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Poverty Up, Median Income Down Across Virginia

Child Poverty Rate at Highest since 1998

RICHMOND, VA – The number of Virginians living in poverty in 2010 grew by 7.4 percent over 2009, and 16 percent since 2007 according to new data released today by the U.S. Census. That puts the total number of Virginians living with incomes below the federal poverty line, about $22,000 a year for a family of four, at 11.1 percent of the population. In addition, the number of Virginians living in deep poverty – about $11,000 a year for a family of four – has grown by 20.1 percent since 2007. In 2010, 4.8 percent of the state’s population lived in deep poverty.

“These numbers are a stark reminder that even though the recession officially ended in 2009, the economic damage is lasting,” says Sara Okos, policy director for The Commonwealth Institute for Fiscal Analysis. “With the state facing an $800 million shortfall in the coming budget, further cuts to funding for health care, education and other key services that struggling families rely on could significantly worsen the outlook for Virginians.”

In addition, the new numbers show that in 2010:

- 14.2 percent of children in Virginia lived in households with incomes below the poverty line; an increase of 14.4 percent in the number of kids living in poverty since 2007, and the highest child poverty rate since 1998.
- The number children in Virginia without health insurance remains at 6.6 percent or about 122,000 kids, largely due to the success of increased enrollments in the state’s Medicaid and FAMIS programs.
- Statewide the number of uninsured Virginians grew from 909,611 in 2009 to 1.02 million in 2010, an increase of about 10 percent in the number of uninsured Virginians.
- Statewide median household income was $60,674, a drop of just over 3 percent from pre-recession levels.

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About The Commonwealth Institute
The Commonwealth Institute for Fiscal Analysis provides credible, independent and accessible information and analyses of fiscal and economic issues with particular attention to the impacts on low- and moderate-income persons. Our products inform fiscal and budget policy debates and contribute to sound decisions that improve the well-being of individuals, communities and Virginia as a whole. Visit www.thecommonwealthinstitute.org for more information.

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