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### CPPP ON CENSUS' NEW INCOME, POVERTY, & HEALTH DATA

For an economy in its fifth year of recovery, the new Census Bureau figures paint a disappointing picture nationally and in Texas. The poverty rate in Texas is unchanged at 16.3 percent in 2005-06, while median income edged up to \$44,922, leaving Texas about where it was when the recession bottomed out in 2001.

“Despite five years of economic growth, Texas’ poverty rate has stagnated,” said Frances Deviney, Senior Research Associate at the Center for Public Policy Priorities. “While it’s encouraging that conditions haven’t gotten worse, it’s discouraging that we still have 3.7 million Texans living in poverty.”

Nationally, poverty declines are concentrated among the elderly. Texas’ elderly poverty rate is almost 13 percent—considerably higher than the U.S. elderly poverty rate of 9.8 percent, but much lower than the poverty rate for Texas children (22 percent).

Also, one in four Texans lack health insurance. About 20% of children and almost 30% of working-age adults in Texas are uninsured, the worst rates in the nation. National trends show that the share of Americans—including children—who are uninsured has increased 2.2 million in 2006. For the second year in a row the number of uninsured children has *increased*, rising by more than 600,000 in 2006.

These new figures are further evidence that many low and moderate income Texas families aren’t sharing in the gains of the recovery. The new data on health insurance are particularly relevant as Congress is in the midst of debating the reauthorization of the State Children’s Health Insurance Program. Given the troubling rise in uninsurance rates among children, the Bush Administration should reconsider its positions on children’s health insurance and work with Congress to improve children’s health coverage by renewing and strengthening CHIP. Read a short backgrounder on poverty at <http://www.cphp.org/research.php?aid=705>.