

“Entitlements”

Life, Liberty and The Pursuit of Happiness - - That’s it – the sum total of what is spelled out in the Declaration of Independence.

Of course, there are also the first ten amendments to the US Constitution (the Bill of Rights) - - These basic fundamental rights can also be considered to be entitlements.

One more.... We The People are also entitled to equal opportunities, and there is an appropriate role for the federal and the state governments to ensure equality of opportunities. Because our country is the “land of opportunity”, equal opportunity is the default presumption. If an individual feels that equal opportunity is being denied, then they have the opportunity to pursue the matter with the assistance of the American Civil Liberties Union.

Our Editorial Board believes that these entitlements and basic rights are all that the US government (or any governmental unit) is obligated to provide to its citizens – no less, and no more. We believe that anything beyond these entitlements and basic rights are a personal responsibility, and are something that a person needs to acquire for themselves.

But what about the necessities of daily life - - food, water, shelter, etc? Shouldn’t the US government provide these basic needs to its citizens? If so, the question becomes - what is the list of those items, and what price is the price? (See our Conversation Piece on *Capitalism, Communism and Socialism*). Also, doesn’t a person’s “needs” include a basic education? And what about health care?

Our Editorial Board believes that there are appropriate limitations in regards to what the US government (or any other governmental unit) should provide to its citizens. Although this may sound harsh, the government is not (and should not be) a nanny, a fairy godmother, or a sugar daddy. Providing for the necessities of daily life is a personal responsibility.

Having said that.... We are also cognizant of the fact that for some citizens, acquiring the necessities of daily life can become a daily struggle. As we mention in the Conversation Piece on *Tax Reform / Tax Simplification*, we believe that religious organizations and Not for Profit organizations are the proper vehicles for addressing these citizens’ needs, rather than a government program. Our Editorial Board believes that the country’s citizens continue to be a very generous, civic-minded, and compassionate community, and in that Conversation Piece, we illustrate how the US government and the country’s taxpayers can support these religious and Not For Profit organizations via the country’s federal income tax policies.