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WEAK ECONOMY A KEY FACTOR IN GROWING POVERTY AMONG HISPANICS THROUGHOUT 2010

Washington, D.C.—Data released yesterday by the U.S. Census Bureau reveal significant increases in poverty among Latinos during 2010, reflecting the weak economic recovery and continuing unemployment crises, according to [new analysis](#) by NCLR (National Council of La Raza). These data show the need to focus sharply on policies that improve the economy and reduce joblessness while helping people most affected by unemployment weather the storm.

Census findings include the following:

- **Latino poverty is on the rise with more than one in four Latinos living in poverty.** The Hispanic poverty rate increased from 25.3 percent in 2009 to 26.6 percent in 2010; among all Americans, the rate increased from 14.3 percent in 2009 to 15.1 percent in 2010. Thirteen million Latinos were counted as poor in 2010, representing an increase of 893,000 since 2009. In 2010, a four-person family was considered poor if income fell below \$22,314.
- **High unemployment among Latino workers is the key factor.** The unemployment rate among Latino workers hovered over 12.5 percent for most of 2010, compared to approximately 8.7 percent for all workers. The Latino unemployment rate for 2011 has fallen to an average of 11.6 percent, which is in the right direction though still far above the 5 percent unemployment rate of 2006 before the recession began.
- **Poverty is higher among communities of color.** In 2010, the poverty rate for Latinos was 26.6 percent, compared to 9.9 percent for Whites and 27.4 percent for Blacks.
- **Hispanic family income fell significantly between 2009 and 2010.** Latino median household income fell to \$37,759 in 2010, which was a statistically significant drop from its 2009 level of \$38,667. The median household income also fell among White families to \$54,620, among Black families to \$32,068, and among Asian families to \$64,308.
- **One in three Latino children lives in poverty.** The Latino child poverty rate was 35.0 percent in 2010, which is an increase from 33.1 percent in 2009. There are 15.7 million poor children overall in the United States, and 5.8 million (37.4 percent) of them are Hispanic.
- **The poverty rate among Hispanic seniors fell to 18.0 percent in 2010 compared to its level in 2009 of 18.3 percent.** Previous studies have shown that without Social Security, the poverty rate among Latino seniors would be approximately 50 percent.

This is the fourth year in a row that poverty has risen, and our safety-net programs are more important than ever. Federal efforts such as unemployment insurance, tax credits to boost family income, or support to provide children access to medical care should continue to play a very significant role. Social Security's role in reducing poverty among seniors must also continue to be supported. However, federal support for families alone is not enough. We need more effective skills training for unemployed workers, and we need a robustly growing economy to create more jobs.

A growing economy means that people can move out of poverty. When people have jobs, they can provide for their families and purchase goods and services that can keep the economy growing. More people working also means more people are paying taxes and paying down the long-term debt. Budget cutting while the economy was still weak in 2011 has only drained the economy further and will lead to higher poverty unless we change course. The president's renewed focus on job creation is the right priority to address today's unemployment crises, and federal programs that help the poor and invest in the future must also be protected in the long-term budget discussions.

NCLR is committed to fighting for more aggressive and sustained actions that are required to ensure a prosperous future for all Americans, including Latinos.

NCLR—the largest national Hispanic civil rights and advocacy organization in the United States—works to improve opportunities for Hispanic Americans. For more information on NCLR, please visit www.nclr.org or follow us on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).

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