



Earning Minimum Wage? Better Clone Yourself to (Almost) Afford Rent

-- *Minnesota Least Affordable State in Midwest* --

St. Paul, MN (March 13, 2012)- According to a national report released today, to afford a modest two-bedroom apartment, a minimum wage earner would have to work 86 hours per week – or hold 2.1 full time jobs -- in Minnesota. Of the twelve states in the Midwest, Minnesota ranks the worst for affordability for minimum wage workers.

The report, *Out of Reach 2012*, was jointly released by the National Low Income Housing Coalition (NLIHC), a Washington, D.C.-based housing policy organization, and for Minnesota, the Minnesota Housing Partnership and the Minnesota Coalition for the Homeless. The report provides rental affordability data for every state, metro area, and county in the country.

In order to afford the rent and utilities for a safe, modest 2-bedroom apartment in the private housing market, a Minnesota worker must earn \$15.50 per hour, 40 hours a week, all year long. By contrast, the typical renter in Minnesota earns \$12.17 per hour. Minimum wage pays only \$7.25 per hour.

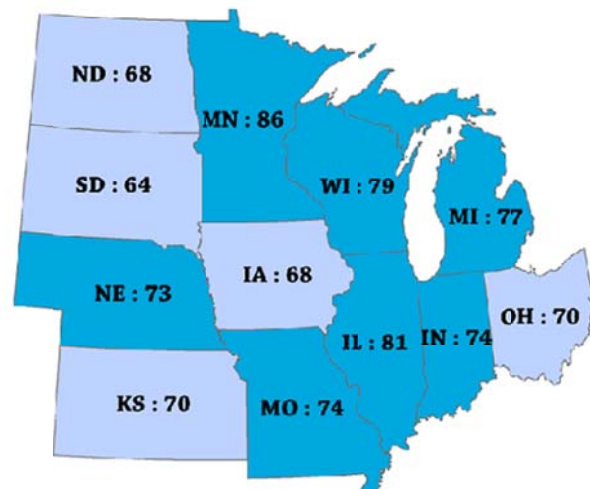
“The gap between what most renters make and the cost of housing is a problem facing the entire state,” said Chip Halbach, Executive Director of Minnesota Housing Partnership. “Families are forced to move because they cannot keep up their rent payments. This kind of instability jeopardizes the future of Minnesota’s children.”

An estimated 54% renters in Minnesota do not earn enough to afford a two-bedroom unit at the “fair market rent” where they live.

Additional Minnesota *Out of Reach* Facts:

- **Twin Cities metro rents are most expensive.** A modest two-bedroom apartment requires a full time worker to earn \$17.38 per hour year-round -- the most expensive in the state.
- **The counties *least affordable* to renters,** given the incomes they earn, are distributed throughout the both Metro and Greater Minnesota Counties. The top 5 least affordable counties with the highest estimated percent of renters unable to afford a modest two-bedroom apartment are Wadena (67% unable to afford), Carlton (62%), Winona (62%), Chisago (61%), and Ramsey (61%) Counties.

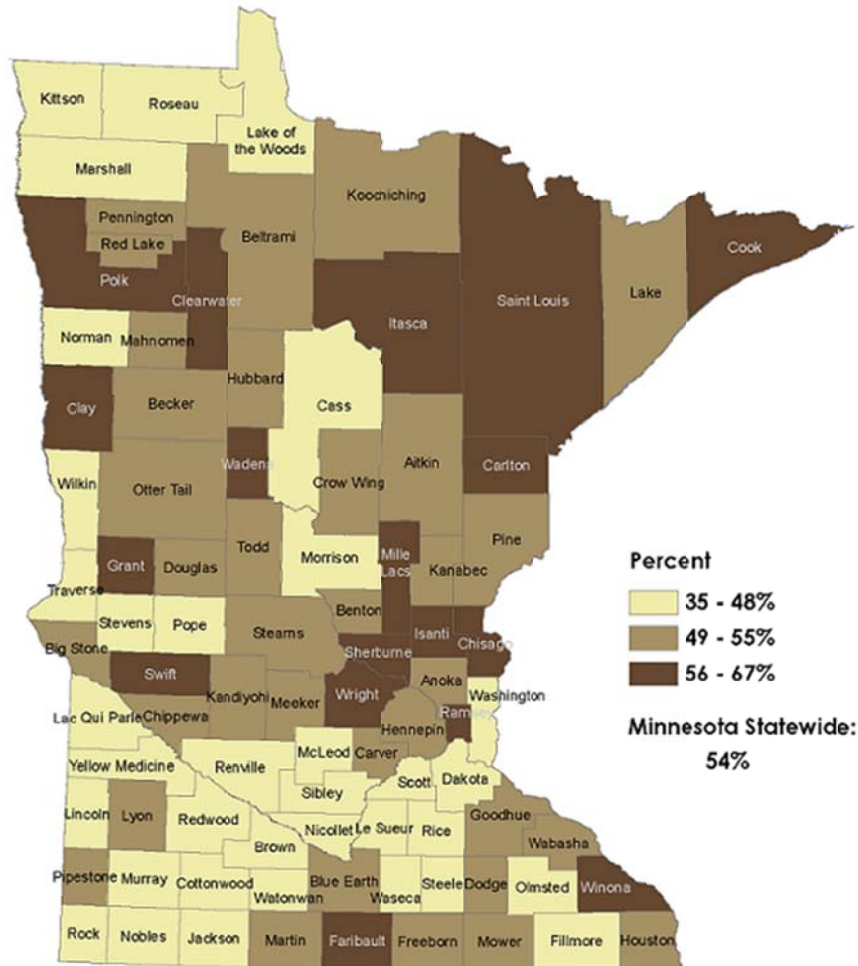
WEEKLY HOURS A MINIMUM WAGE WORKER MUST WORK TO AFFORD AN APARTMENT



HOURS NEEDED TO AFFORD APARTMENT



Estimated Percent of Renters Unable to Afford a 2-Bedroom Apartment



See MHP's additional Minnesota map and data for *Out of Reach 2012* at <http://mhponline.org/publications/reports-and-research/reports>.

See NLIHC's national data, analysis, and maps at <http://www.nlihc.org/oor/2012/>

Contact Leigh Rosenberg at the Minnesota Housing Partnership at rosenberg@mhponline.org or 651-925-5543 for assistance in accessing or analyzing *Out of Reach* data for any county or metro area of Minnesota.