



Press Release
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**Kentucky's Median Household Income Ranks 48th, Seven Percent of
Kentucky Children Uninsured, Census Bureau Reports**
Data Points to Importance of Balanced Approach to
Closing State Budget Shortfall

Louisville, KY –The income of the median Kentucky household in 2008 was stagnate at \$41,538 - \$507 less than in 2006 and \$276 less than in 2007, according to Census Bureau data released today. Kentucky was one of only two states with drops in median income two years in a row. Although the relatively small consecutive drops in median income are not significant, they may mark a trend. These figures represent survey data from 2008, a time before the recession was as bad as it is now. It is likely incomes have declined even more than Census numbers suggest.

“When deciding how to address growing needs, legislators should be mindful that more Kentuckians are struggling to make ends meet,” said Terry Brooks, executive director of Kentucky Youth Advocates. “They should take a balanced approach that doesn’t rely too heavily on cutting spending to public programs just when families need them most.”

Signs of economic recovery exist nationally, but Kentucky lags the national economy and unemployment is still growing. States across the nation, including Kentucky, face significant budget shortfalls into fiscal years 2011 and 2012. Kentucky’s policymakers will continue to face tough decisions about how to balance the state’s budget as mid-year gaps emerge, the rainy day fund remains dry, and federal recovery dollars run out.

The Census Bureau also released additional health insurance data focusing on specific demographics. In Kentucky, 69,973 children 18 and under are uninsured. A greater percentage of Kentucky children are insured than in the U.S. and Indiana. In Kentucky, 93 percent of children are insured, compared to 90 percent in Indiana and the U.S.

“These positive numbers in Kentucky reflect the great strides made by the Governor and others to expand KCHIP [Kentucky Children’s Health Insurance Program] in recent years. We have more children covered, but we do not have all children covered. Many of the uninsured are likely eligible for Medicaid or KCHIP. Therefore, a continued commitment to 100 percent coverage requires that local, state and national leaders seek creative solutions that support Kentucky families,” said Brooks.

Kentucky Youth Advocates (KYA) anticipated the full release of the 2008 American Community Survey (ACS) data today, but the release of approximately ten percent of data tables has been postponed. The Census Bureau discovered a coding error that affected poverty, family income and food stamp receipt data. All affected data tables have been revised; however, additional time is needed to create new tables. The Census Bureau will release the withheld information on September 29, 2009. At which time, KYA will issue a press release with analysis of the poverty numbers for Kentucky.

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Kentucky Youth Advocates is the home of Kentucky’s Tax and Budget Initiative, a member of the nationwide State Fiscal Analysis Initiative.