



For Immediate Release

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POVERTY, INCOME UNCHANGED LAST YEAR IN RHODE ISLAND

Residents continue to struggle in wake of recession

PROVIDENCE, RI (September 19, 2013). Poverty rates and median household income in Rhode Island remained relatively unchanged last year at 13.7 percent and \$54,554 respectively, according to the latest figures released by the Census Bureau's American Community Survey (ACS).

The ACS is considered a more reliable data set than the Current Population Survey (CPS), released earlier this week, because the ACS has a much larger sample size of 3 million respondents.

Nationally, poverty rates held steady at 15.9 percent, while median household income dropped to \$51,371 (a \$200 decrease from 2011).

Key findings for Rhode Island include:

Poverty

- 13.7 percent of Rhode Islanders (close to 139,000) live in households with income below the federal poverty level, which was \$19,090 for a family of three in 2012
- The Ocean State's poverty rate ranked 29th in the country (1 being the worst) and 2nd highest in New England, after Maine
- 6.1 percent of Rhode Islanders (62,056) were considered to be living in deep poverty, meaning they had income that was less than half of the federal poverty level

Racial disparities

- More than one in four African-Americans (26.1 percent) and one-third of Latinos (33 percent) lived in poverty in 2012; Asian and white households experienced poverty rates of 14 percent and 9.4 percent respectively



Income

- Median household income remained stagnant \$54,554 in 2012; this was still well below the pre-recession amount which was \$59,321 in 2007
- The Ocean State's median household income ranked 19th highest in the country and 4th highest in New England, above Vermont and Maine

“Stagnant income and unchanged poverty rates underscore the need for Rhode Island to do more to improve the economic vitality of our state and its residents, especially our African American and Latino neighbors. Rhode Island should make educating its current and future workforce the cornerstone of its economic development strategy,” said Kate Brewster, executive director of the Economic Progress Institute.

In addition to investing in education and workforce training, the Institute calls on lawmakers to ensure that every Rhode Islander can meet their basic needs, including those who are working at low wage jobs or unable to work. This includes:

- Increasing the state's Earned Income Tax Credit
- Investing in affordable housing and fully funding the state's plan to end homelessness
- Continuing expansions to child care assistance
- Increasing support for the community food bank
- Capping the interest rate for predatory payday loans at 36 percent
- Ensuring all Rhode Islanders have access to affordable health insurance
- Making improvements to the state's cash assistance program, RI Works, to better serve as an entry way to the workforce and a safety net for very poor children and families

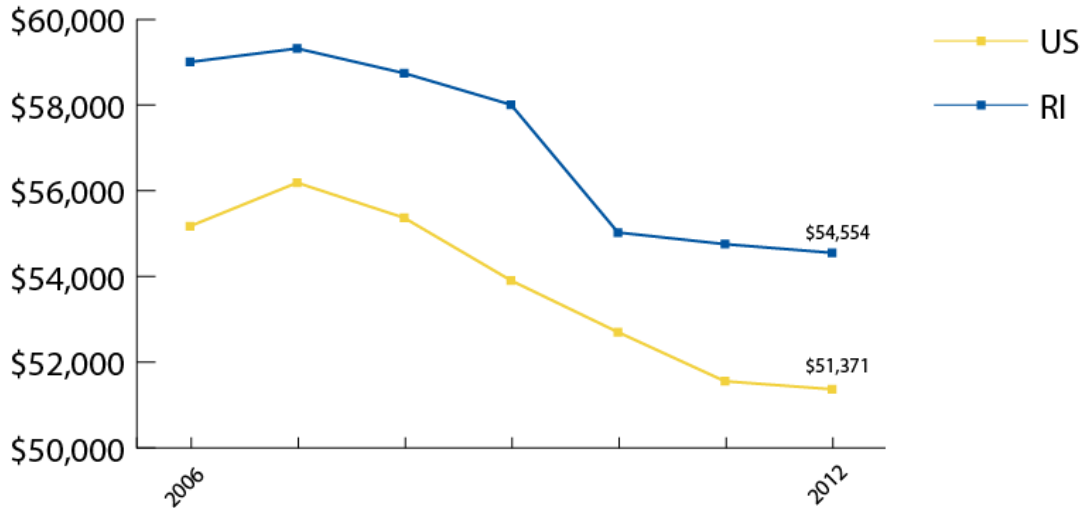
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About The Economic Progress Institute

The Economic Progress Institute - formerly The Poverty Institute - is a nonpartisan research and policy organization dedicated to improving the economic well-being of low- and modest-income Rhode Islanders. For more information visit www.economicprogressri.org.



Rhode Island's Median Household Income Remains Below Pre-Recession Level



Rhode Island & United States Poverty Rates, 2012

	2011	2012
National	15.9% (48,500,000)	15.9% (48,760,123)
Rhode Island	14.7% (148,819)	13.7% (138,907)

(Neither change is statistically significant)

Poverty in The Ocean State, 2012

	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Low Income (<200% FPL)	27.08%	26.46%	26.71%	27.98%	31.04%	30.84%	30.56%
Poverty (<100% FPL)	11.12%	11.99%	11.70%	11.46%	14.05%	14.70%	13.70%
Deep Poverty (<50% FPL)	4.64%	5.17%	5.31%	4.92%	6.04%	6.80%	6.14%

