



EESI
Environmental and
Energy Study Institute

**ENERGY
EFFICIENCY
FOR ALL**

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CONGRESSIONAL BRIEFING

Relief and Housing Assistance for COVID- Impacted Communities

Friday, February 19, 2021

About EESI...



NON-PROFIT

Founded in 1984 by a bipartisan Congressional caucus as an independent (i.e., not federally-funded) non-profit organization



NON-PARTISAN

Source of non-partisan information on environmental, energy, and climate policies



DIRECT ASSISTANCE

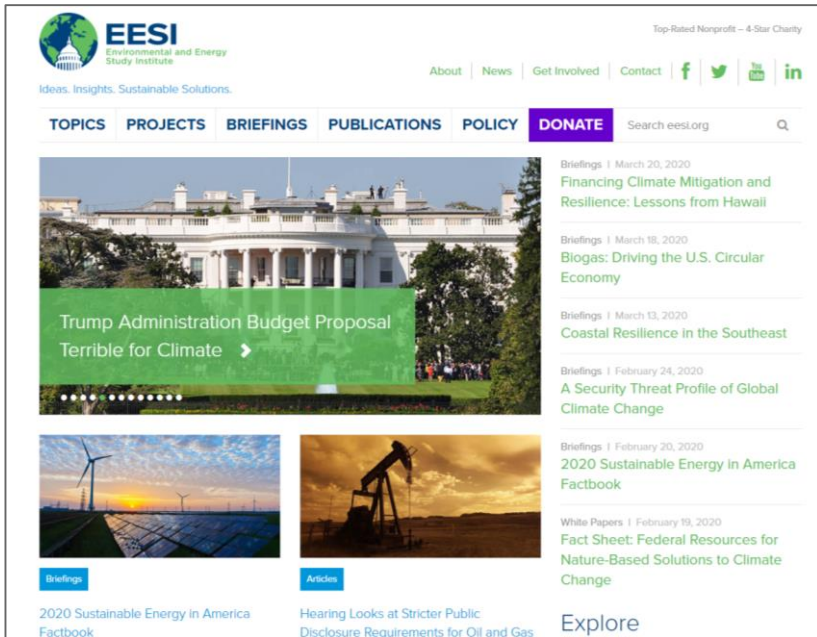
In addition to a full portfolio of federal policy work, EESI provides direct assistance to utilities to develop “on-bill financing” programs



SUSTAINABLE SOCIETIES

Focused on win-win solutions to make our energy, buildings, and transportation sectors sustainable, resilient, and more equitable

...About EESI



HILL BRIEFINGS

Video recordings and written summaries of Congressional briefings



CLIMATE CHANGE SOLUTIONS

Bi-weekly newsletter with all you need to know including a legislation tracker



SOCIAL MEDIA (@EESIONLINE)

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FACT SHEETS

Timely, science-based coverage of climate and clean energy topics

Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program

- Block grant, established in **1981**
- Bipartisan Support
- Congress appropriates funds annually
 - Not an entitlement program
- Normal federal funding for LIHEAP is about \$3.7 billion – enough to serve 6 million households.



The mission of LIHEAP is to assist low income households, particularly those with the lowest incomes that pay a high proportion of household income for home energy, to help meet their immediate home energy needs.

One out of three
households helped by LIHEAP went
without food for at least one day in
the past year.

LIHEAP helps keep our most
vulnerable neighbors safe.

[#ProtectLIHEAP](#)

Source: 2018 National Energy Assistance Survey



neuac

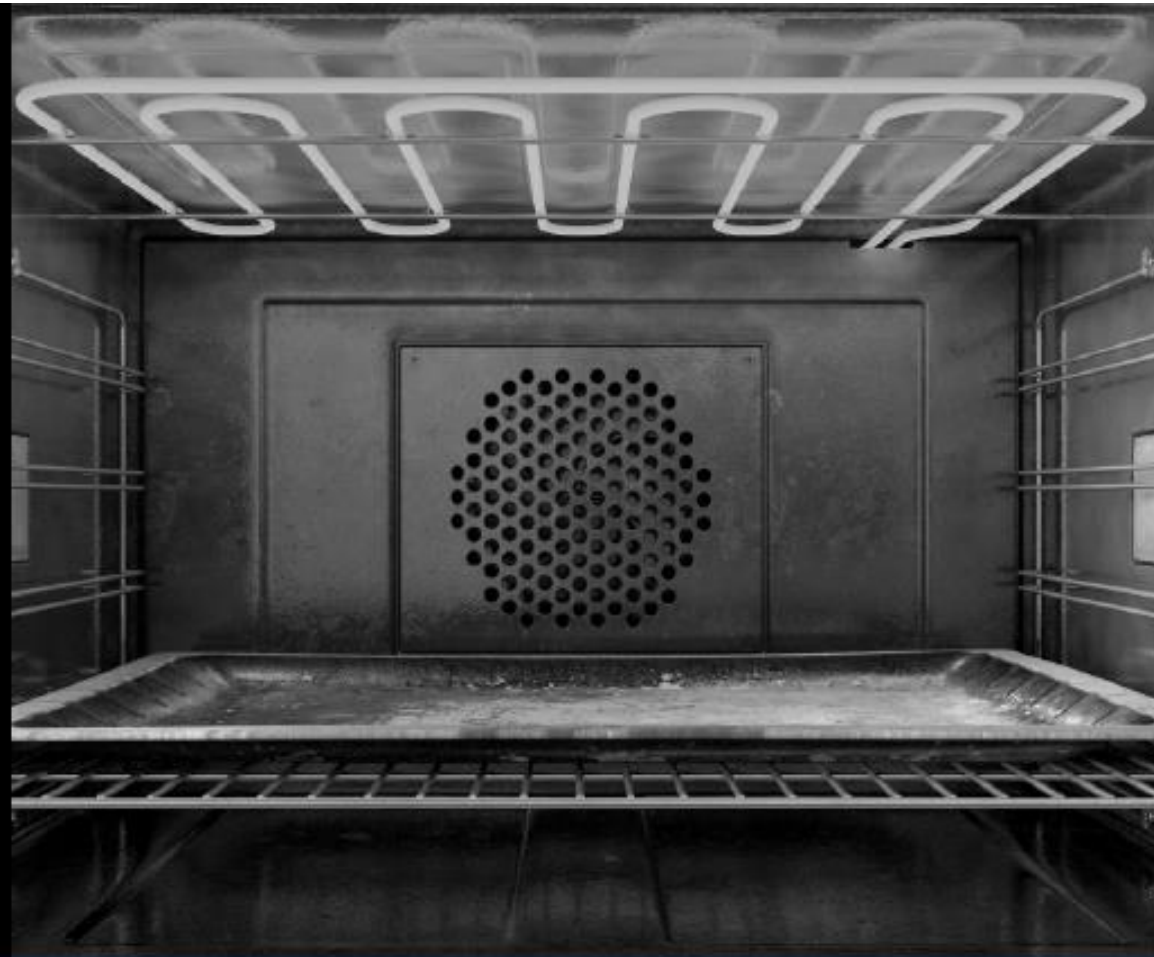
Three out of ten

households receiving LIHEAP used their kitchen stove or oven to provide heat.

LIHEAP helps keep our neighbors safe and warm in their homes.

[#ProtectLIHEAP](#)

Source: 2018 National Energy Assistance Survey



neuac

Data makes the go 'round

- The \$900 million in supplemental funds provided for LIHEAP in the CARES Act are now **fully obligated**, and have been able to reach only a fraction of those households that need support
- Reflecting the rapidly changing conditions, NEADA estimates that **15 to 20 percent of residential customers are at least 60 days behind on their utility bills**
- More than 1/4 of those who lost jobs during the COVID-19 crisis reported **skipping or needing to skip a utility bill payment**
- Electric and natural gas arrearages were expected to reach **\$32 billion** by the end of 2020, based on an analysis by The National Energy Assistance Directors Association (NEADA)

128 times.



Data makes the go 'round

- More than **45 million Americans filed for unemployment during the crisis**, many of whom remain unemployed or under-employed and are now eligible for LIHEAP
- In some states, **1 in 3 households is behind on utility bills**
- 22% of utility customers reported that they had **reduced or put off expenses for basic needs like medicine and food** in order to pay their utility bills
- More than **60% of U.S. K-12 schools reopened virtually** for the 2020-2021 school year, underscoring the importance of energy affordability to education access for millions of children
- **42% of the U.S. labor force is working from home fulltime**, with many others suffering job loss or reduction of hours. Access to power is critical to maintaining work for the remaining household member(s)

Shutoff Moratoria

According to the National Energy Assistance Directors Association (NEADA)

- 43 states and DC currently have mandatory shutoff moratoria in place

<https://neada.org/wintercovid19moratoriums/>

- Patchwork of voluntary moratoria
- Challenge: Customers are still responsible for the bill

Request

- \$10 billion in supplemental LIHEAP funds
 - **50% for arrearages:** pay off energy debt for 4 million households (source: NEADA)
 - **50% for current bills:** help 7.7 million households stay current on their bills between now and September 30th (source: NEADA)
- *\$4.5 billion for LIHEAP proposed by House*

Find your state LIHEAP info sheet






PROTECT LIHEAP IN 2021

Texas By the Numbers

Gross LIHEAP allocation to Texas in 2019 \$161,003,678 for utility payment assistance and home weatherization programs ¹	Texas LIHEAP funding down 12.16% from FY10 to FY19
2,109,662 # of households eligible for LIHEAP in Texas ²	149,352 # of low-income households that received LIHEAP in Texas in 2019

Only 7.08% of the total eligible population in Texas received LIHEAP in 2019

80.93%
of LIHEAP recipients in Texas have at least one vulnerable member:

 elderly over 60 42.74%	 disabled 54.29%	 child under 6 17.29%
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Federal home heating/cooling assistance saves Texas lives.
NEUAC urges Congress to protect LIHEAP funding for FY21.

www.neuac.org

Why Protect LIHEAP Funding?

The Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) provides critical home heating and cooling help to millions of vulnerable American families. LIHEAP funding peaked when Congress appropriated \$5.1 billion for the program in FY09 and FY10. Since then, funding has fallen by more than one-third. Because of these cuts, one million fewer eligible households receive energy assistance, and average individual grants have been reduced.³

LIHEAP is not an entitlement.
Unlike entitlement programs, LIHEAP is funded by the annual congressional appropriations process. While states set eligibility rates, federal statute limits household income to a maximum of 150 percent of the federal poverty guideline, or 60 percent of the state median income. For example, 150 percent of the FY20 poverty guideline for a family of three is \$31,995.⁴ Most LIHEAP recipients earn much less than the maximum thresholds: the latest data show that a typical LIHEAP recipient household had a median income of 83.5 percent of the federal poverty guideline.⁵

The need for LIHEAP remains high.
In 2018, the national poverty rate was 11.5 percent, and 38.1 million Americans lived in poverty.⁶

LIHEAP prioritizes vulnerable households.
More than 90 percent of LIHEAP recipient households have at least one vulnerable person - a senior aged 60 or older, a child aged 18 or under, or an individual with a disability.⁷

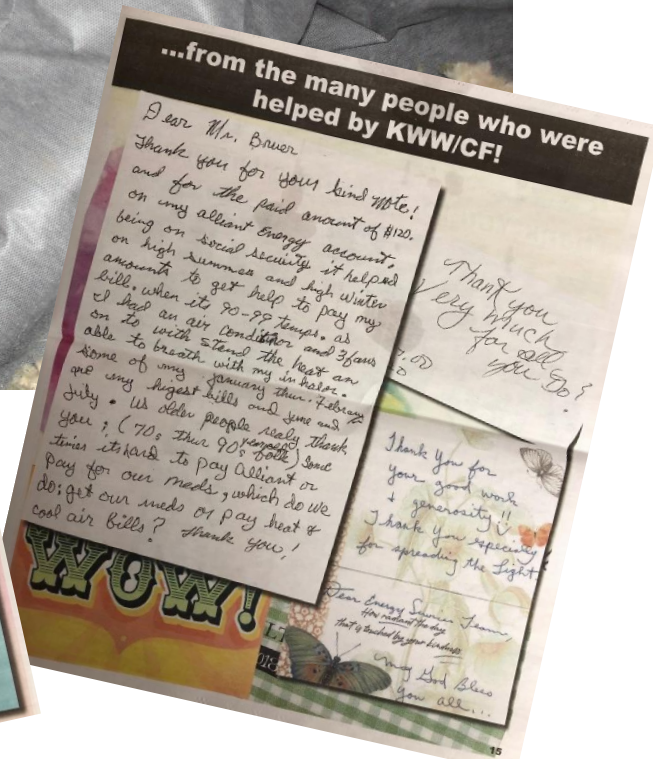
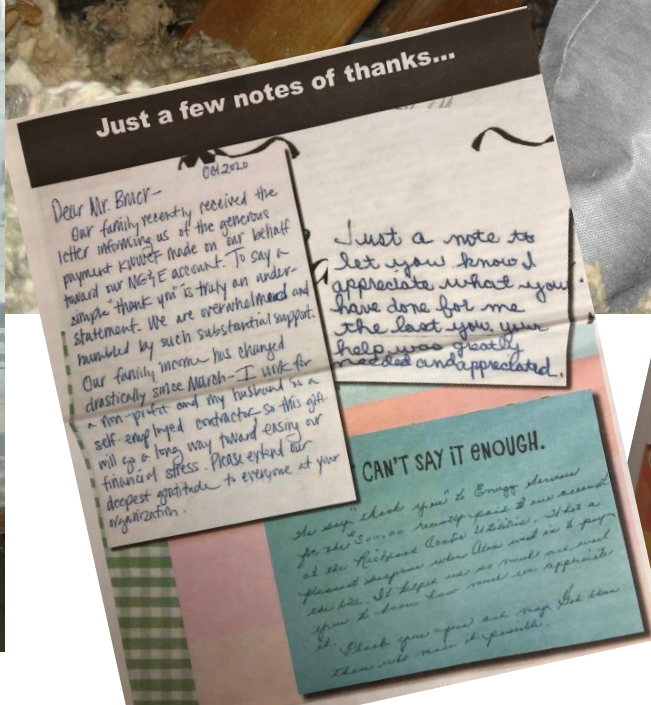
LIHEAP makes the difference.
The Federal Reserve found that nearly half of American families would struggle to pay for an emergency expense costing \$400.⁸ LIHEAP frequently meets those exact short-term emergencies and can be the difference between making ends meet or not.

Protect LIHEAP.

Sources
1. FY10-19 Data, HHS; *FY2019 reflects preliminary data pending final data validation
2. Eligible households, households served and vulnerable household statistics supplied from state reports and are preliminary for FY2019
3. NEADA Purchasing Power Table
4. <https://heaphd.acf.hhs.gov/tables/POP.htm>
5. HHS FY2017 Budget Justification https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/olab/final_cj_2017_print.pdf
6. US Census Bureau: <https://www.census.gov/library/publications/2019/demo/p60-266.html>
7. <https://neada.org/program-policy-reports/liheapsurvey/>
8. "Report on the Economic Well-Being of U.S. Households in 2015" <https://www.federalreserve.gov/2015-report-economic-well-being-us-households-201605.pdf>

<http://neuac.org/liheap-state-by-state-metrics/>

LIHEAP Photos from the Front Lines...



Questions?



Katrina Metzler

Executive Director

**National Energy and Utility
Affordability Coalition (NEUAC)**

Cell (call or text): 740-248-9177

kmetzler@neuac.org

<http://neuac.org/advocacy>

LOUISIANA'S STATE OF HOUSING

#PUTHOUSINGFIRST



Creating Neighborhood Developers

Andreanecia M. Morris

HousingNOLA Executive Director



HousingNOLA

2019 REPORT CARD

EVALUATION OF PROGRESS

TOWARDS A MORE EQUITABLE NEW ORLEANS



2019 Policy Victories

New Soft Second
Funding

FANO Green
Mortgage Product

Property Tax Relief
Bills 79/80

Short Term Rental
Regulations

The New Orleans City
Council unanimously passed
the Smart Housing Mix
ordinance!

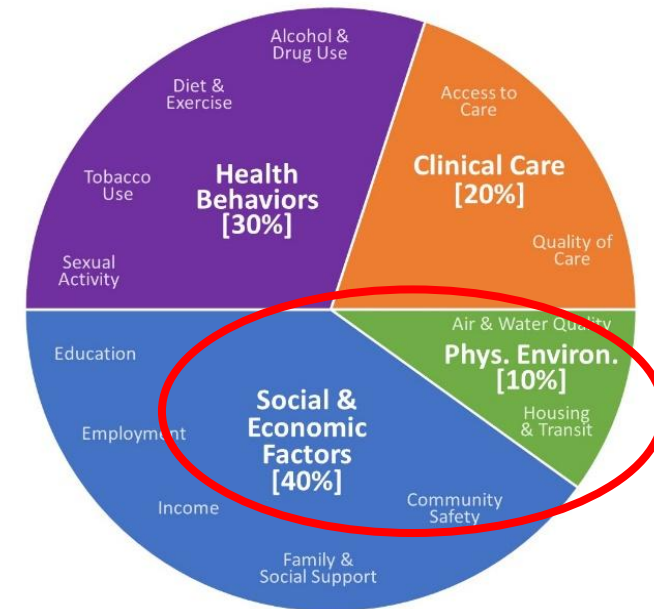


Senate Bill 109, which
extends the foster care age
from 18 to 21.

HOUSING IS CENTRAL TO OPPORTUNITY

- Stable and affordable housing is a cornerstone of household financial security and resilience
- Where your housing is located determines many outcomes: school quality, job accessibility, safety and health, and economic mobility
- Housing is increasingly recognized as a critical social determinant of health
- Affordable housing options support collective growth and prosperity of a community

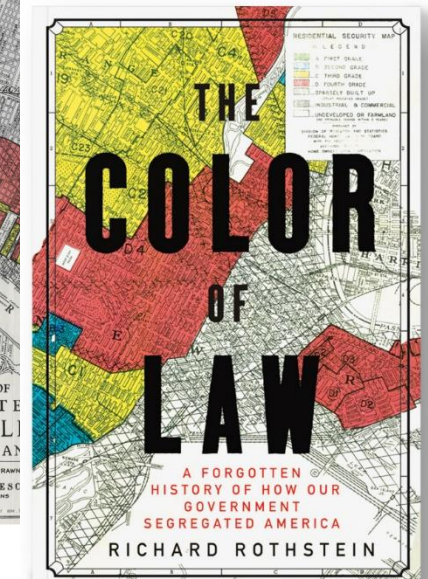
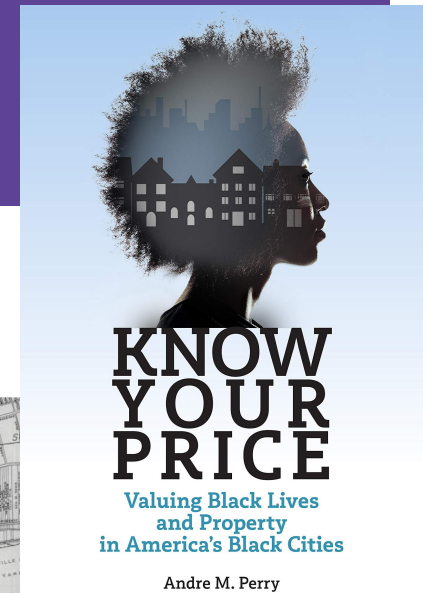
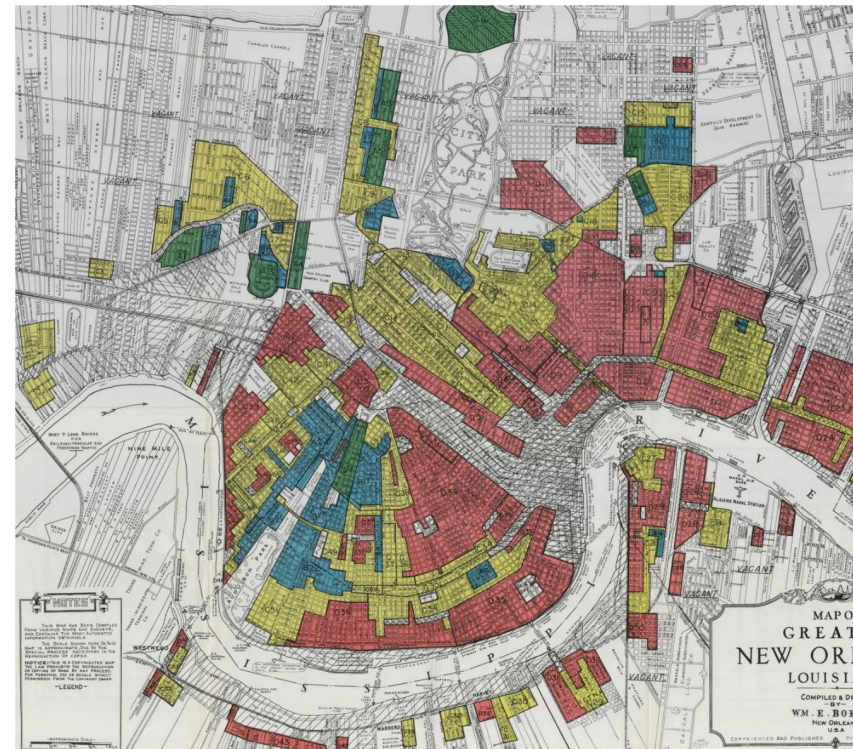
Figure 1: The Factors Impacting Health Outcomes



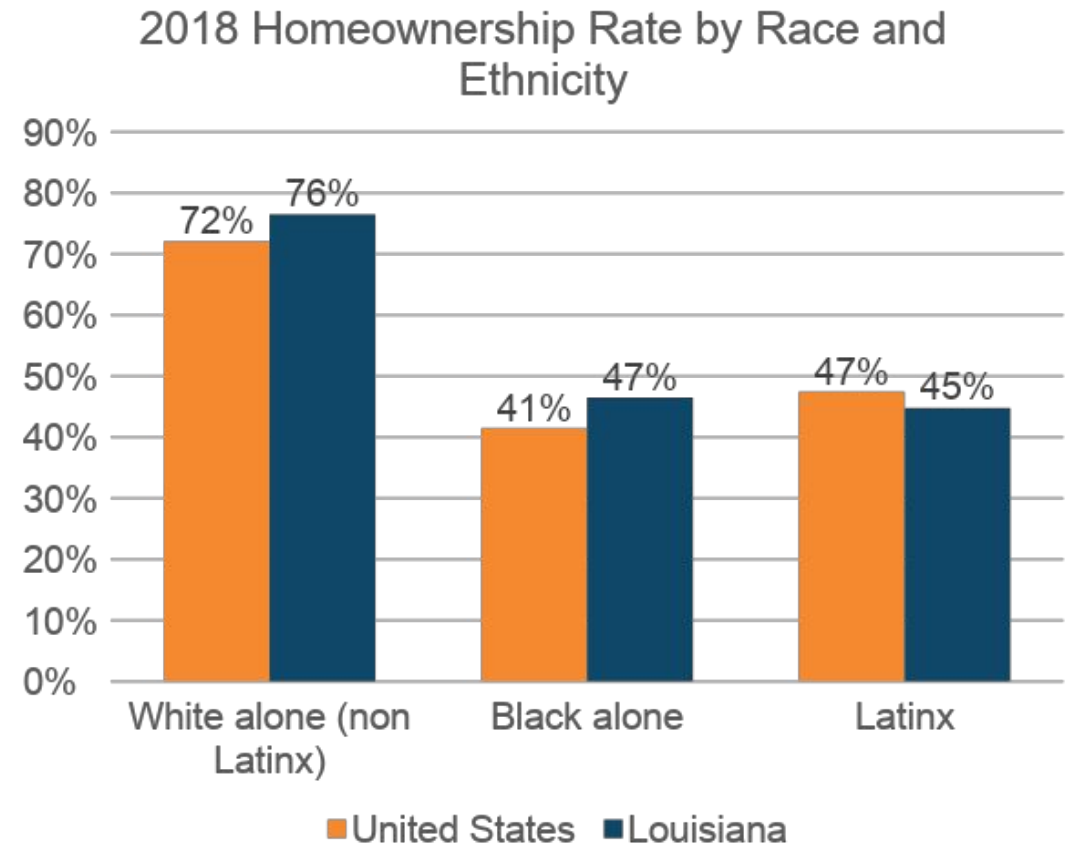
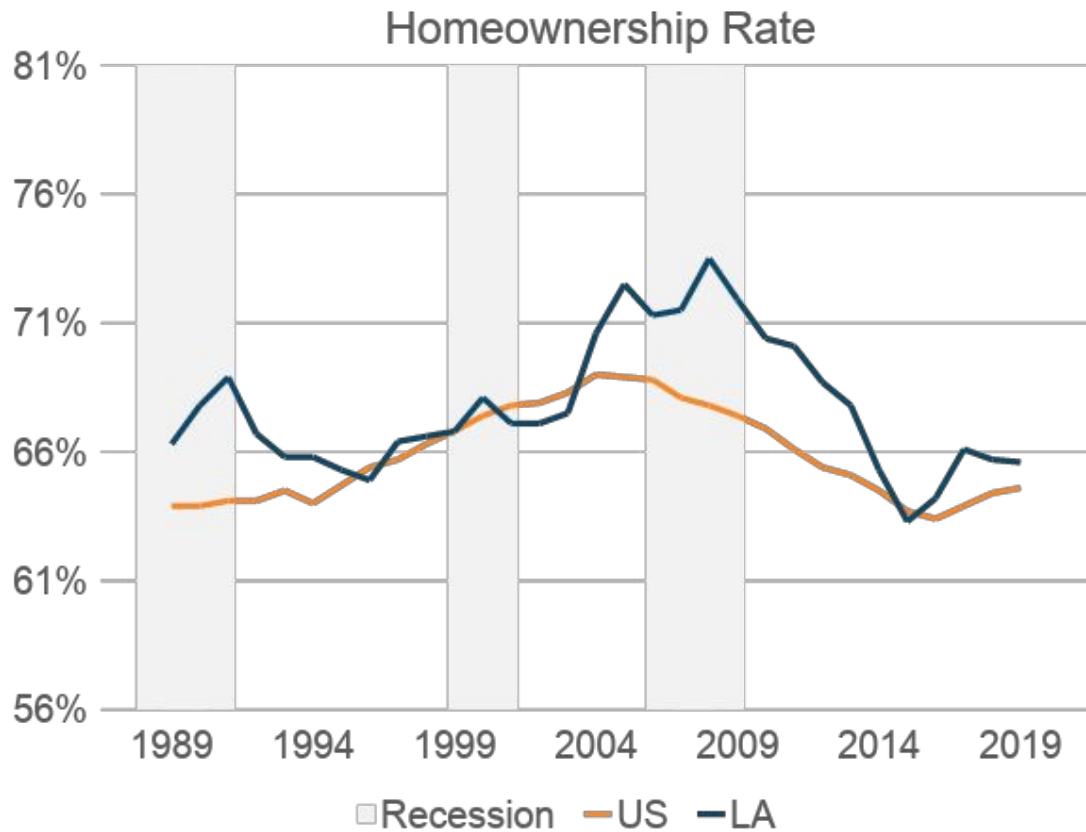
Source: Adapted from the University of Wisconsin's *County Health Rankings model (2014)*

DISCRIMINATION IS ROUTINE

- Overt discrimination against households of color by the government and private sector was legal for most of the 20th century
- Impacts of these practices are still apparent in residential segregation, disinvestment, and the racial wealth divide
- COVID has the potential to widen these disparities

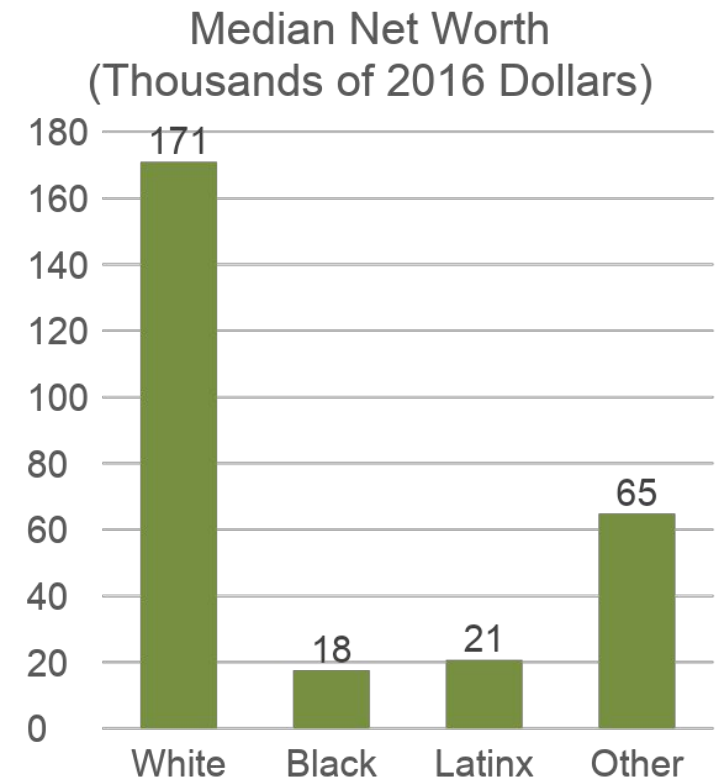
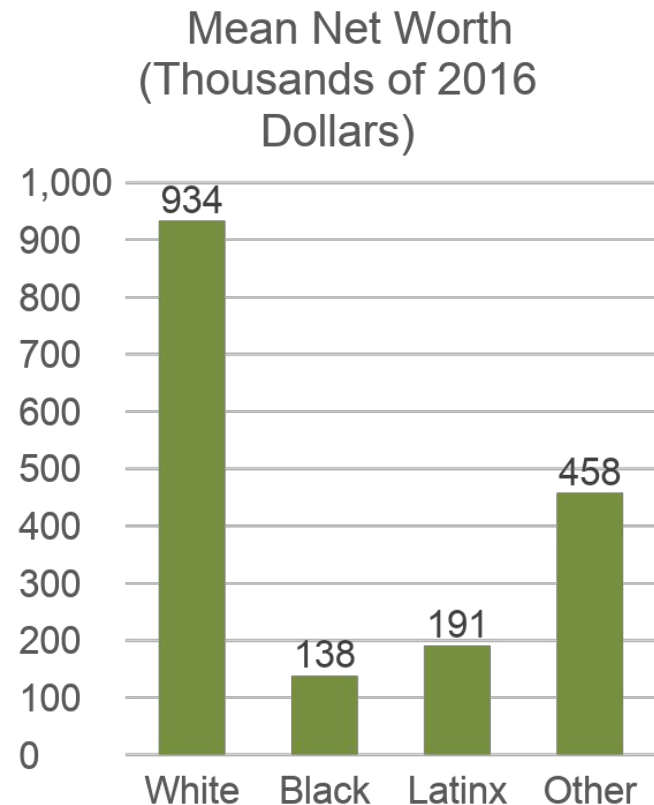


HOMEOWNERSHIP RATES ARE LOWER FOR BLACK AND LATINX FAMILIES THAN WHITE FAMILIES



BLACK AND LATINX WEALTH ALSO LAGS

- 32% of White, 37% of Black, and 39% of Latinx family assets are derived from housing wealth
- White families have an average of \$216K in housing wealth, while Black families have \$94K and Latinx families have \$130K

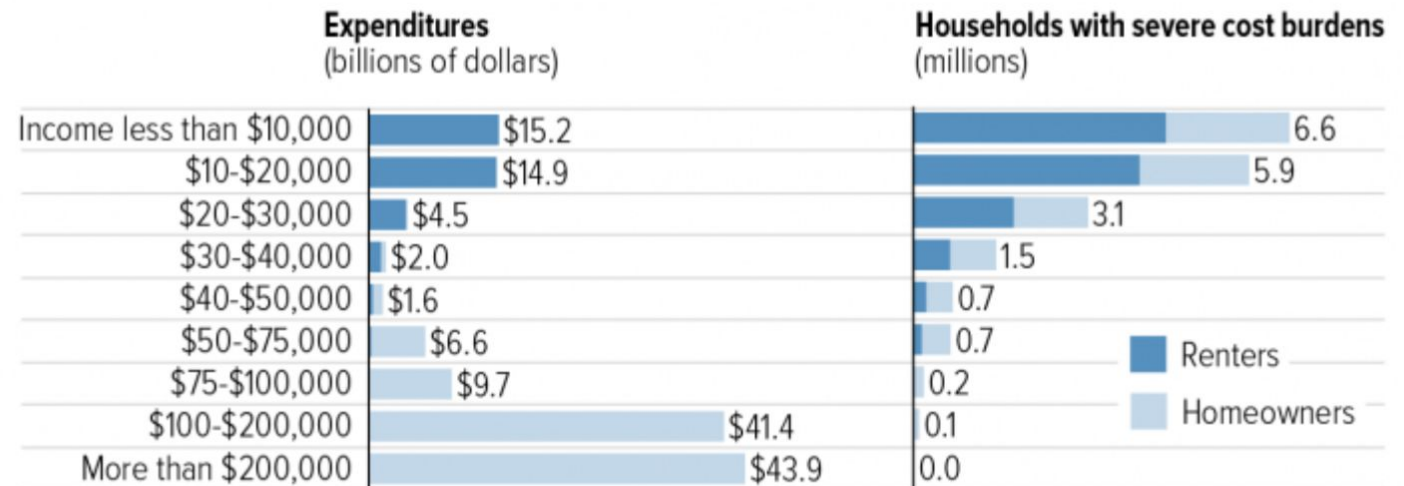


Source: Federal Reserve Board, Survey of Consumer Finances, Net Worth by Race/Ethnicity, 2016 Survey

CURRENT FEDERAL SUBSIDIES ARE INSUFFICIENT AND HAVE FAVORED WEALTHY HOMEOWNERS

- Only 1 in 4 renter households that qualify for assistance receive a housing subsidy
- Even after the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act, the Tax Foundation found that high-income households receive the vast majority of mortgage interest deduction benefit

Federal Housing Expenditures Poorly Matched to Need

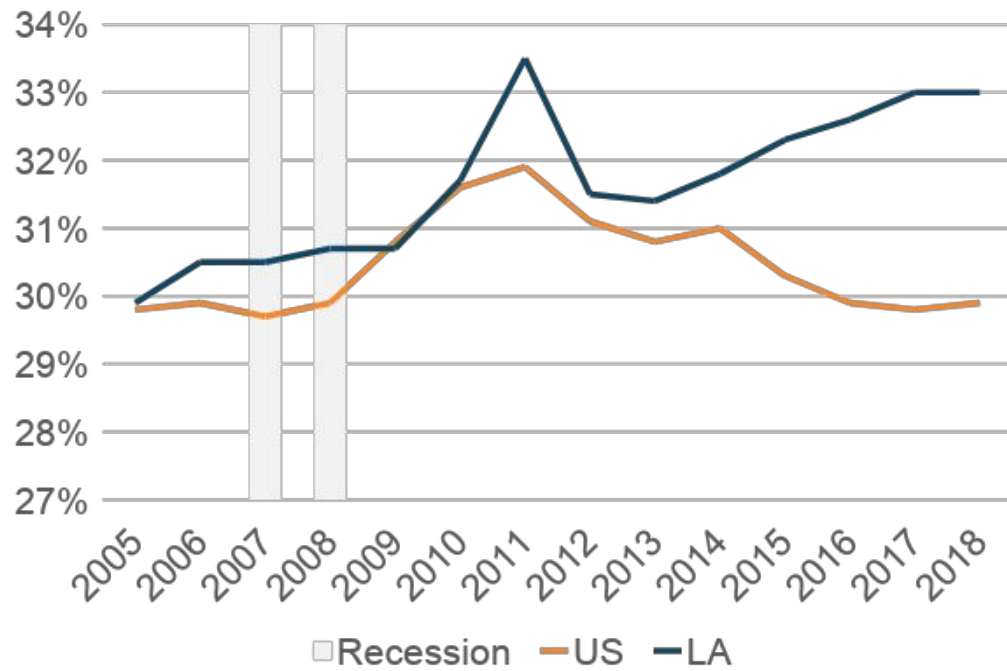


Notes: Data are for 2015. Homeowner expenditures include the mortgage interest and property tax deductions; income figures are for tax filing units. Rental expenditures include total outlays for the Housing Choice Voucher, Section 8 Project-Based, Public Housing, Housing for the Elderly (Section 202), and Housing for People with Disabilities (Section 811) programs; income figures are for households. Data on the income of beneficiaries of various housing expenditures are available only for these programs, which represent about three-fourths of homeownership and rental spending. HUD defines households with severe cost burdens as those paying more than half their income for housing.

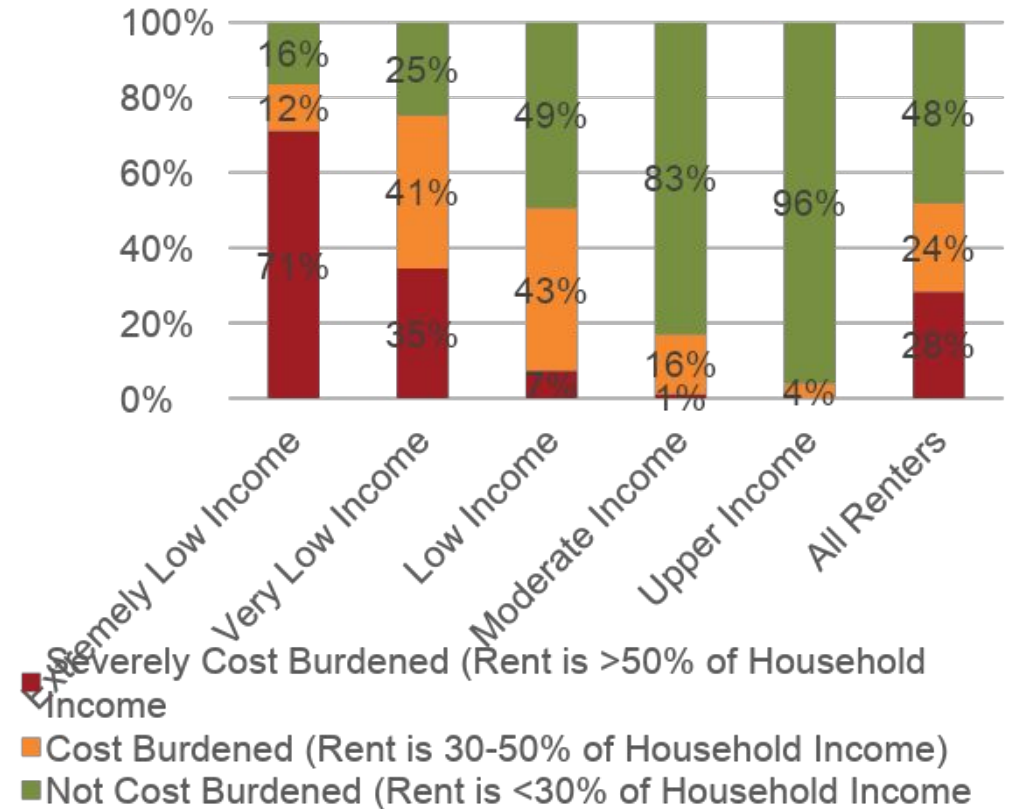
Sources: CBPP analysis of HUD program data, Census data on number of households and cost burdens in each income group, Joint Committee on Taxation tax expenditure estimates, and the Office of Management and Budget public budget database

RENTERS IN LOUISIANA ARE INCREASINGLY COST BURDENED

Median Gross Rent as a Percentage of Household Income (Renter Households Only)



% Cost Burdened Renter HHs by Income



Source: U.S. Census ACS 1-Year estimates

What is affordable housing in Louisiana?

MIT LIVING
WAGE
\$23.05

COVID UI
RATE
\$15.00

POVERTY
WAGE
\$10.25

RENTAL
WAGE
\$17.48

HOUSINGLOUISIANA

HousingLOUISIANA is a statewide network of housing practitioners and advocates whose primary goal is to ensure that all Louisiana's housing needs are met.

Through our statewide network of the nine regional housing alliances in Alexandria, Baton Rouge, Houma-Thibodaux, Lafayette, Lake Charles, Monroe, New Orleans, Northshore, and Shreveport, we work to better coordinate efforts and build collaboration across the state on housing issues.



*A Tale of Two Cities:
Lake Charles & New Orleans*



Calcasieu Parish



Orleans Parish



Lake Charles

How Much Does It Cost To Live In the Lake Charles Area?

\$16.10

*per hour**

\$33,480

*annually**

\$7.25

minimum wage

\$16.77

*estimated hourly mean renter wage**

*this data comes from the NLIHC and is based on the average cost of a 2 bedroom home in the Lake Charles Area which is \$837

- Increase permanent and emergency housing opportunities
- Review zoning ordinances that can prevent the development of affordable housing and/or create more affordable housing opportunities
- Recruit more local developers to partner with and commit to affordable housing development
- Increase homeownership opportunities for low- and moderate income renters (Section 8 homeownership program, mobile homeownership as affordable option, Soft Second Programs)
- Set habitability requirements for landlords and the city to abide by, such as a Rental Registry
- Section 8 Reform

Lake Charles COVID-19 Housing Crisis

RENTAL HOUSING INSECURITY

4,777 renter households that pay at least 30% of their income on rent have lost their jobs due to COVID. With a median rent of \$800,

the rent gap is \$479/month.



The rent gap reflects the difference between the median rent in a parish and 30% of a household's income if they are receiving state benefits. \$247/week for state benefits x 4.33 weeks in a month x 30% = \$321. An assumption is made that each household is a single-income household.

COMPOUNDING IMPACTS

19% of rental households are spending more than 30% on housing (rent burdened) **AND** jobless due to COVID.

The number of rent burdened households at risk of losing their homes due to COVID...

4,777

The anticipated monthly rental gap for rent burdened households impacted by COVID...

\$2,288,482

Visit cpex.org for more information

Lake Charles MSA Rental Assistance Estimate

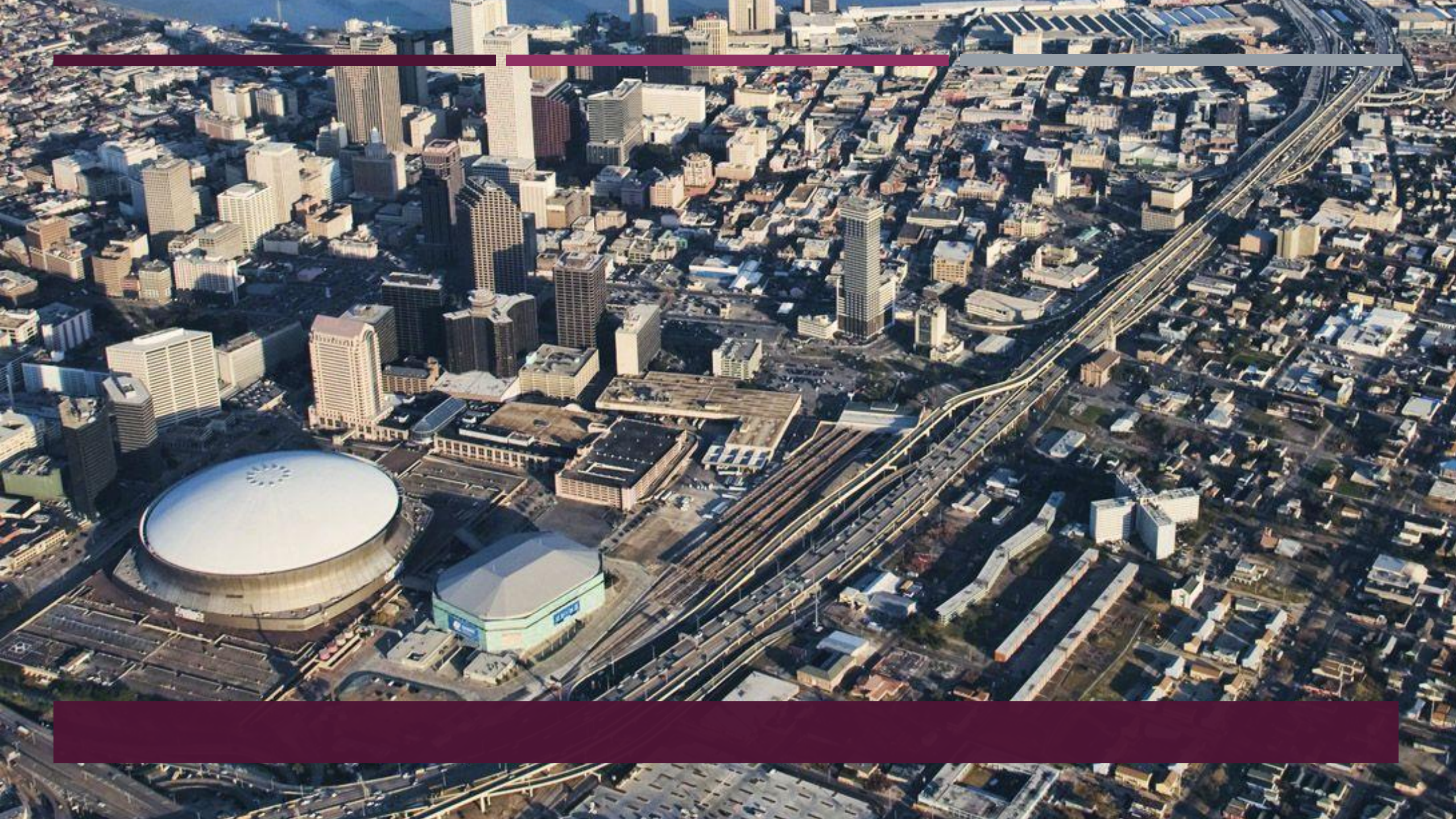
	Projected Nonfarm Payroll ⁽¹⁾⁽²⁾	# of Renter Households		\$ of Rental Assistance	
		Unemployed ⁽³⁾	W/Reduced Income	Unemployed	W/Reduced Income
January 2020 (Actual)	110,800	-	-	\$ -	\$ -
April 2020	95,800	7,560	217	\$ -	\$ 92,360
May 2020	95,800	7,560	217	\$ -	\$ 92,360
June 2020	95,800	7,560	217	\$ -	\$ 92,360
July 2020	95,000	7,963	229	\$ -	\$ 97,286
August 2020	95,000	7,963	229	\$ 4,004,890	\$ 97,286
September 2020	95,000	7,963	229	\$ 4,004,890	\$ 97,286
October 2020	96,000	7,459	214	\$ 3,751,416	\$ 91,129
November 2020	96,000	7,459	214	\$ 3,751,416	\$ 91,129
December 2020	96,000	7,459	214	\$ 3,751,416	\$ 91,129
January 2021	98,000	6,451	185	\$ 3,244,468	\$ 78,814
February 2021	98,000	6,451	185	\$ 3,244,468	\$ 78,814
March 2021	98,000	6,451	185	\$ 3,244,468	\$ 78,814
April 2021	97,000	6,955	200	\$ 3,497,942	\$ 84,971
May 2021	97,000	6,955	200	\$ 3,497,942	\$ 84,971
June 2021	97,000	6,955	200	\$ 3,497,942	\$ 84,971
July 2021	97,700	6,602	190	\$ 3,320,510	\$ 80,661

Total Rental Assistance Needed Through December 2020 \$ 20,106,352

Total Rental Assistance Needed Through July 2021 \$ 44,226,107







New Orleans

How Much Does It Cost To Live In the New Orleans Metro?

\$20.73
*per hour**

\$43,120
*annually**

\$7.25
minimum wage

\$16.09
*estimated hourly mean renter wage**

*this data comes from the NLIHC and is based on the average cost of a 2 bedroom home in the New Orleans Area which is \$1,078

- Implement the Smart Housing Mix
- Increase transit-oriented development and density in high transit corridors to offset
- Increase African American homeownership opportunities
- Invest in sustainable development
- Increase support for aging-in-place policies
- Establish a centralized system for renter's rights and protections and landlord enforcement
- Increase funds to local Housing Trust Fund

New Orleans COVID-19 Housing Crisis

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New Orleans MSA Rental Assistance Estimate

	Projected Nonfarm Payroll ⁽¹⁾⁽²⁾	# of Renter Households		\$ of Rental Assistance	
		Unemployed ⁽³⁾	W/Reduced Income	Unemployed	W/Reduced Income
January 2020 (Actual)	586,100	-	-	\$ -	\$ -
April 2020	500,100	50,224	1,695	\$ -	\$ 1,010,729
May 2020	500,100	50,224	1,695	\$ -	\$ 1,010,729
June 2020	500,100	50,224	1,695	\$ -	\$ 1,010,729
July 2020	500,100	50,224	1,695	\$ -	\$ 1,010,729
August 2020	503,500	48,238	1,628	\$ 31,640,758	\$ 970,770
September 2020	507,000	46,194	1,559	\$ 30,300,048	\$ 929,636
October 2020	510,100	44,384	1,498	\$ 29,112,562	\$ 893,203
November 2020	513,500	42,398	1,431	\$ 27,810,158	\$ 853,244
December 2020	517,000	40,354	1,362	\$ 26,469,448	\$ 812,109
January 2021	520,000	38,602	1,303	\$ 25,320,268	\$ 776,851
February 2021	523,500	36,558	1,234	\$ 23,979,558	\$ 735,717
March 2021	527,000	34,514	1,165	\$ 22,638,847	\$ 694,583
April 2021	530,000	32,762	1,106	\$ 21,489,667	\$ 659,325
May 2021	533,500	30,718	1,037	\$ 20,148,957	\$ 618,190
June 2021	537,000	28,674	968	\$ 18,808,247	\$ 577,056
July 2021	544,400	24,353	822	\$ 15,973,603	\$ 490,086

Total Rental Assistance Needed Through December 2020 \$ 153,834,852

Total Rental Assistance Needed Through July 2021 \$ 306,745,807

Lake Charles & New Orleans

How Much Does It Cost To Live In the Lake Charles Area?

\$16.10
per hour*

\$33,480
annually*

\$7.25
minimum wage

\$16.77
estimated hourly
mean renter wage*

**this data comes from the NLIHC and is based on the average cost of a 2 bedroom home in the Lake Charles Area which is \$837*

How Much Does It Cost To Live In the New Orleans Metro?

\$20.73
per hour*

\$43,120
annually*

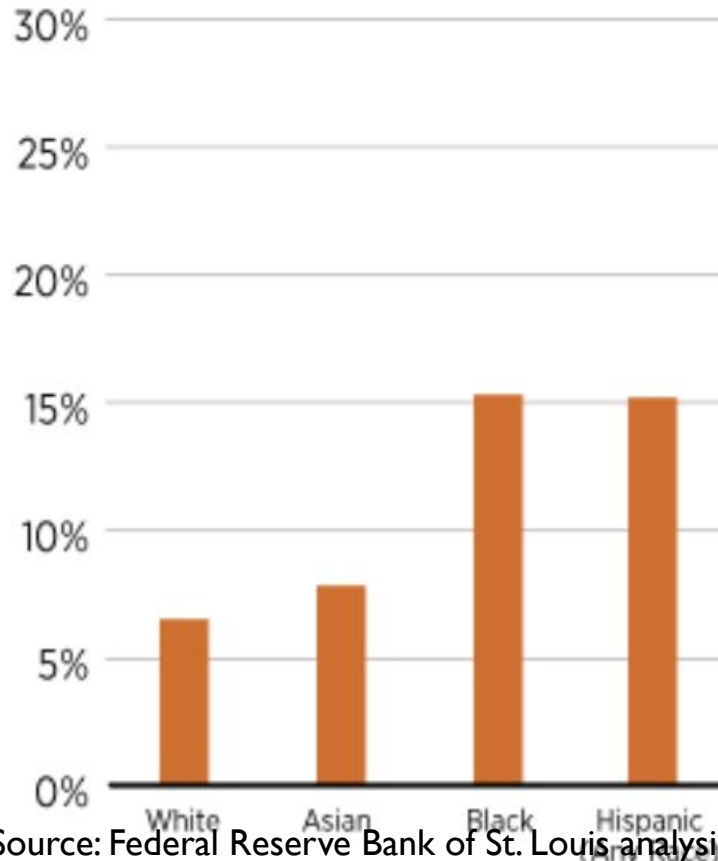
\$7.25
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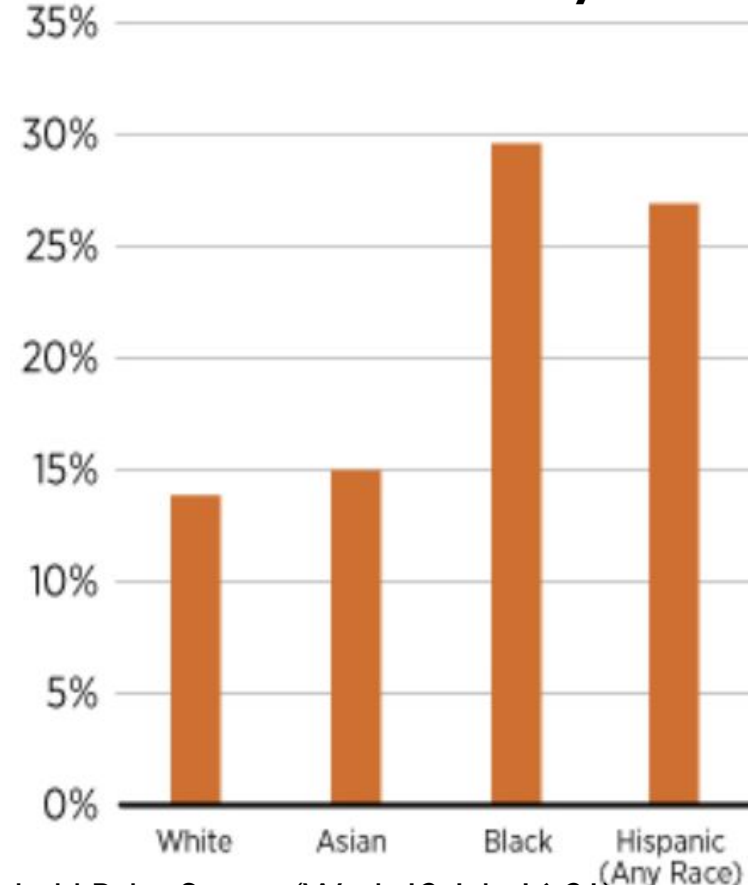
**this data comes from the NLIHC and is based on the average cost of a 2 bedroom home in the New Orleans Area which is \$1,078*

COVID MAY EXACERBATE DISPARITIES BY RACE AND ETHNICITY

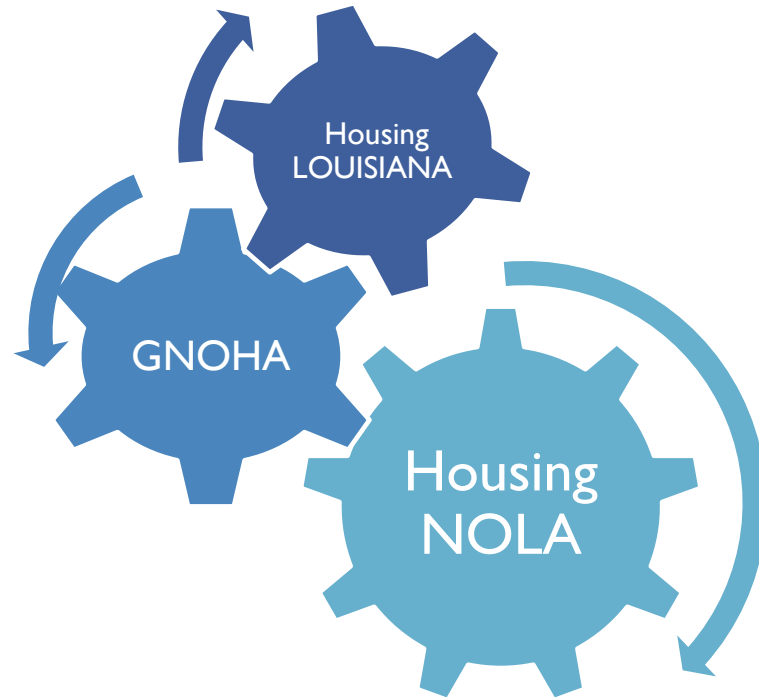
Late or Deferred Mortgage Payments



Late or Deferred Rent Payments



Source: Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis analysis of U.S. Census Bureau 2020 Household Pulse Survey (Week 12, July 16-21)



PUT HOUSING FIRST

HEIRS' PROPERTY IS A BARRIER TO INTERGENERATIONAL WEALTH AND DESTABILIZES COMMUNITIES

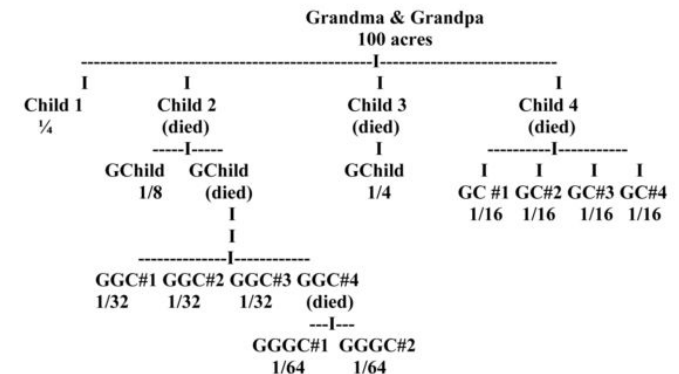
WHAT IS HEIRS' PROPERTY?

- Inherited intestate (without a will)
- Heirs are joint owners with undivided interest
- No clear, marketable title
- Vulnerable to disputes and predatory land deals

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

- Heirs cannot access grants or loans for property improvements

- May lead to blight, health and safety concerns, loss of tax revenue, and lower property values
- Disproportionately high among Black, Indigenous, People of Color, and low-income and low-wealth households





Statewide Housing Priorities 2020




1. Create designated revenue streams for local and statewide Housing Trust Funds to increase affordable housing production.
2. Increase permanent and emergency housing opportunities with wraparound services for special needs populations, including at-risk youth, people who are mentally ill, homeless individuals, people who were formerly incarcerated, and victims of domestic violence.
3. Create a comprehensive housing strategy that addresses title and succession issues to create more affordable housing.
4. Review zoning ordinances that can prevent the development of affordable housing and/or create more affordable housing opportunities.
5. Education and Community Engagement Around Affordable Housing



Statewide Housing Priorities 2020



6. Recruit more local developers to partner with and commit to affordable housing development.
7. Increase homeownership opportunities for low- and moderate income renters (Section 8 homeownership program, mobile homeownership as affordable option, Soft Second Programs).
8. Increase Homebuyer Education & Financial Literacy opportunities.
9. Ensure that affordable housing does not equate to substandard housing by setting habitability requirements for landlords and the city to abide by, such as a Rental Registry.
10. Section 8 Reform: Procure more funding for Section 8 to open waitlists and invest in more viable housing inventory for Section 8 (HCVP) clients to protect households from losing their vouchers from unavailability of eligible units.



We believe that our communities can provide high-quality, safe and accessible housing that is affordable to individuals and families of all income levels throughout Louisiana



Andreanecia M. Morris
Executive Director, HousingNOLA

www.housingnola.org

www.gnoha.org

www.housinglouisiana.org

HOUSINGLOUISIANA

Energy Efficiency, Race, Class and Place

Tony Reames, PhD

University of Michigan

Urban Energy Justice Lab

February 19, 2021

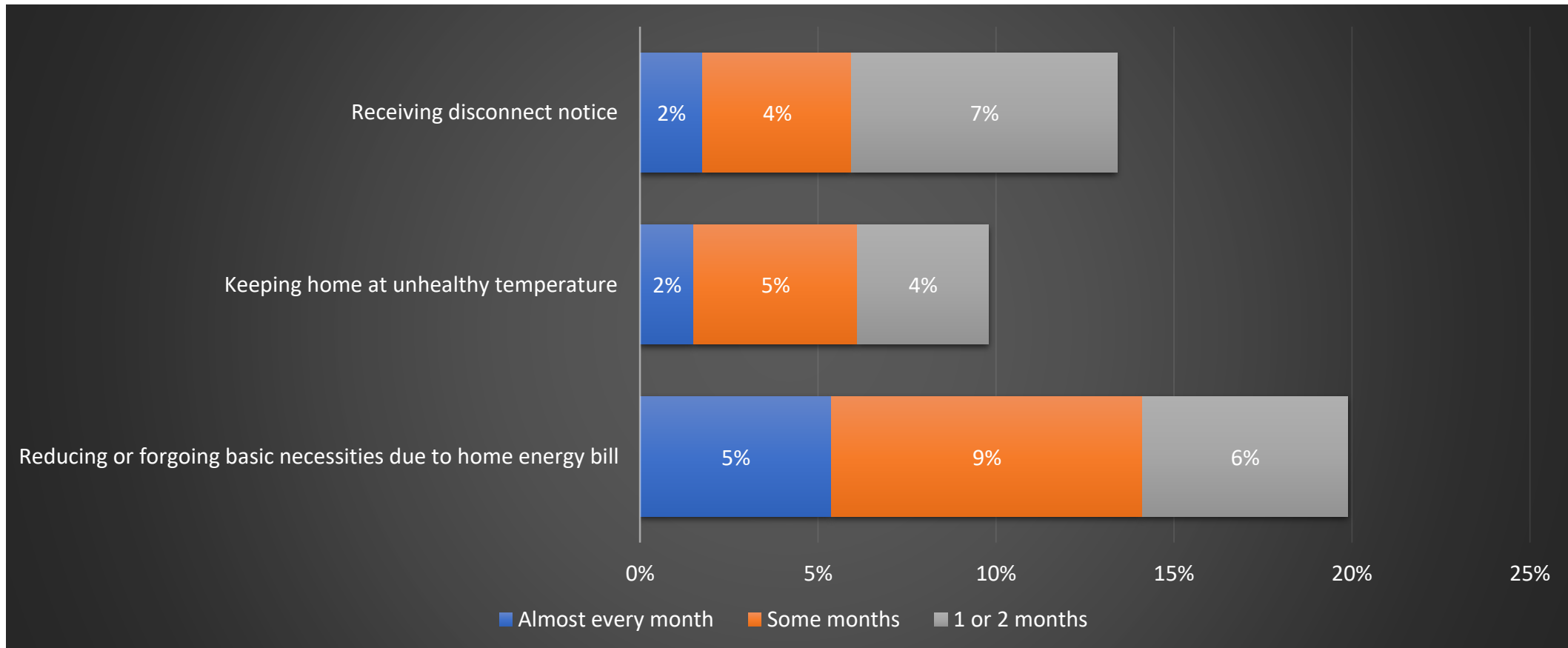




Is
energy access
a
basic human right

The State of U.S. Energy Insecurity

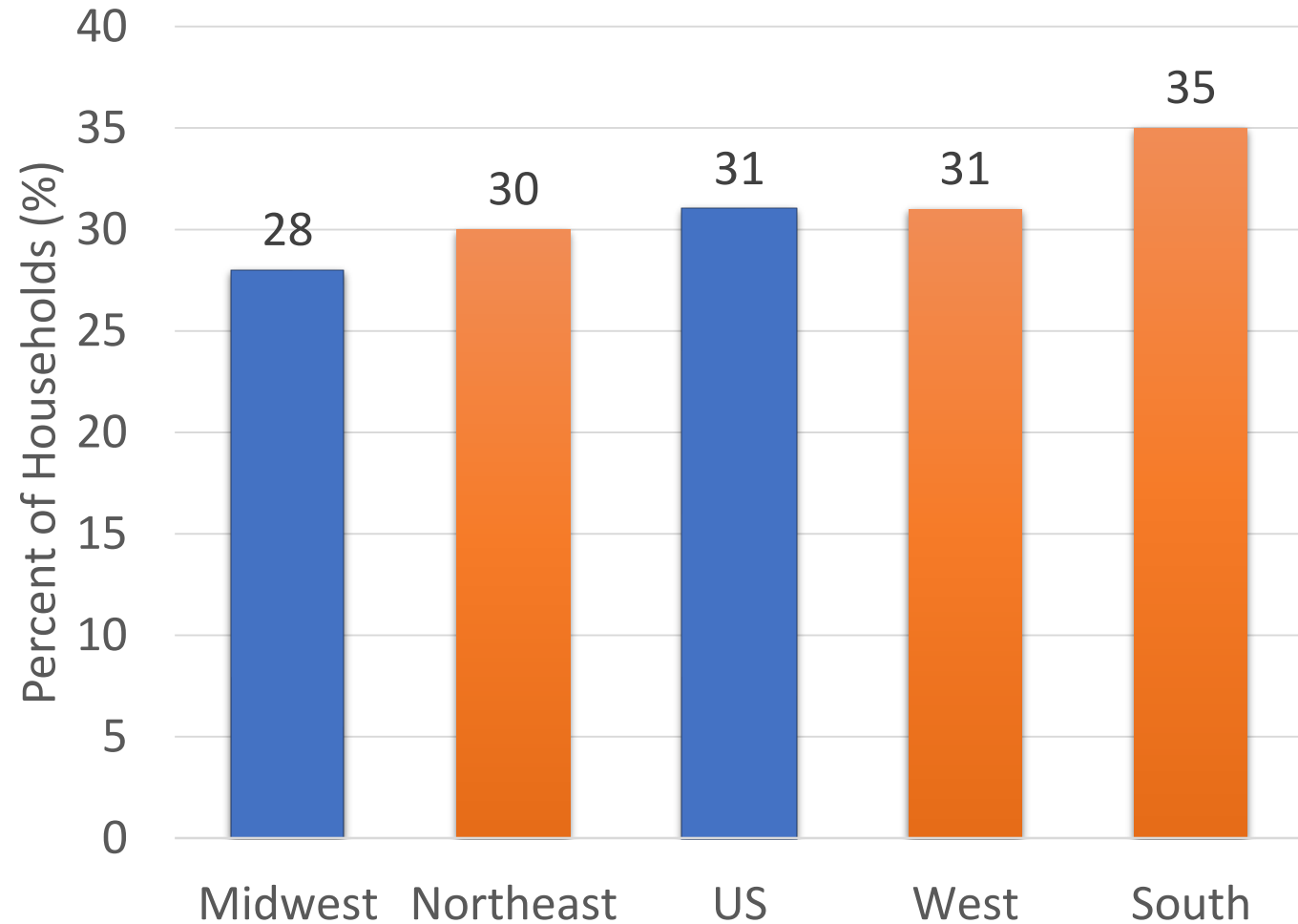
Pre-pandemic (2015 RECS)



Distribution of Energy Insecurity by Census Region

No. of Energy Insecure HHs

- US 37.1M
- Northeast 6.2M
- Midwest 7.4M
- West 8.1M
- South 15.4M



Source: EIA, Residential Energy Consumption Survey 2015

The State of U.S. Energy Insecurity

The pandemic has deepened energy insecurity (May 2020)

- Energy insecurity has disproportionately worsened for vulnerable populations

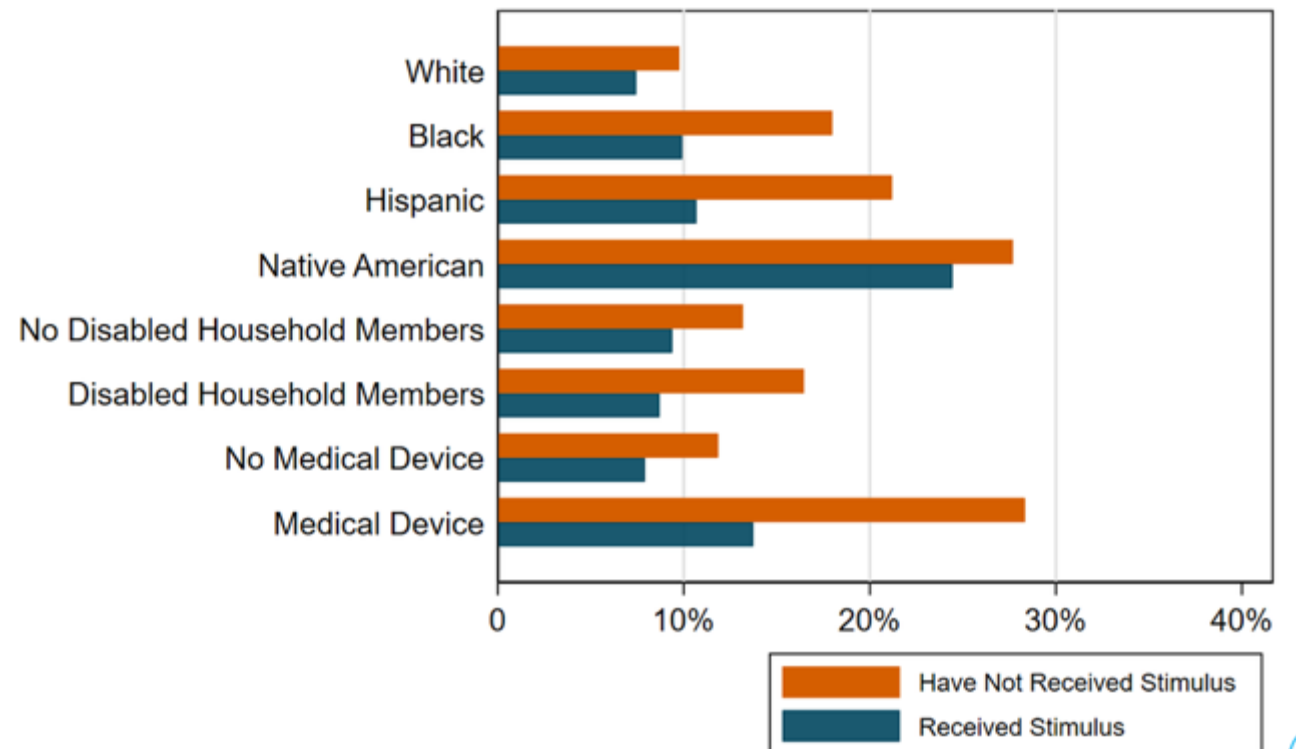
African American (16 %)

Hispanic (19 %)

White respondents (9 %)

- reported difficulty paying an energy bill in the last month

Household could not pay an energy bill



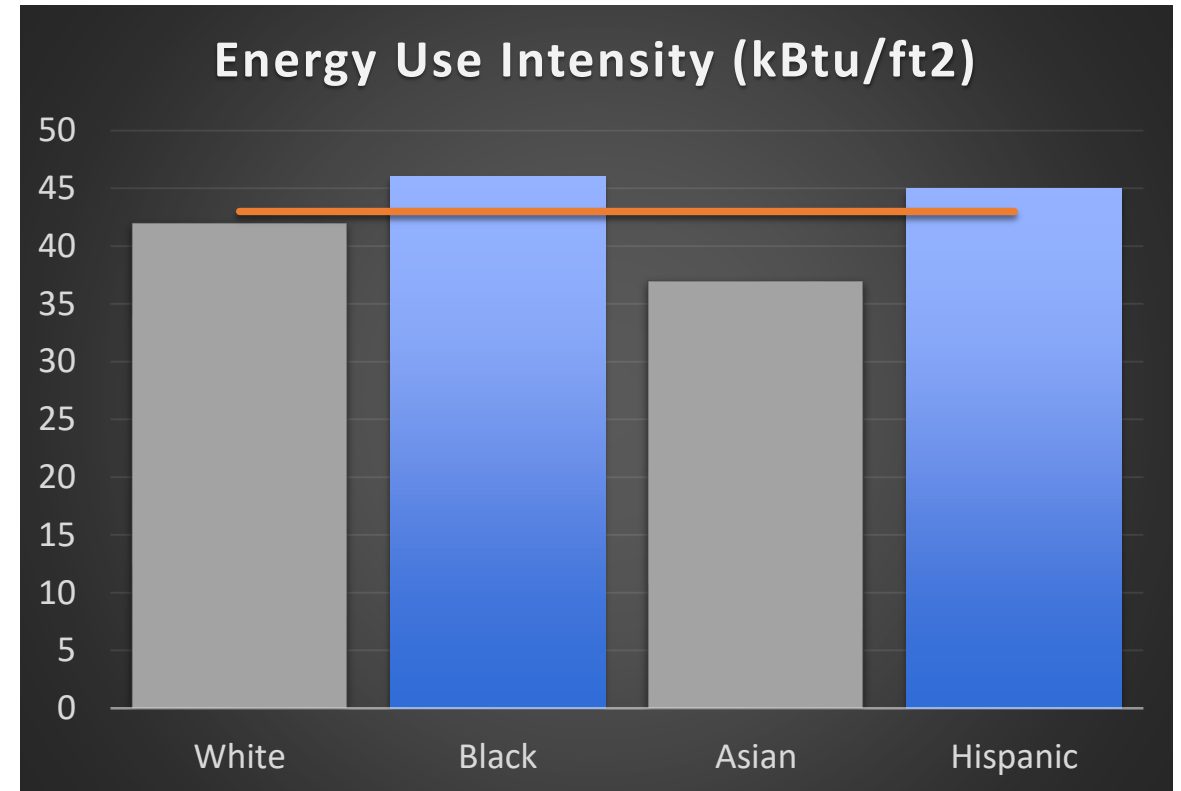
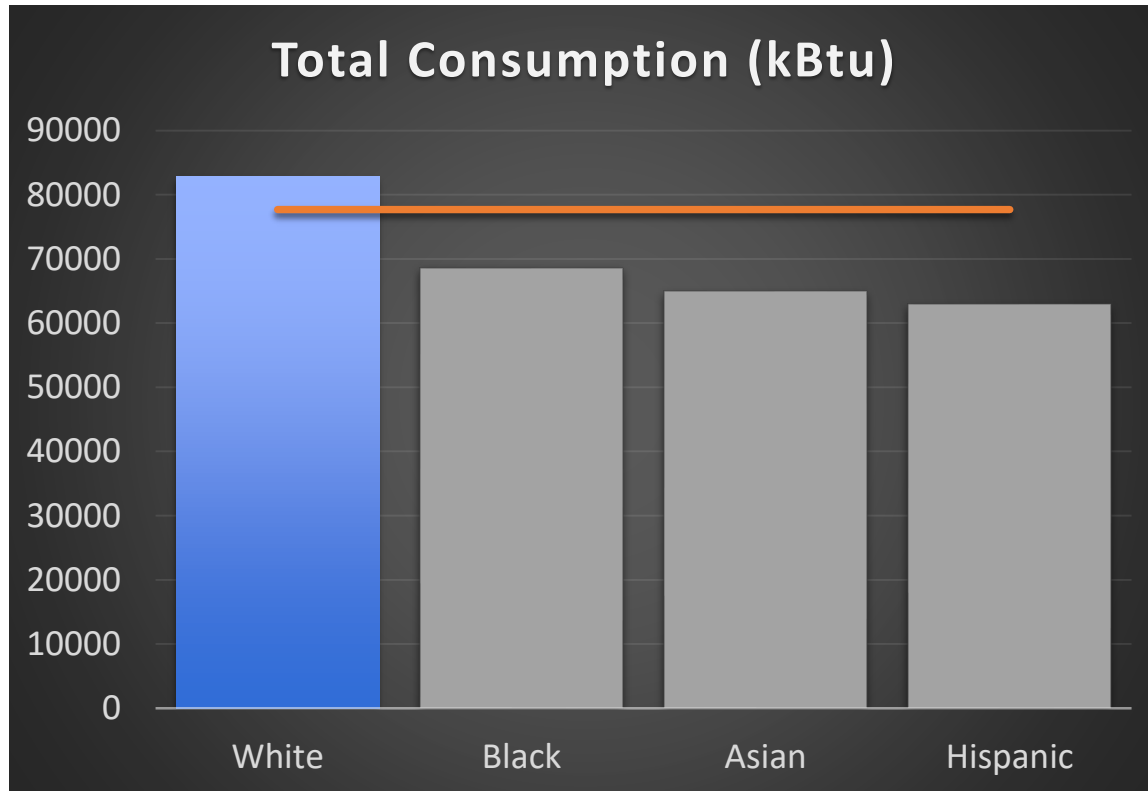
Source: [Indiana University](#)



**“Where U.S. Energy Policy is concerned,
African Americans are proverbial canaries in
the mineshaft.”**

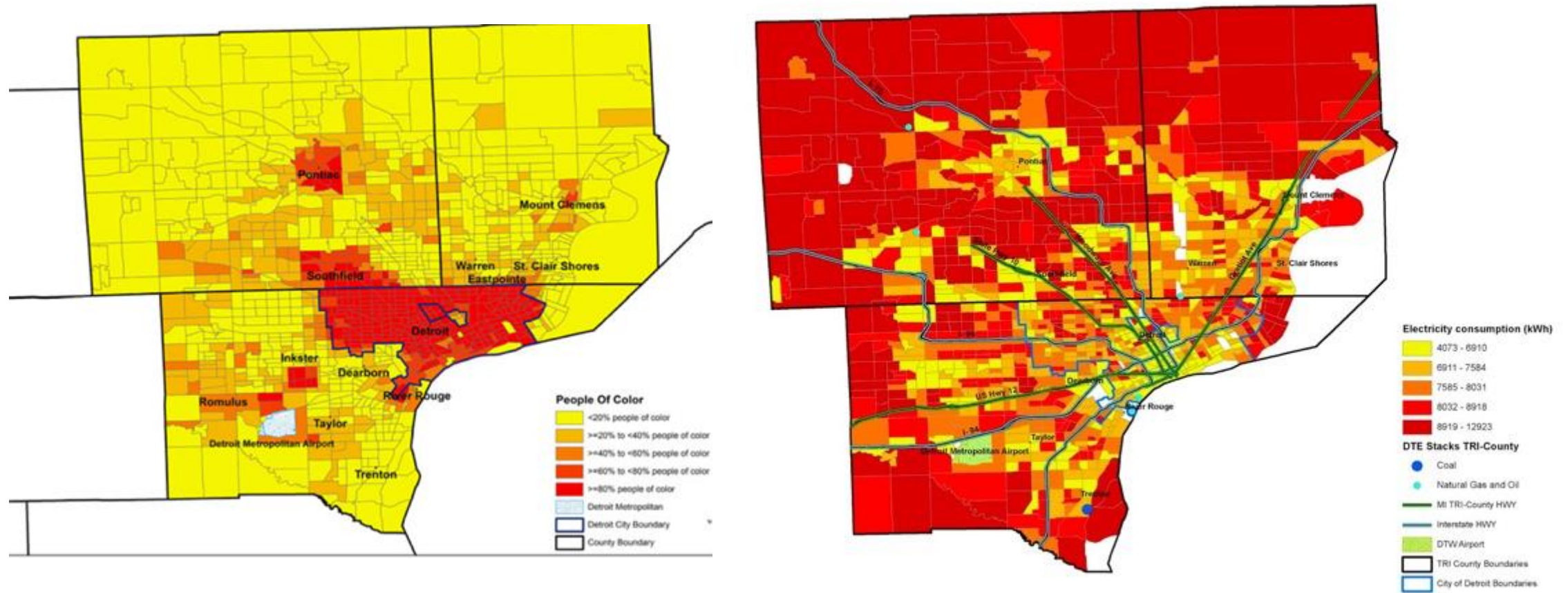
Congressional Black Caucus Foundation Report, African Americans and Climate Change: An Unequal Burden, 2004

Energy and Race – Consumption vs Efficiency

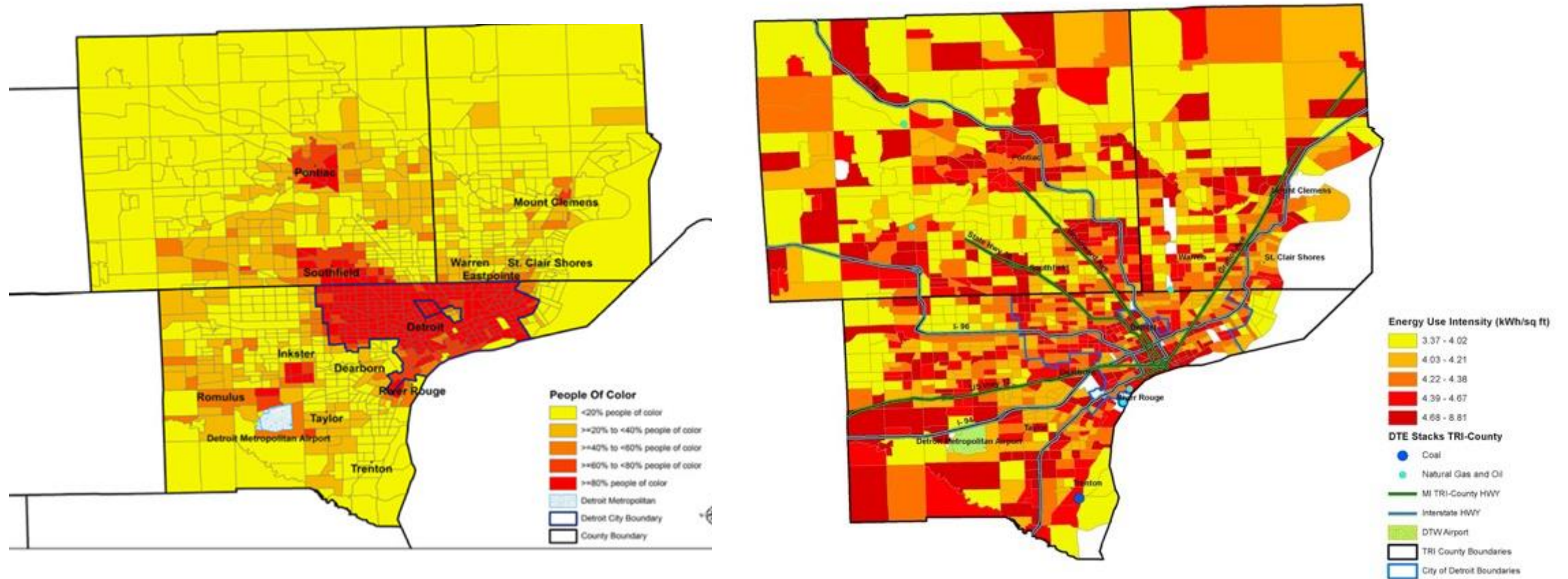


Source: EIA, Residential Energy Consumption Survey 2015

Residential Electricity Consumption



Residential Electricity (in)Efficiency



Detroit Heating Consumption v. (in)efficiency

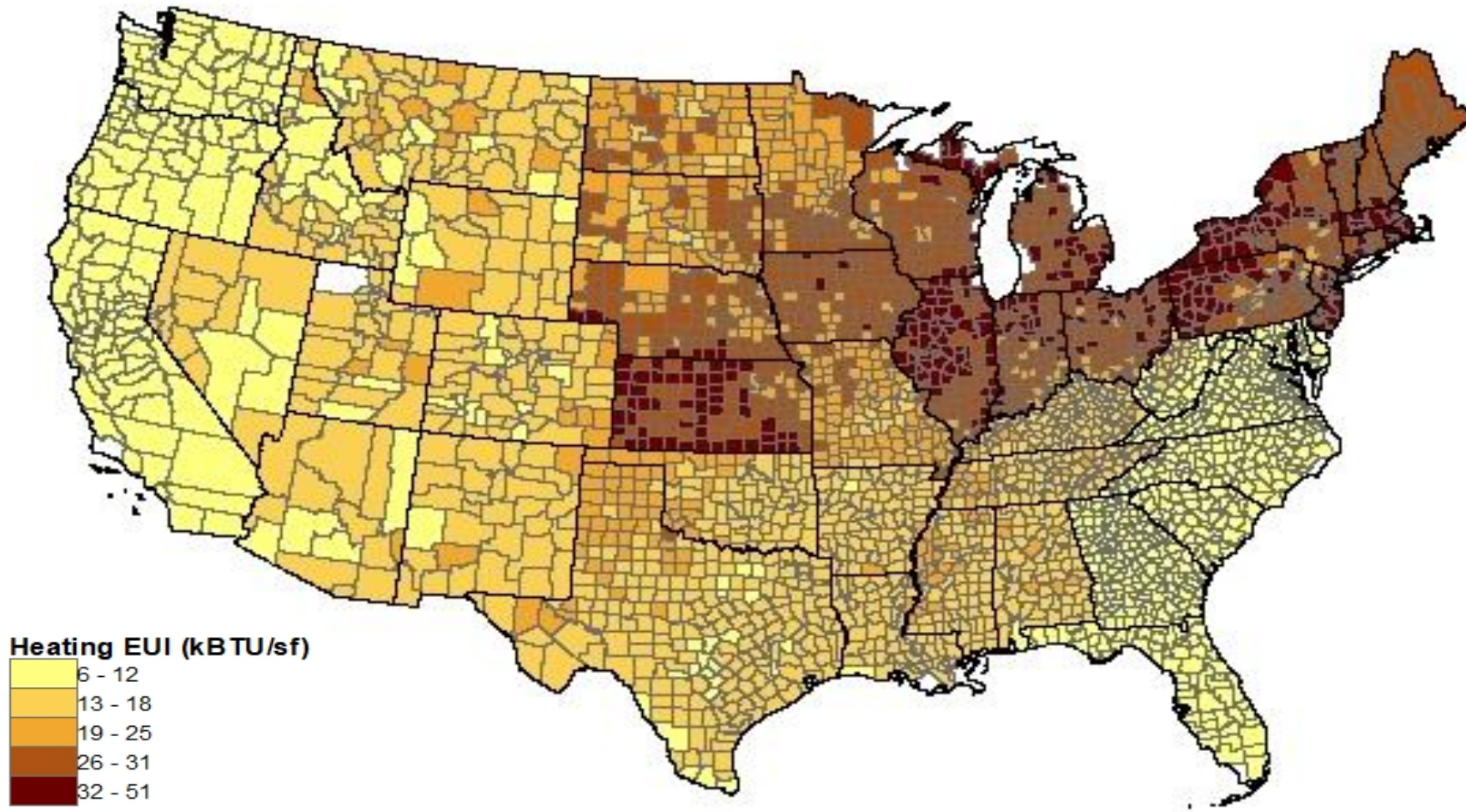
Category	Description	Correlation	
		Heating Consumption	Heating Inefficiency
Economic Status	Median HH income	↑	↓
	% HHs below poverty	↓	↑
Education	% Less HS diploma	↓	↑
Race/Ethnicity	% White HHs		↓
	% African Americans HHs		↑
	% Hispanic HHs		↑
Housing Tenure	% Owner-occupied	↑	↓

HHs= Households

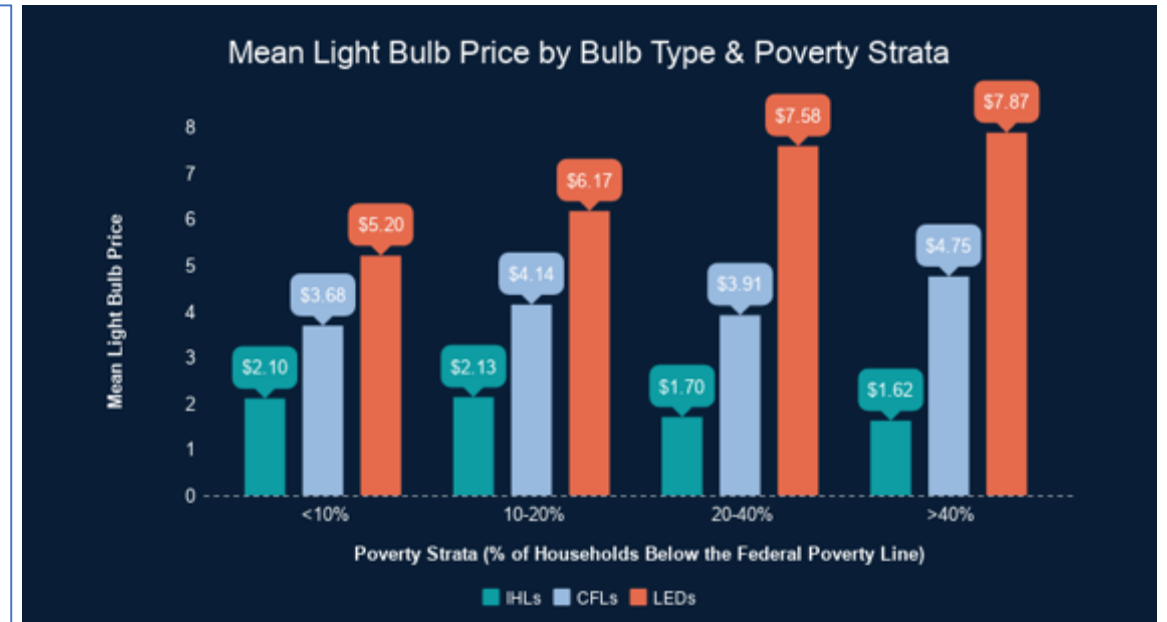
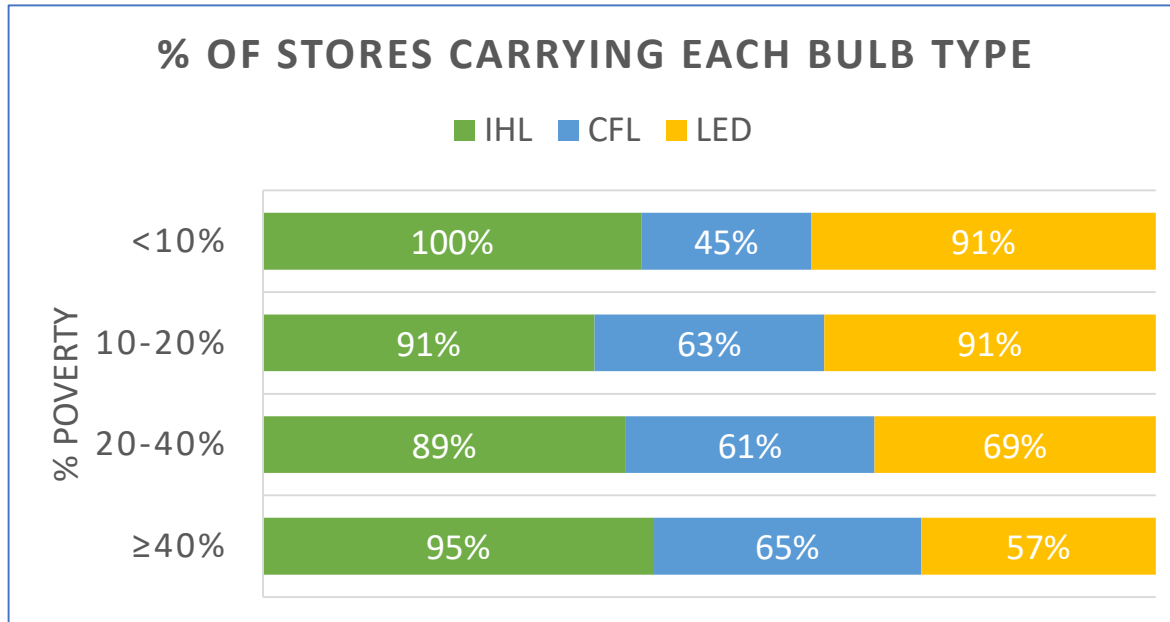


Detroit utility shut-off protests, 2012

Estimating Heating Energy Efficiency (National)



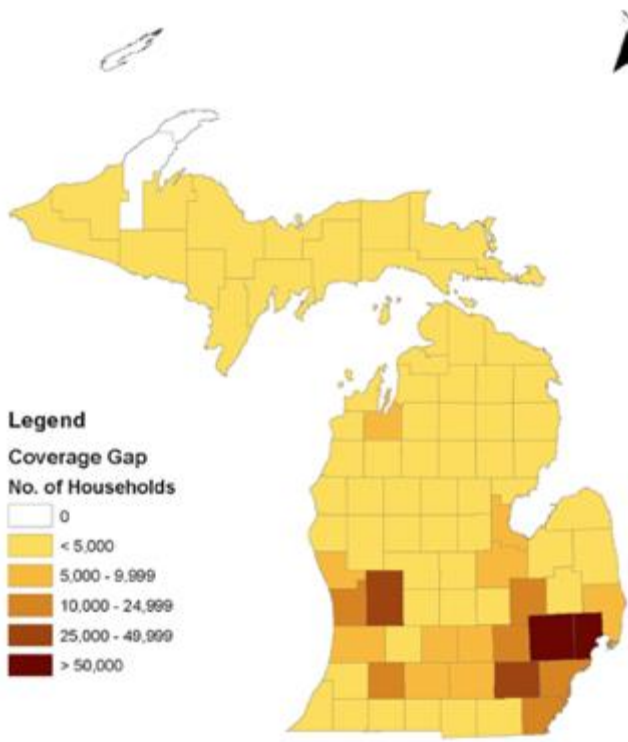
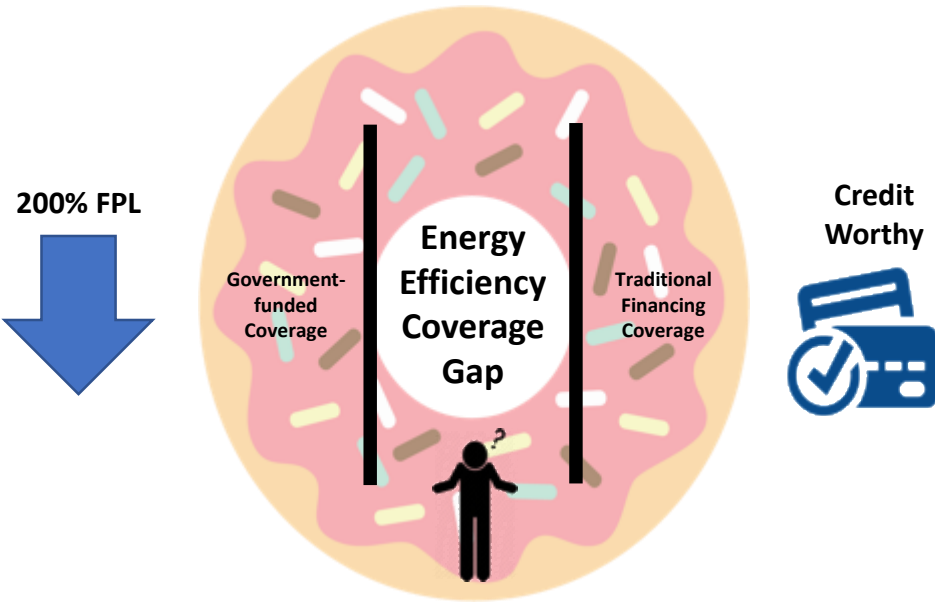
Energy Efficient Technology Access and Affordability Disparities



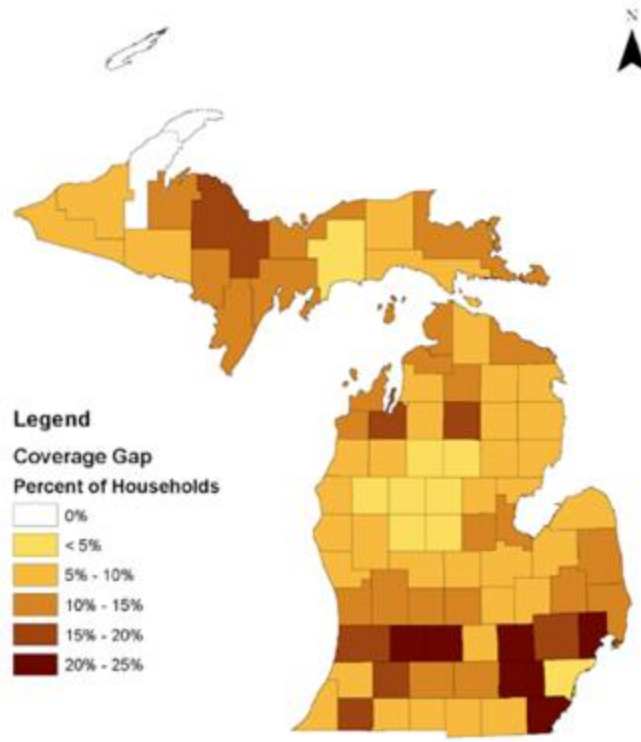
An incandescent truth: Disparities in energy-efficient lighting availability and prices in an urban US county

Reames, T. G., Reiner, M. A., & Stacey, M. B. 2018. *Applied Energy*, 218, 95-103.

The Energy Efficiency Funding Donut Hole



Number of Households



Percent of Households

1 in 8 (460,000) Michigan households

Understanding the residential energy efficiency financing coverage gap and market potential.

Forrester, S. P., & Reames, T. G. (2020). *Applied Energy*, 260, 114307.

Conclusions

- Spatial, racial, and socioeconomic disparities exist in residential energy efficiency, affordability, and technology access
- Less energy efficient areas are spatially clustered (place is important)
- Targeted, community-based approaches to energy efficiency support energy justice & may enable more effective implementation of assistance programs
- Community-based approaches recognize the unique characteristics and needs of target communities to overcome participation and technology access barriers

THANK YOU!

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www.thegreenscholar.com

www.urbanenergyjusticelab.com

 [@tgreames](https://twitter.com/tgreames) [@justurbanenergy](https://twitter.com/justurbanenergy)

Energy Efficiency and Assisting COVID-Impacted Communities

February 19, 2021

Lauren Ross
Senior Director of Policy
American Council for an Energy-Efficient Economy

Lross@aceee.org



American Council for an Energy-Efficient Economy



The American Council for an Energy-Efficient Economy is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) founded in 1980. We act as a catalyst to advance energy efficiency policies, programs, technologies, investments, & behaviors.

Our research explores economic impacts, financing options, behavior changes, program design, and utility planning, as well as US national, state, & local policy.

Our work is made possible by foundation funding, contracts, government grants, and conference revenue.

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The problem

Pre-COVID ACEEE Energy Burden Analysis

Energy Burden =

Annual energy bills/Annual income

- E.g., \$2,000/\$50,000 = 4% energy burden

Annual energy bills include electricity, natural gas, and other heating fuels.

Builds from previous ACEEE research

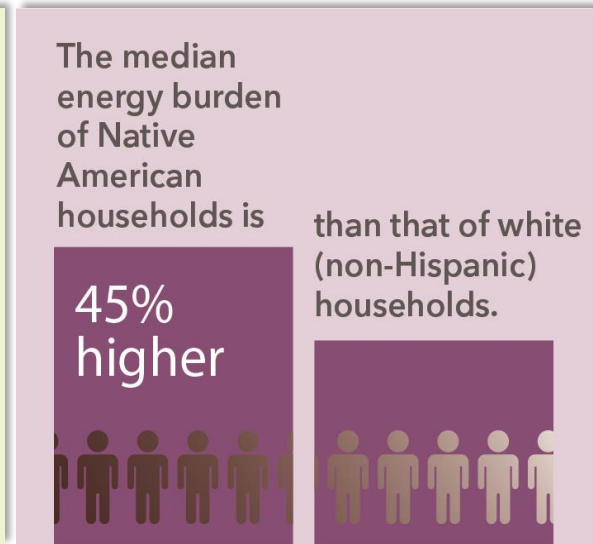
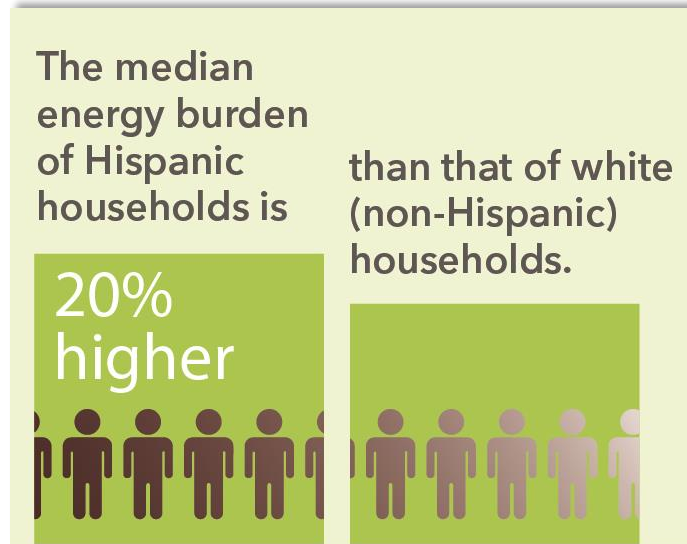
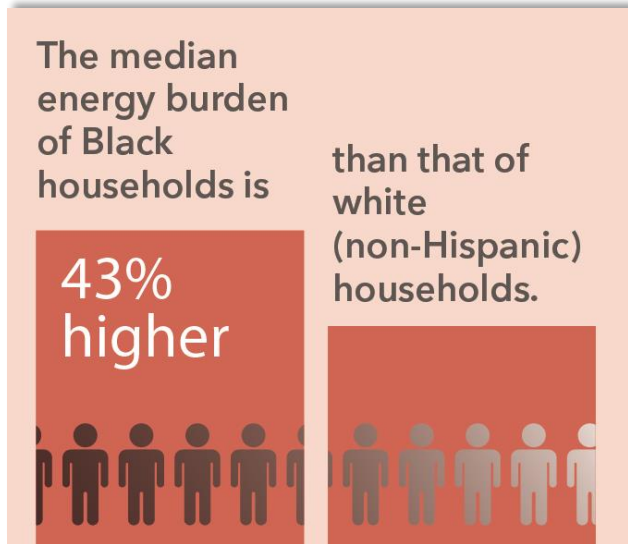
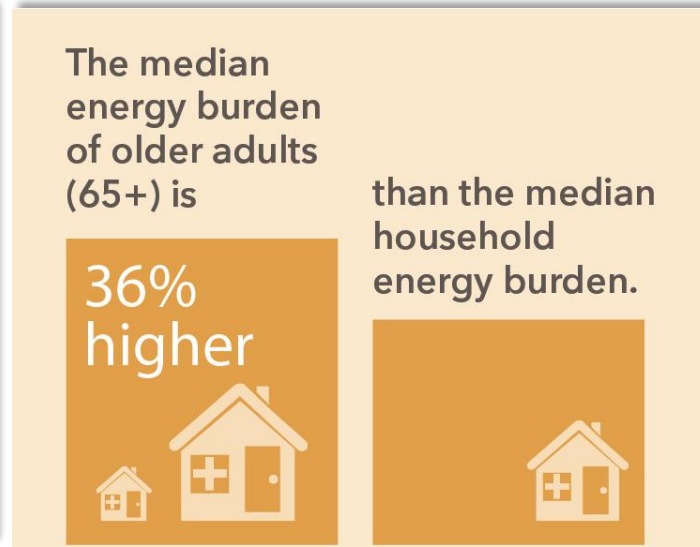
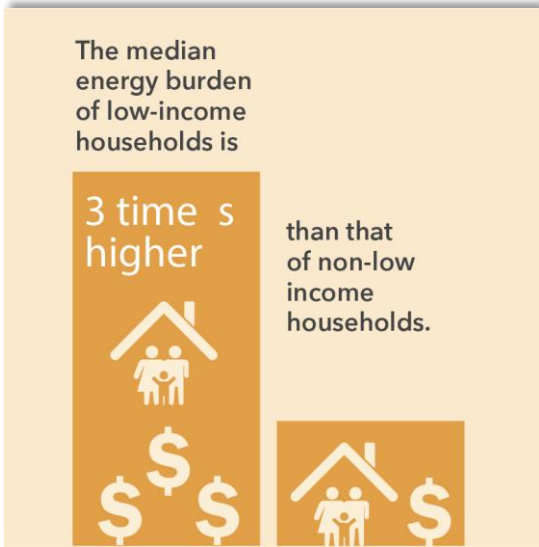
- 2016 Report: [aceee.org/research-report/u1602](https://www.aceee.org/research-report/u1602)
- 2018 Report: [aceee.org/research-report/u1806](https://www.aceee.org/research-report/u1806)

How High Are Household Energy Burdens?

An Assessment of National and Metropolitan Energy Burden across the United States

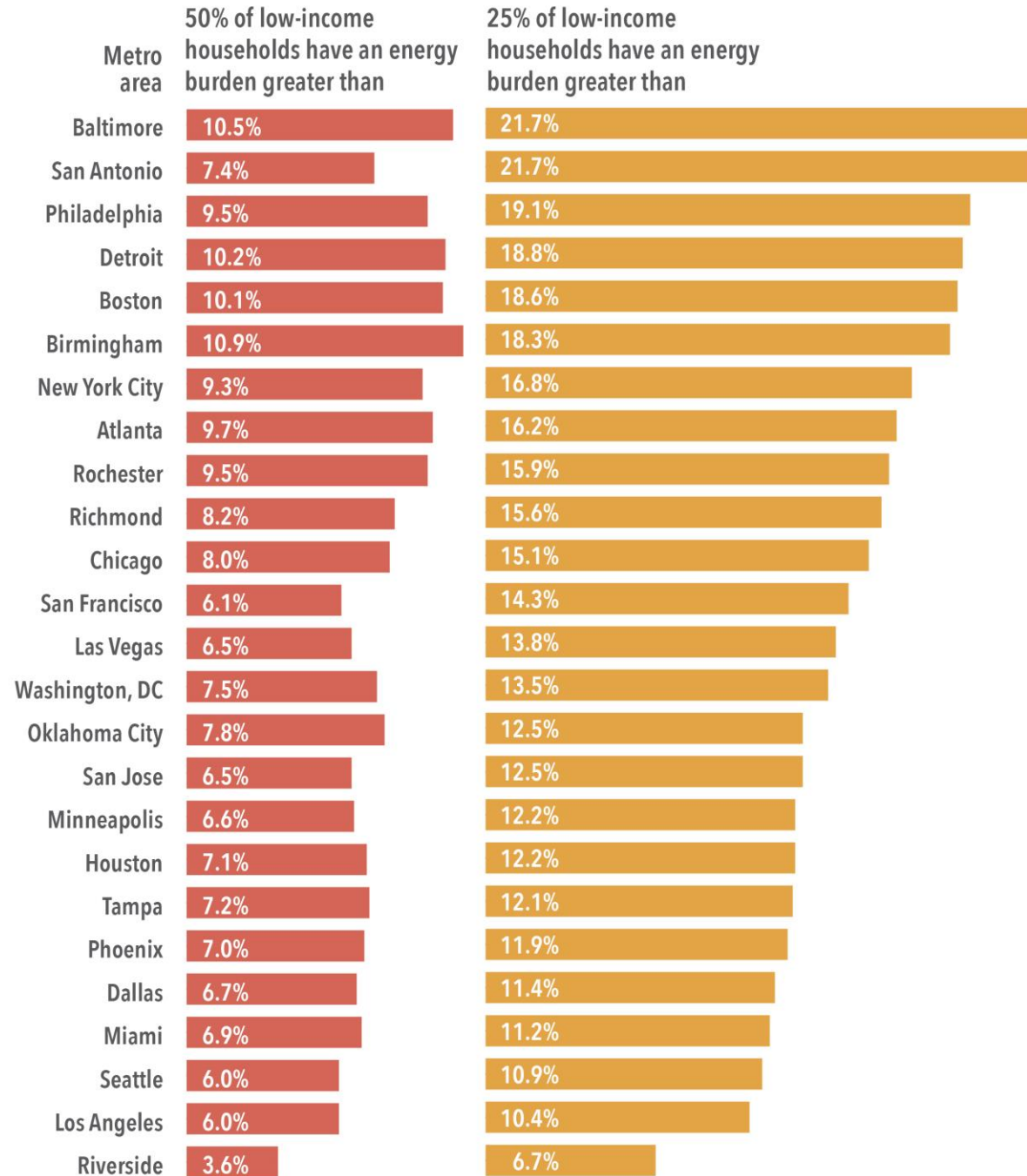
Ariel Dreobl, Lauren Ross, and Roxana Ayala





Low-Income Metro Energy Burdens

Median burdens and upper quartile burdens for low-income households in 25 metro areas



What causes high energy burdens?

Causes: physical, economic, policy, and behavioral factors

IMPORTANT: Low utility rates \neq affordable energy!



Impacts and Correlations of High Energy Burdens

High burdens correlated with:

- Poorer indoor air quality
- Increased respiratory diseases (e.g., asthma, COPD)
- Increased stress and negative mental health impacts
- Negative impacts on school success
- Perpetuates cycles of poverty
- Increased utility disconnections
- Increased reliance on payday lending



COVID and energy insecurity - a new urgency



Energy efficiency efforts are shutting down due to COVID-19, threatening jobs and savings

By Robert Walton
Published April 6, 2020

LIVE Patriots vs Rams: Scores and updates from TNF

As temperature drops and virus cases climb, groups file for new Missouri utility disconnection moratorium

OPINION This piece expresses the views of its author(s), separate from those of this publication.

Mississippians need COVID-19 utility relief with national shutoffs moratorium

DEEP DIVE

Utility customers owe up to \$40B in COVID-19 debt, but who will pay it?

Shutoff moratoria have provided a reprieve for some on 2020 power bills, but still-

Justice

A Pandemic and Surging Summer Heat Leave Thousands Struggling to Pay Utility Bills

High unemployment, stay at home orders and rising temperatures due to climate change are fueling energy insecurity and furthering the need for assistance.



Our Work

Home · Blogs · Climate 411 · Energy justice is racial justice

Energy justice is racial justice

f CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC

Hundreds of thousands of people face utility shutoffs as pandemic surges

By Zoë Read · November 11, 2020

OPINION

Utilities shutoffs during the pandemic are a nightmare Pa. should end | Opinion

Posted: November 16, 2020 - 1:12 PM



CNN IMPACT YOUR WORLD

An estimated 205 million Americans are at risk of utility disconnection. Here's how you can get help

By Lauren Lee, CNN

Updated 2:57 PM ET, Thu November 12, 2020

Energy efficiency as an environmental justice strategy

“I’m convinced that the best and most equitable way to address climate change is to push energy efficiency into every corner of our economy....I would challenge anyone to find an energy solution that answers so many of our challenges. Doubling down on energy efficiency for everyone isn’t just the right thing to do, it’s the smart thing to do.”



Paula Glover, President, Alliance to Save Energy

How does energy efficiency fit in?

- Long-term solution to high burdens and more affordable housing
- Can help address energy and health equity
- Provide bill savings for households
 - Can lower burdens by 25% and save households up to \$400/year
- Additional benefits such as health and job creation

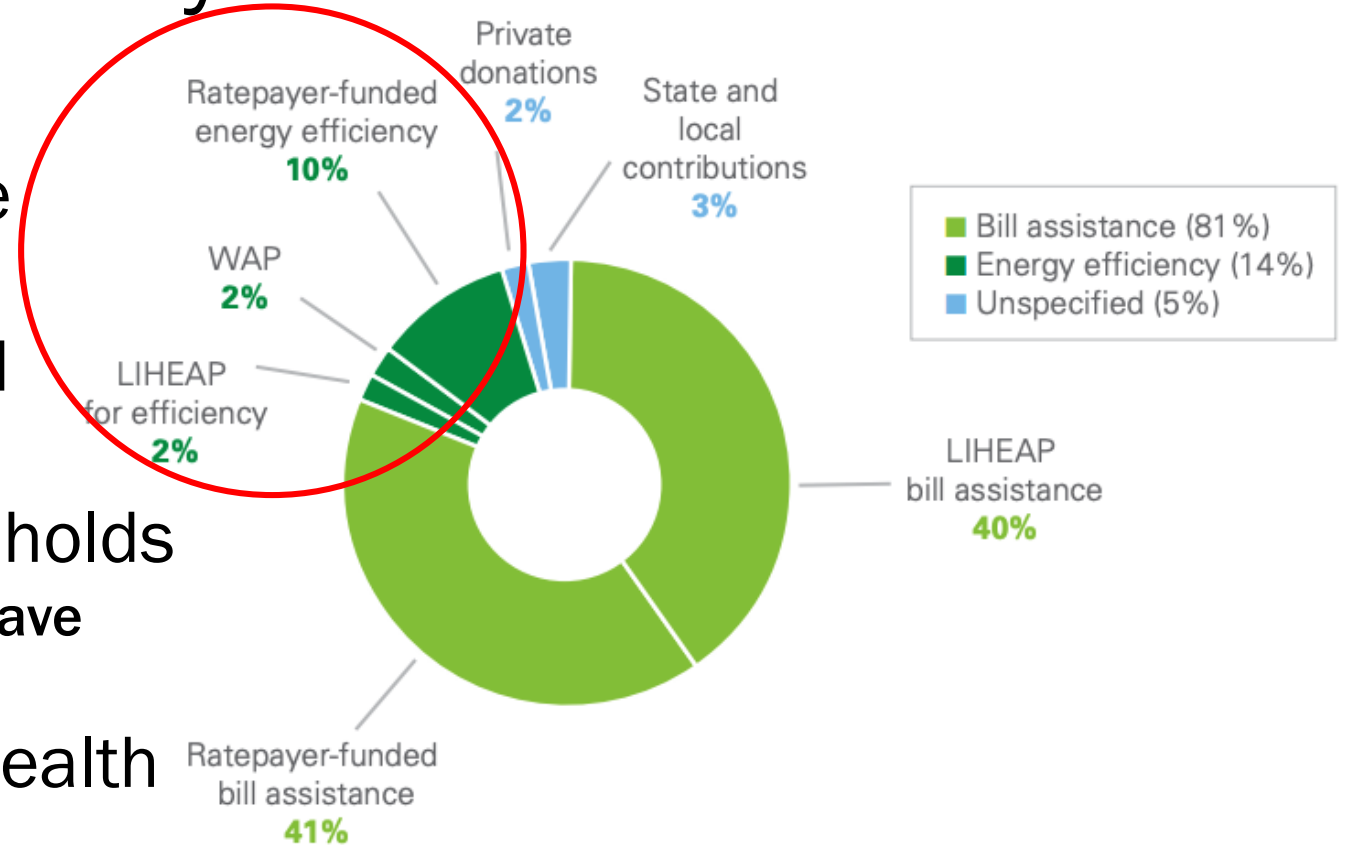
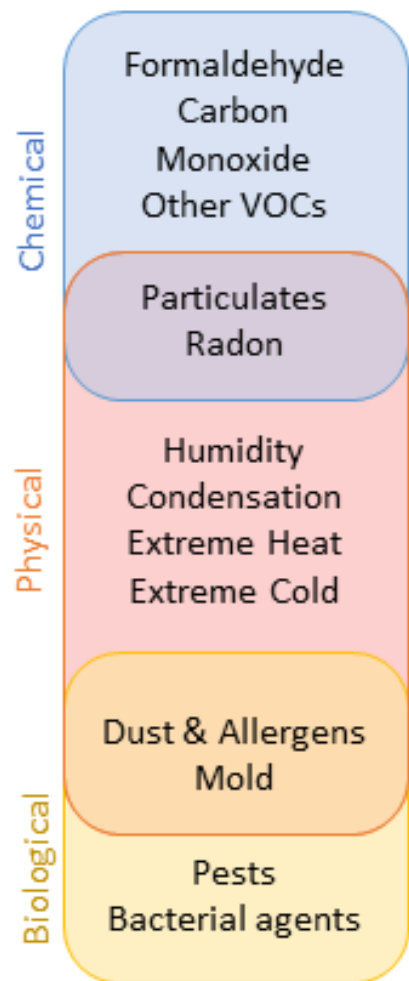


Image from Drehobl and Ross (2016)
[aceee.org/research-report/u1602](https://www.aceee.org/research-report/u1602)

Common health stressors in homes include...



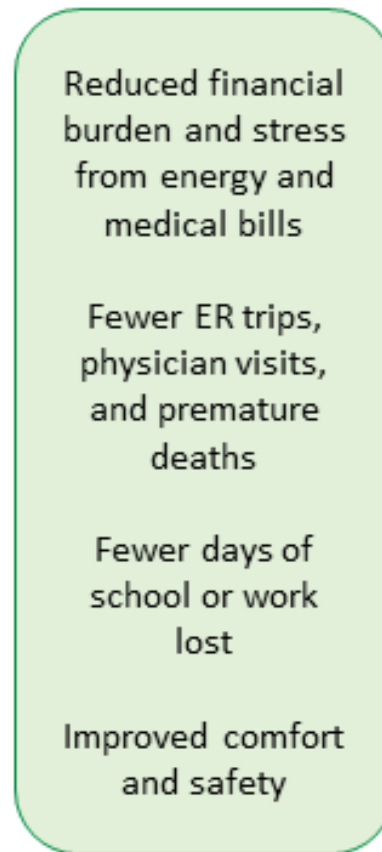
Weatherization measures help to...



This reduces or prevents health issues like...



And leads to...



National policy solutions

Energy efficiency as an economic recovery and climate strategy

Near- and long-term benefits

- Creates jobs now
- Reduces greenhouse gas emissions for years to come
- Immediate savings for consumers and businesses and promotes long-term affordability
- Supports energy and housing justice
- Improves public health



Opportunities for federal action

- Federal aid bill(s) should include funding for energy efficiency investments, targeted at indebted, overburdened households and inclusive workforce training
- Bill assistance/utility debt relief should be paired with energy efficiency and weatherization
- State and utilities need better data and should be encouraged to identify and provide opportunities to increase access to energy efficiency, bill assistance, and other support for indebted customers who are at-risk of shutoffs

Opportunities for federal action

- Increase support for the Weatherization Assistance Program
- HOPE4HOMES: Implement new U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) and state rebate programs for home energy upgrades and also contractor training/workforce development
 - Incentives doubled households with income less than 80% of area medians
- Multifamily programs: Fund energy upgrades to low- and moderate-income multifamily housing
- Support affordable financing to help households pay costs not covered by grant; include consumer protections
- Tax incentives for manufactures of heat pumps and heat pump water heaters to make them more accessible



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Environmental and
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Friday, February 19, 2021