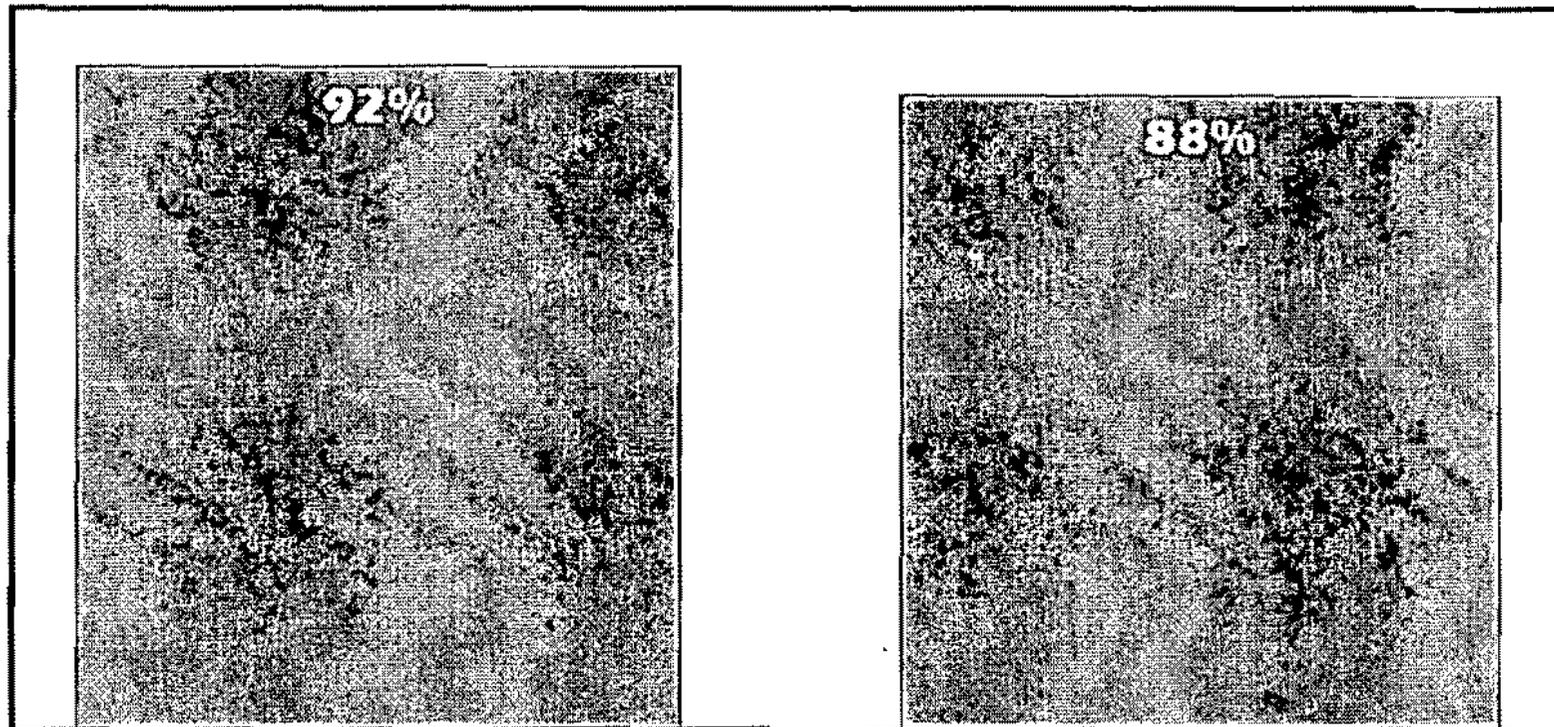


Source: New York Times  
1347 National Adults - May 1992

# 9 Out Of 10 Americans Support Education and Training Requirements

## Nearly the Same Level of Support Is Found Among the Poor

Do you think able-bodied people receiving welfare benefits should or should not be required to go to school or receive job training as a condition of getting benefits?



All Americans

Poor  
(income less than \$12,500)

**Source:** Kaiser/Harvard/NORC National Health Access & Satisfaction Survey of Low Income Americans  
1900 Low Income Americans - June 1992

## **Middle Class Squeeze**

The most effective messages in the 1992 campaign responded to middle class voters' feelings that they are being squeezed between rising costs and incomes that are falling behind. Any program that does not address this world view is highly vulnerable to attack. Focus group participants will tell you they want to help the poor, but at the same time, many fear rising taxes and other costs which are already threatening to drop their own families out of the comfortable middle class.

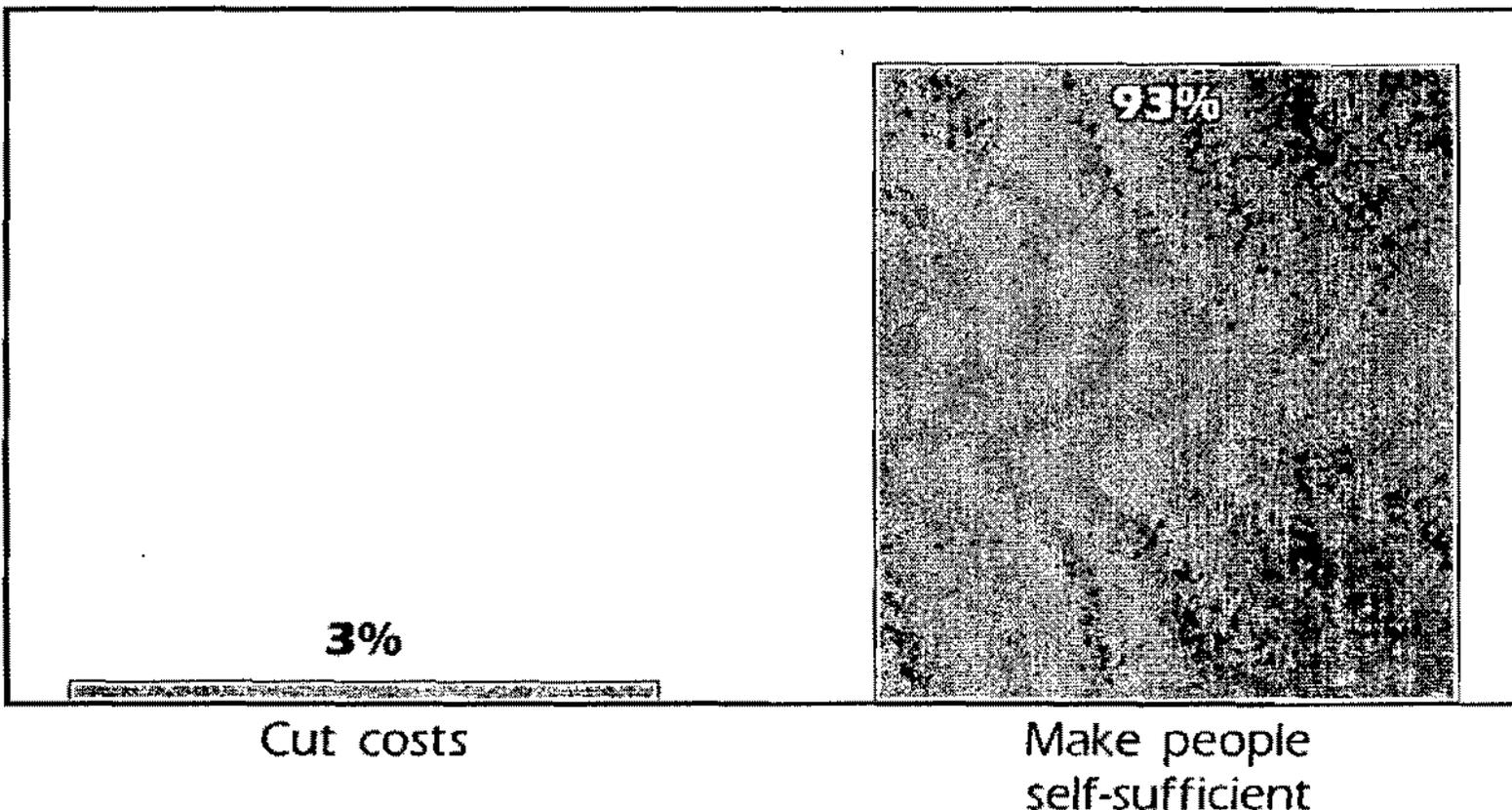
If the administration's welfare reform proposal will require net spending increases for assistance programs for the poor, then this is likely to be its greatest weakness in the eyes of taxpayers, and the area where it will be attacked. The possible attack and counterattack scenarios have not been played out or statistically modeled in the publicly available surveys on this topic. Thus we do not know which of several possible charges and responses will be most effective in shaping public support for the administration's plan.

## **Will Voters Pay for Reform?**

While there are survey findings that show near consensus that the goal of welfare reform should be to improve the system's ability to help the poor become self-reliant, and that the goal of reform is not to save taxpayer money, this result may be illusory. There are no data to evaluate voters' willingness to pay additional taxes for welfare reform. The assumption behind many of the surveys seems to be that comprehensive welfare reform will save money. There are no results that allow us to evaluate voters' willingness to reach into their pockets for this reform.

# Emphatically, the Goal Is Transitional Aid - Not Savings

Which of the following goals of welfare reform is most important to you: cutting the cost of welfare programs by removing people from the welfare rolls, or giving poor people the skills they need to become self-sufficient?

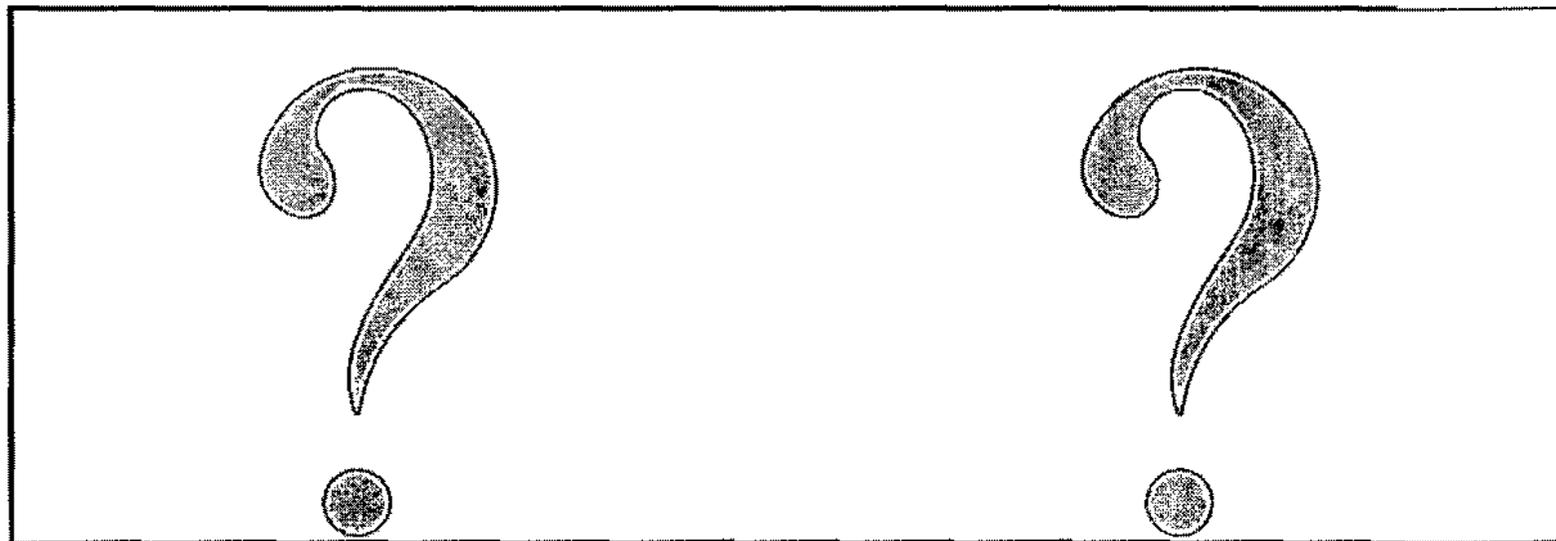


**Source:** Time/CNN/Yankelovich Clancy Shulman  
1250 National Adults - May 14, 1992

# But Watch Out for Cheaper Alternatives

We don't know how people would answer this question: Which would you prefer:

- A) a welfare reform proposal that encourages people on welfare to become more self-sufficient but costs taxpayers more money than the current welfare system or
- B) a proposal that encourages people on welfare to become more self-sufficient but also cuts costs by cutting waste and fraud?



Make people self-sufficient

Make people self-sufficient  
and cut costs

## Unanswered Questions

With a well designed primary research effort we can learn answers to several strategically important questions including:

- Voters say their goal is a better program rather than cost savings, but how will they respond to an opposition claim to offer an alternative plan that offers a better program with cost savings?
- How will voters respond to the argument that they are being asked to pay a little more for a program that works? What evidence do they have, or would they need, to convince them that this program will, in fact, work? How will evidence from past Democratic administrations, from Arkansas, from assistance recipients, from think tanks, and opinions from well known personalities affect their conclusion about whether this reform will work?

- How strong is the investment approach in the current climate where voters may perceive they are being asked to invest too much all at once?
- Voters express strong support for job training and education. How does this support stand up to opposition arguments that job training is a myth? This conclusion is likely to be supported by statistics, the example of the CETA program, and the common sense argument that there are currently thousands of well trained and educated people who are unable to find work. Which of these attacks are effective and what are the most effective counter arguments?
- To what degree can the discussion be shifted from costs and benefits to justice. Now dated focus groups suggest voters are less concerned about the overall cost of public assistance when they are convinced the program properly distinguishes between the deserving and undeserving. How will voters respond to the argument that the reform proposal takes money away from some, while it increases investment in others? How will they then

## **Conclusion**

Even with the limitations of the secondary data sources it is clear that the public has a hunger for change in the nations public assistance programs. They find a great deal of fault in the current system. The danger is that they may find as much fault in the reform proposal. Primary research will be necessary to help us chart a public communications plan to steer us through waters that are likely to be more treacherous than they may appear on the surface.