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HUFF POST POLITICS

## Hey, Paul Ryan -- We All Depend on Government - Even You (and Your Mom)!

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Rep. Paul Ryan is back to his old tricks, demonizing people who rely on government to improve their lives. This week, his target was food stamp recipients.

He's already come out in favor of \$20 billion in cuts that will throw an estimated two million children, elderly, and disabled Americans off food stamps. But now Ryan -- the millionaire Wisconsin Congressman who was Mitt Romney's VP running mate last year -- is pushing an amendment to eliminate food stamps for people who have \$2,000 in savings, or a car worth more than \$5,000.

The CBO found that this would throw 1.8 million people off of the program. The Hill reported,

Most of these would be low-income seniors and working families with children. These families typically live paycheck to paycheck. Denying them the ability to save for emergencies, such as fixing a car, or unexpected expenses, such as buying a uniform for a new job, only makes them more dependent on government resources, not less.

Last summer, in his speech to the GOP convention in Tampa, Ryan told a story about how, after his father's death, his mother "got on a bus every weekday for years, and rode 40 miles each morning to Madison."

She earned a new degree and learned new skills to start her small business. It wasn't just a new livelihood. It was a new life. And it transformed my Mom from a widow in grief to a small businesswoman whose happiness wasn't just in the past. Her work gave her hope. It made our family proud. And to this day, my Mom is my role model.

Ryan meant this as a celebration of his mother's lift-herself-by-her-own-bootstraps spirit.

But shouldn't someone remind Ryan that the bus was a public service, that the road was built and maintained by government, and that the University of Wisconsin in Madison is a public institution?

This is the Paul Ryan whose budget plan would have slashed funding for public education, roads, and public services that are the investments we need to lift people out of poverty and strengthen our economy. Now he's taking aim at the most vulnerable people in society -- food stamp recipients.

Ryan worships at the altar of novelist Ayn Rand, the philosopher of you're-on-your-own selfishness, whose books were required reading for his Congressional staffers.

And let's not forget the underlying philosophy of the Republican Party, well articulated by Mitt Romney last year. Speaking to a group of like-minded conservatives, Romney dissed the 47 percent of Americans who, he claimed, "are dependent upon government, who believe that they are victims, who believe the government has a responsibility to care for them, who believe that they are entitled to health care, to food, to housing, to you-name-it."

Raise your hand if you:

- went to a public college or university,
- work for government (i.e., cops, teachers, firefighters, military, social workers, librarians, school janitors, judges, court reporters, bus drivers, etc),
- borrow books from a public library,
- work for or own stock in a defense contractor,

- get your electricity or water from a government-owned utility,
- went to, or send your kids to, public school,
- ride on government-run buses, subways or light-rail,
- take prescription medicine whose safety and effectiveness are regulated by the Food and Drug Administration,
- use or work for the post office,
- went to college on the GI Bill, Pell Grant, state financial aid program,
- are retired and get Social Security payments,
- ever used food stamps,
- lived in public housing or had a Section 8 voucher,
- used a wheelchair ramp mandated by the Americans for Disability Act,
- get your health care from the Veterans Administration hospital,
- go boating or fishing in a government-run lake,
- have a job whose workplace is safer because of OSHA rules
- work for a company or nonprofit organization that has a contract with the local, county, state or federal government
- have a family member who depends on a government-subsidized home health care aide,
- pay for your medicine and medical care with Medicaid,
- got a tax subsidy for your mortgage interest and/or property taxes,
- recycle your garbage through your city's sanitation department,
- took a vacation in a national or state park,
- own a family- or corporate-owned farm that is irrigated by a government-owned dam,
- played baseball or soccer or used the see-saw or swings in a public park or playground,
- got your polio and other vaccination shots at your public school,
- traveled with a government-issued passport,
- used an elevator inspected for safety by the local building department,
- eat food inspected for safety by the U.S. Department of Agriculture,
- went to a restaurant inspected by the local Health Department,
- were helped by a police officer, park ranger or firefighter,
- have a savings account in a bank regulated by the Federal Deposit insurance Corporation
- flew on an airplane inspected by the Federal Aviation Administration

Congressman Ryan -- Welcome to "big government!"

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