



National Community Action Partnership's Statement on Administration's Proposed Changes to the Official Poverty Measure's Inflationary Measure

Contact: Denise Harlow, Chief Executive Officer, dharlow@communityactionpartnership.com

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The National Community Action Partnership is deeply troubled by the Administration's [proposal](#) to change the way the official poverty threshold is adjusted annually, potentially shifting to an inflation measure that would annually define fewer people as poor. Such a change would ensure more people will struggle over time to access programs and services needed to stabilize their families. While seeking comments on a range of inflation measures, the Administration's consideration of the Chained CPI (Consumer Price Index) to modify the poverty line each year is of significant concern.

Despite America's economic recovery, millions are still living in poverty and even more are just one missed paycheck away from hardship. Whether our neighbors are experiencing a temporary set-back or have been priced out of affordable housing – too many struggle to achieve a good quality of life. As the hub for the nation's 1,000+ local Community Action Agencies, we see the real face of struggle across America. This proposal would, just by changing the measure of poverty, push families off much needed programs and make it more challenging to meet eligibility requirements. While starting small, the disparity between today's poverty thresholds and those ten years from now under the Chained CPI is real and would lead to millions being ineligible for services in the not-so distant future.

"Community Action understand the Official Poverty Measure is an artificially low threshold to begin with," states Denise Harlow, National Community Action Partnership CEO. "A family of four making \$26,000/year is not considered poor under the current definition, regardless of where they live in the U.S. Our country should be seeking solutions to assist more families as they work toward economic security, not using shifts in inflationary definitions to redefine people out of poverty."

Working families, seniors, children, and those living with disabilities would be impacted by this proposed change. The Administration has put a [request out for comment](#) and the Community Action Partnership will join many others in responding. Community Action would welcome a real dialogue on adjusting poverty thresholds so that we can move towards real solutions that help families succeed. The Supplemental Poverty Measure is a start but Chained CPI adjustments send us in the wrong direction.

The National Community Action Partnership is the hub for the nation's 1,000+ local Community Action Agencies (CAAs). CAAs connect individuals and families to approaches that help them succeed, promote community-wide solutions to seemingly stubborn challenges, and share expertise with national, state, and local leaders looking for evidence on what works to promote greater economic opportunity for children and families.

Community Action Agencies are locally run but receive a range of public and private resources for their work. This includes funding from the federal Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) which provides the Community Action Agency designation. For every \$1 of CSBG funds, the Network annually leverages \$7.70 from state, local, and private sources. More information can be found at www.communityactionpartnership.com.

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