

Facts About Working Poor

- **As of 2006, it was estimated that over 15 percent of West Virginia's total population was living below the federal poverty line. Source** Joint Economic Committee Fact Sheet, August 29, 2007 <http://jec.senate.gov/Documents/Reports/08.29.07Poverty.pdf>
- **Recent findings from the Economic Policy Institute and the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities found that West Virginia's poorest families have seen their income decline by more than \$1,000 since the late 1990s and that the typical worker makes almost \$1 less per hour today than 30 years ago, after adjusting for inflation. Source** "Pulling Apart: A State by State Analysis of Income Trends" <http://www.cbpp.org/4-9-08sfp.htm>
- **West Virginia has an unhealthy and growing income gap, with the wealthy becoming wealthier and the poor becoming poorer. The income gap in West Virginia grew faster than in all but 7 other states since the 1990's – only Alabama's poor are poorer than West Virginia's.**
- **The bottom 20 percent of families in West Virginia earns an average of \$13,941. Source** "Pulling Apart: A State by State Analysis of Income Trends" <http://www.cbpp.org/4-9-08sfp.htm>
- **In addition to income problems, West Virginians have limited opportunities to build wealth and financial security. The 2007-2008 CFED Assets & Opportunity Scorecard found that West Virginia has the second lowest rate of households with interest-bearing accounts and seventh lowest rate of households with non-interest bearing bank accounts, suggesting that a large segment of its population lies outside the financial mainstream.**
- **Business ownership is also not widespread among West Virginians as we have the second lowest rate of small business ownership and we are 47th in micro enterprise ownership.**