



NEW REPORT SHOWS NEED FOR STRONGER POLICIES TO SUPPORT LOW-INCOME WORKING FAMILIES

“Still Working Hard, Still Falling Short”

37 Percent of Texas Working Families are Low-Income

Austin, Texas—The Center for Public Policy Priorities today pointed to a new report by the Working Poor Families Project as evidence of the need for Texas to improve public structures that serve low-income working families. According to the report, 37 percent of Texas working families are low-income. Nearly two-of-three Texas low-income working families lack a parent with any postsecondary education, ranking us 48th in the nation. The report also shows that 57 percent of Texas low-income families have at least one parent without health insurance in 2006, the last year for which data is available. The center cited modest improvements in need-based state financial aid since publication of the last similar report, but urged continued improvement to public structures to ensure prosperity for all Texans.

“Last year, the Texas Legislature made some policy improvements to aid low- and moderate-income Texans, including expanded CHIP access and increased access to need-based financial aid for higher education. We must build on these successes to prepare for challenging economic times ahead. This report shows that before this economic crisis, more Texas families fell into poverty, a higher share of kids lived in low-income working families, and more low-income working families had a parent without health insurance. Texas needs a comprehensive economic opportunity package to stay competitive,” CPPPP Policy Analyst Don Baylor said.

“Still Working Hard, Still Falling Short” updates the 2004 report, “Working Hard, Falling Short.” The authors found that across the country, more than one-in-four working families were low-income in 2006, meaning they earned too little to meet basic needs. This is an increase of 350,000 working families since 2002, bringing the total number of low-income adults and children in the U.S. to 42 million. The report also provides information on education levels, demographics, housing costs and health insurance coverage.

The report also found that in Texas:

- The percentage of children who live in low-income working families is 43, ranking the state 47th in the nation;
- 46 percent of low-income working families have at least one parent without a high school degree and 64 percent have at least one parent without any post-secondary education;
- 50 percent of minority working families are low-income; and
- 56 percent of families have housing costs greater than one-third of income.

“Still Working Hard, Still Falling Short” was produced by the Working Poor Families Project, a national initiative supported by the Annie E. Casey, Ford, Joyce, and C.S. Mott Foundations to examine the conditions of America’s working families. The Center for Public Policy Priorities is the Texas partner for the Working Poor Families Project.

For more information, visit www.workingpoorfamilies.org.