



MINNESOTA RENTAL AFFORDABILITY WORST IN MIDWEST

--Report Finds Minnesota Renters Still Waiting for Recession Recovery--

St. Paul, MN (May 2, 2011)-- According to a national report released today, a Minnesota family must have 2.2 minimum wage earners working full-time – or one person working 87 hours per week at minimum wage– to afford a modest two-bedroom apartment in Minnesota. Of the 12 states in the Midwest, Minnesota ranks the worst for rental affordability among low-wage workers.

The report, *Out of Reach 2011*, 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. The report provides housing affordability data for every state, metro area, and county in the country.

In order to afford the rent and utilities for a safe and modest 2-bedroom apartment in the private housing market, a Minnesota worker must earn \$15.79 per hour, 40 hours a week, 52 weeks a year. By contrast, the typical renter in Minnesota earns \$11.61 per hour, and a minimum wage earner makes only \$7.25 per hour.

“Data from *Out of Reach* reminds us that growing numbers of hard-working, low income families are really struggling to find decent and affordable housing in communities all across the state,” said Chip Halbach, Executive Director of Minnesota Housing Partnership. “For the sake of Minnesotans unable pay for housing while meeting other basic expenses, it is essential that Congress and the Minnesota legislature resist budget cuts to rental housing programs.”

An estimated 55% Minnesota renters do not earn enough to afford a two-bedroom unit at the Fair Market Rent.

Additional Minnesota Facts from *Out of Reach*

Least Affordable Counties. In each of these Minnesota counties, 60% or more of renters are estimated to be unable to afford a modest two-bedroom apartment, given their earnings.

Winona County (68% unable to afford)

Chisago County (62%)

Aitkin County (67%)

Ramsey County (60%)

Mille Lacs County (67%)

Isanti County (60%)

Big Stone County (65%)

Sherburne County (60%)

Grant County (63%)

Dodge County (60%)

Faribault County (62%)

Koochiching County (60%)

Wadena County (62%)

Rural Areas See Highest Increases. The Minnesota counties with the highest increase in rents since 2000 are outside of the Twin Cities Metro, particularly in *southwest Minnesota*. Rents in Martin, Faribault, Cottonwood, Pipestone, Murray, Rock, Watonwan and Jackson Counties have increased by 56% or more since 2000, compared to 32% statewide since 2000.

Twin Cities metro rents are most expensive. A modest two-bedroom apartment requires a full-time worker to earn \$17.77 per hour year-round.

Please contact Leigh Rosenberg at 651-925-5543 or rosenberg@mhponline.org for assistance in accessing or analyzing Out of Reach data for any county or metro area of the state.

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The Minnesota Housing Partnership (MHP - 2446 University Ave W. - Ste 140 | St. Paul, MN 55114) advances the preservation and creation of housing affordable to low- and moderate-income people as a means of strengthening communities and families. MHP is an equal opportunity provider and employer.