



For Immediate Release: September 28, 2010

Contact: Brian Stephens 512-320-0222, ext 112
stephens@cPPP.org

METRO-AREA CENSUS DATA SHOW MORE POOR AND UNINSURED IN TEXAS

(Austin, Texas) – The 2009 American Community Survey (ACS) data released by the U.S. Census Bureau on today show more Texans are below the poverty line and lack health insurance compared to 2008. Most of Texas' metro area rates exceed the U.S. average. Texas again had the nation's highest statewide uninsured rate, and some localities far exceeded the statewide rate. Texas entered the recession later than the rest of the nation and experienced low rates of unemployment through most of 2008. These new data for 2009 reflect the full impact of the recession on Texas.

SEE BELOW FOR TOTAL UNINSURED AND POVERTY TABLES BY METRO AND RURAL AREAS.

Local Data Show Large Variations in Texas' Uninsured Rate

Nearly one in four Texans (23.8 percent) does not have health insurance, or almost 5.8 million people. This is a significant increase from 2008. Texas' uninsured rates ranged broadly from a high in the McAllen-Edinburg-Mission metro area (36 percent) to a low in Killeen-Temple-Fort Hood (14.5 percent), which was the only metro area below the national average (15.1 percent).

Texas' child uninsured rate (16.3 percent) is tied for worst in the country with Nevada, and nearly twice the national uninsured rate (8.6 percent). The child uninsured rates also varied widely across Texas, with a high of 25 percent in Odessa and a low of 9 percent in Tyler.

"The communities that are struggling with a high uninsured rate are also the communities that could benefit the most from health reform," says **Center for Public Policy Priorities** Associate Director Anne Dunkelberg. "But the Texas Legislature *must* take the necessary steps in 2011 and give state agencies the authority and resources they need to make the most of health reform for all Texans."

Texas 8th Worst in Total Poverty

Texas' poverty rate is the 8th worst among the 50 states, with 17.2 percent, or almost 4.2 million Texans living in poverty in 2009 (e.g., \$18,310 for a family of 3) compared to a national average of 14.3 percent. Texas children had the 6th worst rate of poverty among the states, with one in four kids (24.4 percent), or 1.7 million, living below the poverty level in 2009 (U.S. = 20 percent). One bright spot was the decline in the elderly poverty rate from 12.2 percent in 2008 to 11.8 percent in 2009, though this was not a statistically significant change. (See Table 2 below for metro area poverty rates over time)

Texas' overall and child poverty rates were significantly worse than in 2008, largely due to the impact of the recession.

Table 1: Uninsured in Texas Metro and Rural Areas

	2008		2009	
	Uninsured People	Rate of Uninsured	Uninsured People	Rate of Uninsured
United States	43,591,413	14.6%	45,664,741	15.1%*
Texas	5,575,509	23.4%	5,783,256	23.8%*
Abilene	24,790	16.9%	24,798	16.6%
Amarillo	46,131	19.4%	53,917	22.2%*
Austin-Round Rock	328,920	20.2%	347,520	20.5%
Beaumont-Port Arthur	65,950	18.2%	82,396	22.6%*
Brownsville-Harlingen	133,833	34.3%	140,135	35.6%
College Station-Bryan	30,554	14.7%	34,444	16.4%
Corpus Christi	88,820	21.8%	95,006	23.4%
Dallas-Fort Worth-Arlington	1,466,149	23.5%	1,530,858	24.0%
Dallas-Plano-Irving	1,025,530	24.5%	1,053,108	24.6%
Fort Worth-Arlington	439,362	21.4%	477,750	22.8%
El Paso	221,914	30.7%	206,485	28.2%*
Houston-Sugar Land-Baytown	1,378,457	24.3%	1,427,678	24.6%
Killeen-Temple-Fort Hood	45,730	13.5%	49,939	14.5%
Laredo	82,050	34.7%	81,869	34.2%
Longview	43,971	22.1%	42,314	21.2%
Lubbock	44,091	16.5%	53,206	19.4%*
McAllen-Edinburg-Mission	266,840	37.0%	265,066	36.0%
Midland	27,127	21.1%	28,084	21.3%
Odessa	37,276	28.6%	37,064	27.8%
San Angelo	18,273	17.7%	22,221	21.2%
San Antonio	402,788	20.3%	403,082	20.0%
Sherman-Denison	24,414	20.9%	27,271	23.0%
Texarkana	25,094	19.2%	29,763	22.1%
Tyler	41,679	21.0%	43,695	21.5%
Victoria	22,909	20.3%	26,757	23.4%
Waco	47,261	20.8%	42,398	18.4%
Wichita Falls	21,604	16.0%	26,439	19.3%*
Rural Texas	968,596	18.9%	1,004,821	18.8%

Source 2008 and 2009 American Community Survey, U.S. Census Bureau. The ACS asks whether the person was uninsured at the time they were surveyed.

Table 2: Poverty in Texas Metro and Rural Areas

	2008		2009	
	People in Poverty	Poverty Rate	People in Poverty	Poverty Rate
United States	39,108,422	13.2%	42,868,163	14.3%
Texas	3,760,431	15.8	4,150,242	17.2%
Abilene	23,641	16.1	21,483	14.5%
Amarillo	36,356	15.4	36,915	15.3%
Austin-Round Rock	206,337	12.8	232,478	13.9%
Beaumont-Port Arthur	54,827	15.4	61,083	16.8%
Brownsville-Harlingen	134,204	34.7	134,538	34.3%
College Station-Bryan	50,078	25.3	59,519	29.7%
Corpus Christi	70,604	17.3	76,530	18.9%
Dallas-Fort Worth-Arlington	789,491	12.7	919,073	14.5%
Dallas-Plano-Irving	549,278	13.2	626,189	14.7%
Fort Worth-Arlington	240,213	11.7	292,884	14.0%*
El Paso	186,344	25.5	174,698	23.7%
Houston-Sugar Land-Baytown	770,852	13.6	881,835	15.3%
Killeen-Temple-Fort Hood	50,211	13.9	59,360	16.3%
Laredo	62,963	26.9	75,020	31.4%
Longview	27,140	13.8	30,539	15.4%
Lubbock	39,053	15.0	55,592	21.0%
McAllen-Edinburg-Mission	253,798	35.2	260,644	35.4%
Midland	9,031	7.1	16,072	12.2%
Odessa	18,809	14.5	22,485	17.2%
San Angelo	12,842	12.3	16,364	15.4%
San Antonio	319,129	16.0	334,438	16.6%
Sherman-Denison	12,962	11.3	16,132	13.9%
Texarkana	25,964	19.8	24,812	18.7%
Tyler	24,732	12.6	33,222	16.4%
Victoria	17,044	15.1	13,461	11.8%
Waco	45,202	20.5	52,708	23.2%
Wichita Falls	14,789	10.8	18,348	13.5%
Rural Texas	559,136	10.9	640,725	12.0%

Source 2008 and 2009 American Community Survey, U.S. Census Bureau.

Additional Information

For additional local-level data on income and poverty by race and age for Texas' metropolitan and rural areas, see [“Local-Area Health Insurance, Poverty, and Income.”](#)

For more on how Texas must do to successfully implement national health reform, see *Special Report*, [“Texas Health Reform Checklist: Key Steps to Make the Most of Reform.”](#)

For more information on the differences between the Census Bureau's data sources for poverty, income, and health insurance, see *Memorandum*, [“What Is the New Census Data About Anyway?!”](#)

To learn more about the federal poverty measure, how it is used, and the extent of poverty in Texas, see *Policy Point*, [“Texas Poverty 101.”](#)

The Center for Public Policy Priorities (CPPP) is a nonprofit, nonpartisan policy institute dedicated to improving the economic and social conditions of low- and moderate-income Texans. You can learn more about CPPP at <http://www.cppp.org>.

— CPPP —