

Currently, 1 out of 5 New Yorkers are on Medicaid. There are several reasons contributing to this. Some of it comes from a political agenda but a lot of it results from flawed worldviews and the roles of government held by leaders and people.

Over six months ago, I had a young kid come to my office. He confided in me that he was moving from another state because the welfare benefits here in NY were so much better than other states. Within a week, he had assistance for food, shelter, job training and clothing as well as being given a cell phone by a government agency at our expense. Mind you, this gentleman has yet to pay a dime in taxes here in NY and won't for some time I suspect. If he is able to become self-sustaining with our help that would be great. But how many others like him are making the same decisions for the same reasons? Should our state be offering a Cadillac Medicaid program that would encourage others to move here for that reason alone? How many do become self-supporting and do not add to the state's burdens with out of wedlock births and crime? The statistics aren't good and thus the percentage in my opening statement. Without even scaling back on some of these welfare benefits, we could stop this mass entrance of dependent individuals by just requiring proof of residency for one year before being eligible for any welfare benefits. Putting the responsibility on family and friends to support such individuals makes more sense for they know them better than anyone else, and I would think there would be more accountability by family and friends to insure the individual is doing everything they can to improve their lot in life. The benefits should not be a drug that creates dependency. There has to be limitations comparable to that of neighboring states to minimize a dependent class who are simply acting upon their own self interests.

The tax burden of NY upon our families contributes to that number above too. Our legislator's spending addiction has to be dealt with before any improvement will be seen on this front. See my opinion about Spending, Taxes and Debt.

I desire a state that is fair for all, not free for all with little or no accountability and limitations. The state should defend us, insure a level playing field in the free market and regulate against man's vices that would trample on the God given rights of individuals. The state has its place in huge public projects where the market place is unable to address it in and of itself. For the state to be in the business of trying to guarantee outcome of the pursuit of happiness and practice social justice through the tax code, legislation and judicial activism, we only invite bondage to the state empowering them to serve their own interests primarily than that of the people. That is the tendency of government because it is the tendency of man.

Acting in one's own self interest can be good or bad. If bad, they can only do so much damage to the community. When it comes to our government acting in its own self interest and promoting dependency upon them, they can inflict an enormous amount a pain and suffering on the populous. Changing the rudder in one man's heart is a lot easier than that of the many in government simultaneously.

Those climbing the ladder within the party or the **career politician** are the least likely candidates who are serious and passionate enough to desire changing the process, priorities and accountability in Albany. My career is my family business, not 10 or 20 years in Albany. Give me six to see what I can fix.

Shawn Skeelee, NYS 111th Assembly Candidate