



News from the **Fiscal Policy Institute**

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Statement from Frank Mauro on the New Poverty Data Released Today by the United States Census Bureau

The data released today by the Census Bureau shows that in 2006 New York's overall statewide poverty rate declined for the second straight year—but not by much, and not by as much as it should four years into an economic recovery. Much more problematic, however, are the following facts, which clearly demonstrate the need for New York to redouble its efforts to address the interrelated challenges of strengthening and expanding the middle class and revitalizing the upstate cities.

- New York continues to have the highest poverty rate of all of the northeastern and midwestern states. According to the Census Bureau data for 2005-06, New York's poverty rate was 14.3 percent—twelfth among the 50 states and well above the national average, which remained relatively flat at 12.5 percent. Michigan with a poverty rate of 12.6 percent was the only other northern state with a poverty rate above the national average.
- The American Community Survey (ACS) data released by the Census Bureau today for all places and governmental jurisdictions in the United States with populations of 65,000 or more shows that the poverty rates in New York's major upstate cities are extraordinarily high. The four upstate cities covered by the ACS all had child poverty rates in the 40 percent range: Syracuse 40.2 percent, Rochester 40.9 percent, Albany 41.6 percent and Buffalo 42.6 percent.
- New York is one of the nation's wealthiest states on average—when measured on a per capita basis: all of the income divided by all the people—but the new data from the Census Bureau indicates that median household income (i.e., the income of a household in the exact middle of the income distribution) ranks only 20th among the 50 states. When adjusted for inflation, median household income has remained flat, increasing from \$48,191 in 2004-05 to \$48,472 in 05-06, a change that is not statistically significant according to the Census Bureau.

The Fiscal Policy Institute is a nonpartisan research and education organization that focuses on tax, budget, and economic issues that affect the quality of life and the economic well being of New York State residents. FPI's thoughts on how to address the economic challenges facing New York are discussed in One New York: An Agenda for Shared Prosperity, available at www.fiscalpolicy.org.

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