

# THE STATE OF OHIO 2016

A STORY THROUGH STATISTICS:  
HOW OHIO MEASURES UP

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report tells a story about our state, our people, and how we compare to the country. It shows a hard reality: **TOO MANY OHIOANS ARE STRUGGLING**. Deep, stubborn inequality clearly exists. To make all Ohioans' lives better, we'll need serious focus and significant investment aimed at solving our problems.

## HEALTH & HOME



## EDUCATION



## ECONOMY & EMPLOYMENT



## INEQUALITY



### 1 HEALTH & HOME

Infant Mortality	45 th
Hunger	47 th
Home Foreclosure	46 th
Health Insurance	8 th

### 3 ECONOMY & EMPLOYMENT

Poverty	33 rd
Median Income	36 th
Unemployment	24 th
Job Growth	27 th

### 2 EDUCATION

High School Graduation	29 th
College Tuition	34 th
Pre-K Enrollment	22 nd

### 4 INEQUALITY

Black Infant Mortality	
Low-Income Graduation	
Women's Poverty	

Ohio is at or above the national average  
 Ohio is below the national average

**One Ohio Now is a statewide coalition of over 100 health and human service, labor, and advocacy groups. We believe that great public services strengthen our communities and we need revenue to pay for those services.**

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# INTRODUCTION

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Like all policy advocates in Ohio, we read a lot of reports. But we realized, nearly every report is narrowly focused on a single issue. **THE STATE OF OHIO** attempts to synthesize dozens of sources on a range of issues to tell a more holistic story about what's happening in Ohio.

WE SHOULD HAVE A WAY TO MEASURE OUR SUCCESS AS A WHOLE. THE STATE OF OHIO COULD BE THAT TOOL.

The idea for this report came in 2015. In preparation for the state budget debate, we were reviewing statistics that might indicate how the massive tax shift that began in 2005 was working. We found little to no quantitative evidence to support the repeated narrative: tax changes will lead to prosperity. It became clear that development of a comprehensive yardstick could help Ohio, and this report was born.

In **THE STATE OF OHIO**, we've settled on 11 wide-ranging areas for measurement that we believe, together, paint a picture of the reality in our state. These metrics fall into the categories of **1) HEALTH & HOME, 2) EDUCATION, and 3) ECONOMY & EMPLOYMENT**. For each metric, we share our big takeaways, look back at trends and policy changes, and look forward based on current affairs. While many of our issues are part of a national reality, or may be solved through local action, as a state-level budget and tax policy coalition we've focused on Ohio.

Too often our political and policy discourse is focused on metrics and rankings that mean little, are hard to understand in context, or are purposefully misleading. We've attempted to use straightforward statistics from trusted sources. There are very important areas we don't include (infrastructure, for example, stands out), but omissions are almost exclusively because there was not a clear quantitative analysis or where we could not compare Ohio with the rest of the country.

There are so many glaring discrepancies in the data we're using based on race, class, gender, and more. We felt it was imperative to include an **INEQUALITY** category. The report concludes with notes about our methodology and citations.

At One Ohio Now, we work to look at the big picture with the public's interest in mind. We are a coalition of over 100 organizations whose total membership includes over 1 million Ohioans. Our coalition was formed because we believe we need fair and adequate state revenues to invest in the public services that give Ohio a chance to be successful.

Since 2005, Ohio has consistently chosen to shift taxes in the name of job and economic growth. That choice now means we have at least \$3.5 billion per year less to invest in solving the problems this report details, like skyrocketing college tuition and nearly the worst infant mortality rates in the country. We believe that without significant investment, many of our biggest, most vexing problems – like poverty and job growth – will dog us for decades to come. But we can avoid this fate. Through smart public policy that follows the research, all Ohioans can benefit.



# HEALTH & HOME

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## **One thing stands out here: kids need our help.**

Our infant mortality and child hunger are staggering and shameful. Ensuring all Ohioans have the basics for Health & Home would lead to stronger communities for everyone. The expansion of Medicaid has clearly had a huge impact for hundreds of thousands of Ohioans. However, to ensure a great quality of life for everyone, we have more work to do on healthcare and many other issues to tackle as well.

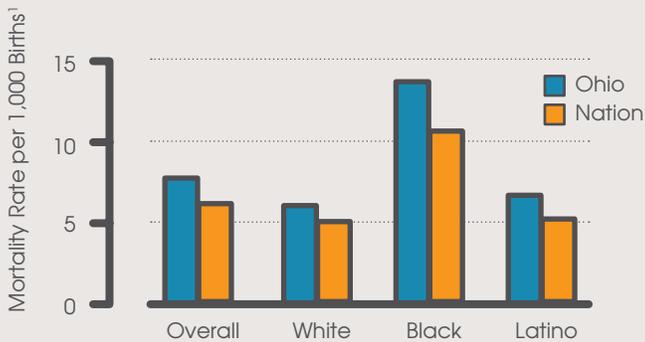
Instead of shifting billions of dollars in tax changes that benefit the wealthy the most, Ohio could make targeted investments and address the systemic problems that impact millions of Ohioans.



# INFANT MORTALITY

*Infant mortality is the death of children under one year.*

**45th**  
in the nation.



WITH AN INFANT MORTALITY RANKING OF 45<sup>TH</sup>, **OUR NATIONAL RANKING IS ONLY MADE WORSE BY THE STRIKING DISPARITY BY RACE.** BLACK INFANT MORTALITY IS OVER TWICE THAT OF WHITE BABIES (13.6 VS. 6.3 DEATHS PER 1,000).

## LOOKING BACK

Premature births (47%), birth defects (14%), unsafe sleeping conditions (15%), and other factors (24%) have contributed to Ohio's high level of infant mortality.<sup>2</sup> Since 2009, infant mortality has become a statewide priority - the goal is to reduce infant mortality to a rate of 6.0 by 2020 for all ethnicities.<sup>3</sup> In the 2016-17 budget, Ohio allocated \$2 million toward infant mortality health grants, and the state increased spending on infant vitality by \$800,000 a year.<sup>4</sup> These new investments, in addition to Medicaid expansion and other improvements, will hopefully help more babies make it to their first birthday.

## LOOKING FORWARD

Data for 2014 shows that Ohio's infant mortality rate dropped 8%, however it increased 3.8% for African American children.<sup>2</sup> To meet our goal by 2020, we'll need to do more. Small investments go a long way to ensuring our children survive so they can thrive, but we are concerned the state is simply not doing enough.

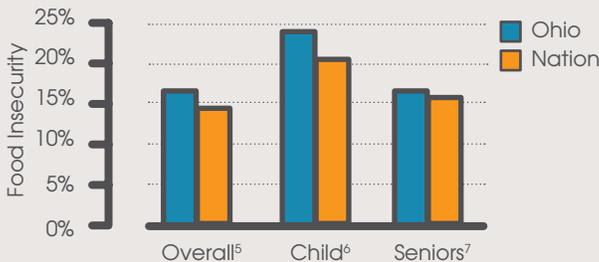


# HUNGER

*A person is food insecure (hungry) if they are without reliable access to a sufficient quantity of nutritious food.*

## 47th

*in the nation.*



NEARLY **1 IN 4 KIDS SUFFER FROM HUNGER** IN OHIO.<sup>6</sup> WE ALSO HAVE THE 12<sup>TH</sup> HIGHEST SENIOR HUNGER RATE IN THE NATION.<sup>7</sup> OHIOANS WERE 18% MORE LIKELY TO BE HUNGRY THAN THE NATION WITH NEARLY 17% OF OHIOANS EXPERIENCING HUNGER.

### LOOKING BACK

Nationally, food insecurity has declined since the height of the recession (2009–2011) by 2.7%, but it increased by 9% in Ohio. Since 2002–2004, the rate of hunger nationally has increased about 25% and in Ohio by over 48%.<sup>5</sup> Recent budget increases for food banks will help alleviate an immediate crisis for some families, but are still insufficient. As Ohio’s economy has changed, we now have more low-wage jobs that leave people in a position of having to choose between healthcare, housing, and food.

### LOOKING FORWARD

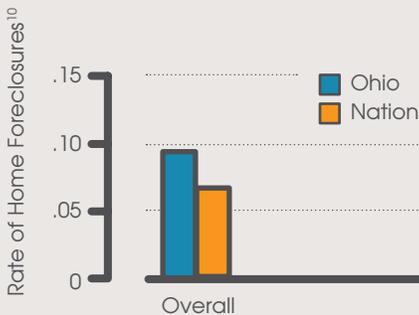
Feeding America estimates it would cost about \$885 million to end hunger in Ohio,<sup>6</sup> less than the amount of revenue we lost as a result of the most recent round of income tax cuts.<sup>8</sup> Especially since we know that Investments in food security have a positive economic impact - helping grocery stores, farmers, and ensuring a healthy workforce - ending hunger is something we can and should do.<sup>9</sup>



# HOME FORECLOSURE

*The number of mortgaged homes where homeowners are unable to make their payments.*

**46th**  
in the nation.



**EVERY OHIOAN DESERVES SAFE, DECENT, AND AFFORDABLE HOUSING.** TOO MANY OHIOANS HAVE LOST THE SECURITY OF A HOME WITH 1 IN EVERY 1,017 HOMES IN OHIO CURRENTLY IN FORECLOSURE.

## LOOKING BACK

Ohio continues to climb out from underneath the fallout from the sub-prime mortgage crisis that caused the recession in 2008. In 2006, foreclosures in Ohio were up 320% compared to a decade earlier – largely a result of sub-prime mortgage lending in Ohio.<sup>11</sup> Since 2005, homeownership rates in Ohio have fallen about 8.2%.<sup>12</sup> In some neighborhoods, foreclosures have increased the demand for rental units. Although rents remain affordable compared to the country – about 27% below the national average – they’re still out of reach for anyone who earns less than \$14.13 an hour. It is even worse in central Ohio, where a person must earn \$15.60 to afford an apartment.<sup>13</sup>

## LOOKING FORWARD

Incomes in Ohio today simply aren’t enough to ensure that everyone can afford to purchase a home or rent an apartment. But through smart investments in affordable housing development and service delivery, Ohio can rehab old homes, create more affordable housing, and end homelessness. States like Utah, for example, are trying innovative strategies like providing housing directly to homeless individuals – and it’s working.<sup>14</sup>

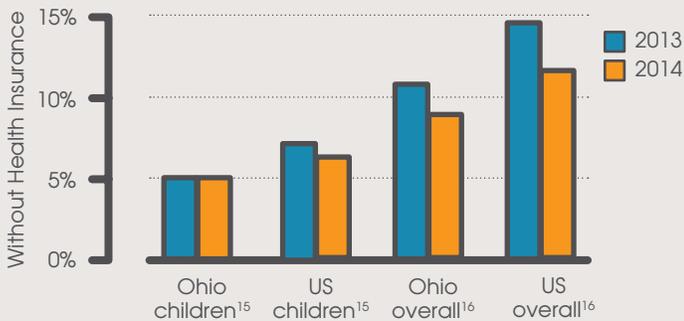


# HEALTH INSURANCE

The percentage of the population in Ohio that has public or private health insurance.

## 8th

in the nation.



**FOLLOWING MEDICAID EXPANSION, OHIO SAW A 24% REDUCTION OF UNINSURED OHIOANS IN JUST 1 YEAR COMPARED TO A NATIONAL REDUCTION OF 19%. IN 2014, THERE WERE 955,000 OHIOANS — OR 8.4%—WITHOUT HEALTH INSURANCE COMPARED TO 11.7% NATIONALLY.**

## LOOKING BACK

The federal passage of the Affordable Care Act (Obamacare) in 2010 has decreased the uninsured population in Ohio and across the nation, with the most notable changes beginning in 2014. The overall population without health insurance decreased in Ohio from 11 to 8.4% – largely thanks to Governor Kasich’s embrace of Medicaid expansion in 2013.<sup>16</sup>

## LOOKING FORWARD

Healthcare will likely remain a politically hot topic during 2016 and beyond, particularly as Ohio’s share of Medicaid expansion costs begins in 2017. Medicaid represents about 4% of Ohio’s economy, insures 45% of Ohio’s children, and covers about half of all births in the state.<sup>17</sup> Even with recent improvements, concerns have been raised about access to doctors and care for those who now have insurance. While Ohio data does not exist, nationally, 20% of Americans live in a community without enough primary care doctors, and 30% of Americans live in communities without enough mental health practitioners.<sup>18</sup> Ohio is still at nearly the bottom (47th) in health outcomes, even after Medicaid expansion.<sup>19</sup> We should make investments so that every single Ohioan is insured and has access to the healthcare they need.



# EDUCATION

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## **We should strive to be #1 in public education.**

There is virtually no disagreement that a great education system is imperative for a strong economy and meaningful opportunity for all. Businesses consistently cite an educated workforce as a top priority. Wage growth is linked to educational attainment, but it will take serious investment to ensure our public education system prepares all of our children for the 21st century.

It's clear that calls to improve adequacy and equity are still warranted, especially as we see such great disparities in outcomes based on both race and class. By now, Ohio could have made pre-K available for all Ohioans and substantially reduced the cost of a college education. Instead, we've pursued a trickle-down tax strategy and results have not materialized.

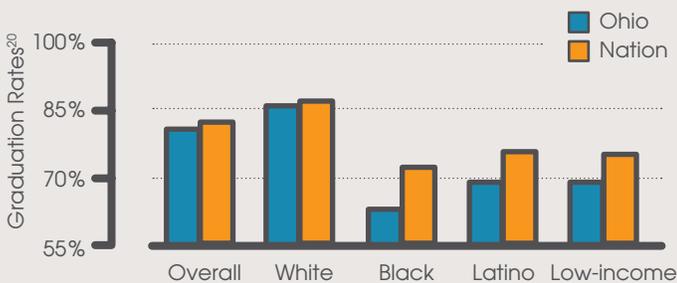


# HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION RATE

The main metric used to track student achievement of public, 4-year high schools.

## 29th

in the nation.



OHIO'S TOTAL GRADUATION RATE OF 81.8% IS JUST BELOW THE NATIONAL AVERAGE OF 82.3%. **BUT AFRICAN AMERICAN STUDENTS GRADUATE AT JUST 62.7%, LEAVING US 46<sup>TH</sup> IN THE COUNTRY.**

## LOOKING BACK

Over the past few years, Ohio has been within 1% of the national average for our graduation rate, but we continue to struggle with unequal educational opportunities and outcomes. The Ohio Supreme Court has ruled four times that our funding system is inadequate and lacks equity.<sup>21</sup> Still, students from districts that are economically disadvantaged have a graduation rate of only 74%, while wealthy districts have a graduation rate of 97%.<sup>22</sup> Consistent funding changes, new mandates, and more have made it hard to expect consistent success.

## LOOKING FORWARD

Ohio needs to prioritize state level investment into public education in large urban areas as well as rural communities. Currently, students in wealthy districts benefit from more opportunities than students in poor districts. For example, 60% of students in wealthy districts take an Advanced Placement course, while only 10% of students from districts with economic disadvantage do.<sup>22</sup> Ensuring all Ohio's students have the opportunity to be successful will require equity and adequacy in school funding for every corner of our state.

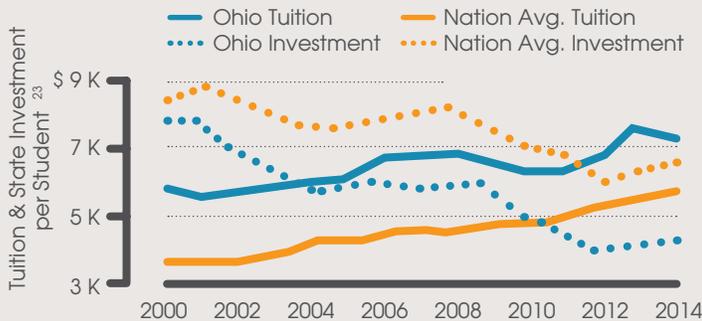


# COLLEGE TUITION

The average cost of a full-time education at Ohio's public colleges and universities.

## 34th

in the nation.



**OHIO'S OVER 40,000 STUDENTS PAY AN AVERAGE OF ABOUT 30% MORE THAN THE NATIONAL AVERAGE FOR COLLEGE. OUR AVERAGE ANNUAL TUITION IS \$7,548 COMPARED TO \$5,777.**

## LOOKING BACK

Public colleges and universities are financed primarily by 1) state investment into systems of higher education and 2) tuition paid by students and their families. Ohio has drastically cut our investment per student in higher education. Since 2000, Ohio has cut state investment by more than 43%. A similar trend has occurred nationally, but not to the same extent, with only a 25% reduction.<sup>23</sup> At the same time, Ohio students have seen a 38% increase in tuition. Ohio has also cut back on need-based assistance by 64% between FY 2008 and FY 2015.<sup>24</sup>

## LOOKING FORWARD

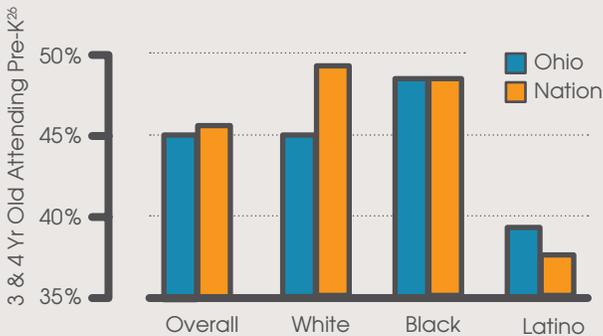
College affordability has become an issue of concern at the Ohio Statehouse, and that is unlikely to change anytime soon. Since 2013, Ohio tuition has been reduced by 1.8% compared to a national average increase of 2.7%.<sup>23</sup> This is a start, but Ohio's investment in higher education in FY 2017 will be \$500 million below FY 2008 levels.<sup>24</sup> The state should address the chronic under-funding of higher education, as well as the misplaced spending priorities – most notably on bloated administration.<sup>25</sup>



# PRE-K ENROLLMENT

*3 & 4 year olds enrolled in a class providing educational experiences for children before kindergarten.*

**22nd**  
in the nation.



FROM 2011–2013, 45% OF OHIO CHILDREN ATTENDED PRESCHOOL. OHIO IS TIED WITH THREE OTHER STATES, **PUTTING US IN THE MIDDLE OF THE PACK NATIONALLY FOR PRE-K ENROLLMENT.**

## LOOKING BACK

Ohio established its public preschool program in 1990, but legislators have never funded it at a level that would allow every student to access preschool in Ohio. Children can access preschool in Ohio through programs administered by local school districts, Head Start, or through private preschools including daycare centers.<sup>27</sup> To put Ohio in context, enrollment in last place Nevada is 31%, while top-ranked Connecticut has 63% of students in pre-K.<sup>26</sup>

## LOOKING FORWARD

Ohio increased spending by \$15 million or 33% in the 2014–15 school year, moving us to 27th for preschool spending. This should be an ongoing priority. Michigan for example, spends \$243 million compared to Ohio’s \$60 million.<sup>28</sup> When children enter kindergarten at very different levels, it slows the progress of the entire class. Investments in early childhood education are a smart public investment that will strengthen our communities and our economy in the long run.



# ECONOMY & EMPLOYMENT

Our economy shows some positive signs, but overall far too many Ohioans are slipping through the cracks.

As the national economy has improved post-Great Recession, so too has Ohio's. Unfortunately, we've underperformed the country on important metrics like job growth. Plus, the jobs we are creating are increasingly low-wage jobs that leave people struggling to get out of poverty.<sup>29</sup>

By far the biggest strategy for economic growth over the past 10 years has been income and business tax cuts that benefit the wealthy the most. Too many Ohioans now actually pay more as we've shifted to sales and other regressive taxes. We must beware of talk about economic growth without proof that this strategy is working. Shared prosperity across, race, gender and other lines should be our goal.

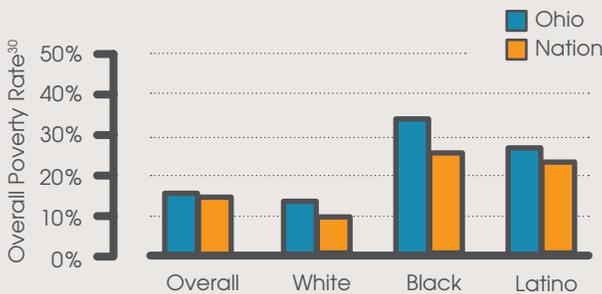


# POVERTY

*Poverty is defined as a family of four earning less than \$24,250.*

## 33rd

*in the nation.*



**15.6% OF OHIOANS – OR 1.8 MILLION PEOPLE – LIVE IN POVERTY COMPARED TO 14.8% NATIONALLY.**

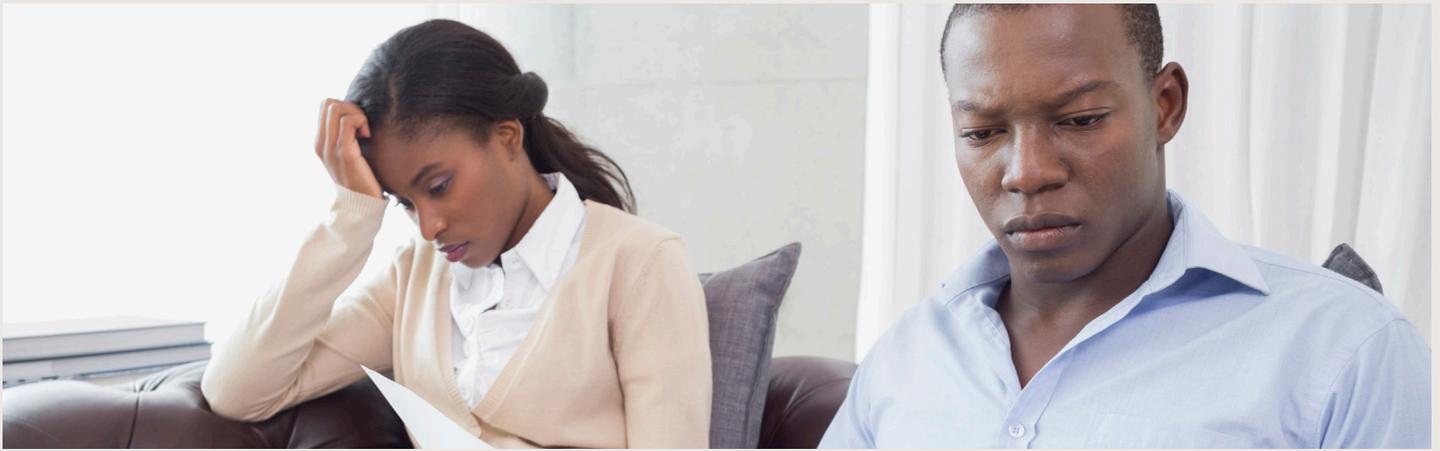
POVERTY DISPROPORTIONATELY IMPACTS RACIAL MINORITIES IN OHIO. FOR EXAMPLE, 33% OF AFRICAN AMERICANS IN OHIO ARE IN POVERTY COMPARED TO 26% NATIONALLY.<sup>31</sup>

## LOOKING BACK

Our poverty rate in 2001 was 11.9% before rising 38% to 16.4% in 2011.<sup>31</sup> Even after a slight improvement since then, we're trending in the wrong direction. An additional 19% of Ohioans are on the brink of poverty (below 200% of the poverty level)<sup>32</sup> which adds up to over 4 million Ohioans in economic distress. The trends are worse for children. Currently, 23% of Ohio's children are in poverty – up 43% since 2001.<sup>33</sup> Ohio's African American child poverty is the worst, currently at 48%.<sup>34</sup>

## LOOKING FORWARD

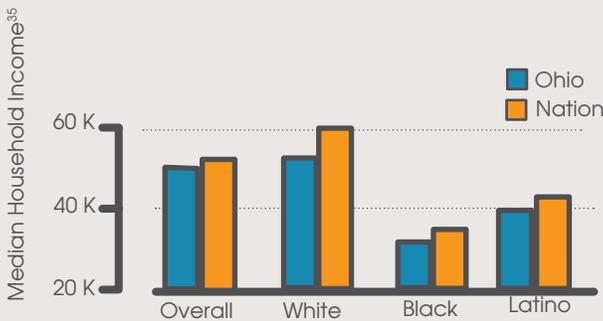
New jobs in Ohio are increasingly low wage-jobs, leaving many working individuals in or near poverty.<sup>29</sup> Until a job means a living for every Ohioan, we need public investments to help families survive day-to-day, including public transportation, affordable housing, health care and more. Ohio should prioritize proven programs like Ohio's Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) that will lift many families out of poverty.



# MEDIAN INCOME

*Median household income is the halfway point of income.  
Half of households earn more, half earn less.*

**36th**  
in the nation.



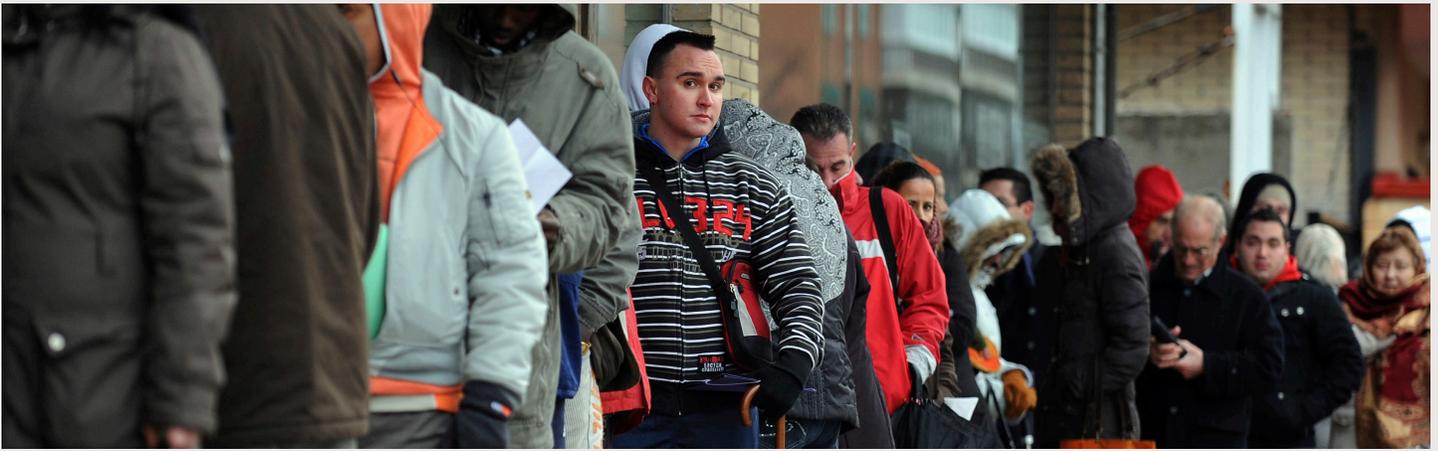
**THE MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME IN OHIO IS \$49,664 A YEAR** – 7.4% BELOW THE NATIONAL AVERAGE OF \$53,657.

## LOOKING BACK

Ohio continues to struggle with declining incomes. In 2000, Ohio ranked 19th in the nation for median household income, now we rank 36th. Since 2000, the national median income has dropped 7%, but Ohio has fallen 16%.<sup>35</sup> This change is widely attributed to a loss of 368,500 quality manufacturing jobs since 1998.<sup>36</sup>

## LOOKING FORWARD

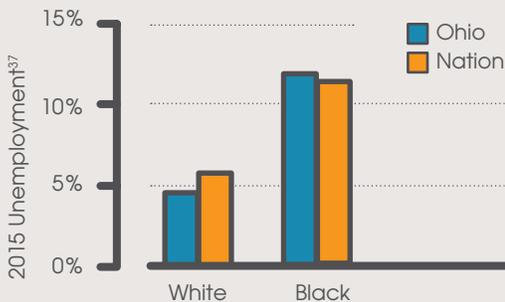
11 of the 12 fastest growing job categories in Ohio pay a lower median income than Ohio’s median income. These 12 categories represent about 1.1 million jobs.<sup>29</sup> Tax changes have consistently benefited businesses and high-income Ohioans, but the wealth has not trickled down. Identifying other solutions – such as a higher minimum wage or living wage laws – could also help Ohio take meaningful steps forward in making sure every Ohioan earns enough for a great quality of life.



# UNEMPLOYMENT

*Unemployment is calculated by the ratio of people not employed who are in the labor force.*

**24th**  
in the nation.



**OHIO'S UNEMPLOYMENT RATE AT THE END OF 2015 WAS 4.8%.** THIS IS BELOW THE NATIONAL UNEMPLOYMENT RATE OF 5.0%.

## LOOKING BACK

Ohio's unemployment rate has fallen from a high of 11.0% in December of 2009, but since the recession the workforce participation rate has remained low - below 63% - and it fell last year.<sup>38</sup> The declining workforce is a negative sign that our unemployment rate might be artificially low. African Americans in Ohio have an unemployment rate of 11.9% - nearly 3 times the unemployment rate for white Ohioans.<sup>38</sup> The national unemployment rate for African Americans is slightly less than Ohio at 11.3%.<sup>39</sup>

## LOOKING FORWARD

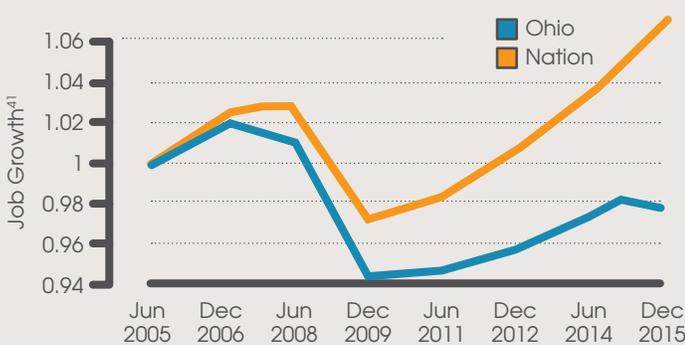
Ohio's unemployment rate ticked up at the end of 2015 (from 4.5% to 4.7%) while creating 15,000 jobs and an increase in the workforce by 16,000 people.<sup>40</sup> Ohio needs more months to follow this trend - an increase in the number of people within the labor force actively seeking work. While this may lead to a higher unemployment rate, it would be a positive sign that Ohio's economy is recovering. In addition to improving the quality of life for all Ohioans, significant public investments in infrastructure, education, and other public services would also have a positive impact on our unemployment rate.



# JOB GROWTH

The rate of new jobs added or subtracted from the economy.

**27th**  
in the nation.



OHIO HAD A JOB GROWTH RATE OF 1.5% COMPARED TO A NATIONAL AVERAGE OF 1.8% IN 2015 - GIVING OHIO A RANK OF 27TH.<sup>42</sup> **WE HAVE BEEN CONSISTENTLY UNABLE TO MATCH THE NATIONAL AVERAGE.**

## LOOKING BACK

In 2005, Ohio passed a major tax package that cut state income taxes by 21%, raised the sales tax, and more – the main goal was to create jobs. But, as of December 2015, Ohio remained about 91,000 jobs below June 2005. After 10 years, Ohio is doing worse than the nation in terms of job growth. Since 2005, Ohio has lost 1.6% of our jobs and the country had a growth rate of 7%.<sup>41</sup>

## LOOKING FORWARD

In addition to the total number of jobs, we should look at the quality of the jobs being created in Ohio. With the decline in manufacturing and the rise of the service sector, Ohio has lost a lot of good paying jobs for minimum wage jobs.<sup>29</sup> We could restore good paying jobs with smart public investments like fixing aging sewer lines, cleaning up polluted rivers, and re-hiring public school teachers to help prepare children for the future. 10 years of income tax cuts and other tax shifts have not delivered the promised jobs – it is time for Ohio to try something else.

\* 2015 Data is based on most recent economic revisions at the time of printing, knowing that the Bureau of Labor Statistics makes periodic revisions to data.



# INEQUALITY

**Racial minorities, women, LGBTQ people, and other groups are consistently underperforming Ohio and the United States as a whole.**

We cannot expect time to naturally heal the disparities that exist in Ohio and the nation around **health & home, education, and employment and the economy**. We must acknowledge the challenges of inequality and identify public policies that can be modified to provide all Ohioans a fair shot at success.

Our goal should be for everyone in Ohio to succeed, period – regardless of race, class, gender, sexual orientation, age, religion, ability, or any other characteristic used to divide us. To accomplish this, we need smart public investments that strengthen all of our communities and not pit one community against another.



## HEALTH & HOME INEQUALITY

**MAJOR DISPARITIES EXIST IN BASIC QUALITY OF LIFE AREAS. HERE ARE A FEW EXAMPLES:**

### HOME OWNERSHIP RATES AND RATES OF RETURN DIFFER BASED ON RACE

Nationally in 2011, 45% of African Americans owned their own homes compared to 73% of white Americans. The economic return on homeownership also is different based on one's race. Every \$1.00 of wealth accumulated through homeownership by African Americans translated to \$1.34 for white families.<sup>43</sup> This inequality prevents wealth-building through home ownership, which is often passed on to the next generation.

### SEXUAL ORIENTATION DISCRIMINATION IN HOUSING, EMPLOYMENT, AND MORE

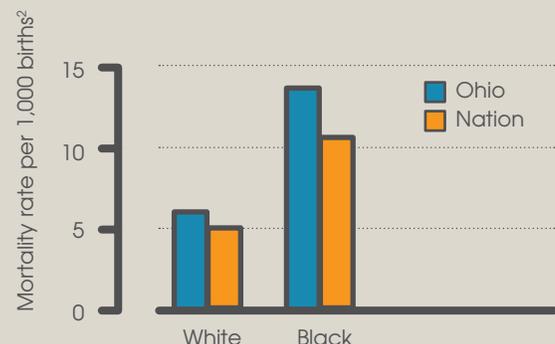
Individuals in Ohio who are LGBTQ continue to face legal discrimination in Ohio based on their sexual orientation and identification. Ohio continues to allow this discrimination in housing and employment. HUD published the first report in May of 2013 on this subject,<sup>44</sup> and it is one of many areas where the state should strive to better understand how inequality is playing out.

SPOTLIGHT ON

### AFRICAN AMERICAN INFANT MORTALITY

**38<sup>th</sup> out of 40**

*in the nation of states reporting African American Infant Mortality.*



In 2014, Ohio's African American infant mortality rate was 170% greater than that of Ohio's white children,<sup>2</sup> and Ohio's African American infant mortality rate was 20% greater than the national average. Of states with data reported, only Kansas and Wisconsin had a higher infant mortality rate among African Americans than Ohio.<sup>1</sup> Ohio's goal by 2020 is to reduce infant mortality for all races to a rate of 6.0.<sup>3</sup> This is a sad example of how far we have to go to achieve equality.



## EDUCATION INEQUALITY

**OUTCOMES FOR BLACK AND LOW-INCOME STUDENTS ARE JUST SOME OF THE DIVIDES WE SEE IN EDUCATION. EXAMPLES INCLUDE:**

### OHIO'S AFRICAN AMERICAN GRADUATION RATE IS NOTABLY LOW

For the 2013–14 school year, Ohio's African American students were 24% less likely to graduate from high school than their white counterparts, and 10% less likely to graduate from high school than African Americans in the nation (72.5% to 62.7%). Only 4 states and Washington DC had a lower African American graduation rate.<sup>20</sup>

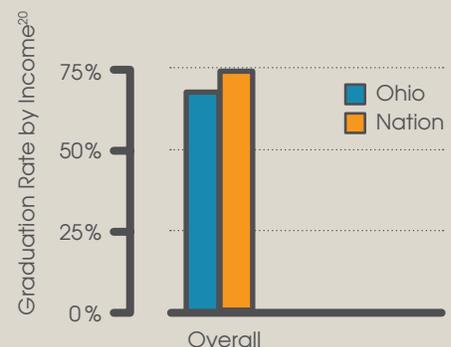
### THE VALUE OF A COLLEGE DEGREE DEPENDS ON THE COLOR OF YOUR SKIN

A white worker is 41% more likely to earn a bachelor's degree than an African American.<sup>43</sup> The economic return on that degree is also unequal. A white worker will earn 23.5% more than an African American when both have bachelor's degrees. Among workers with only a high school education, the median wage of a white worker is 16% higher than the median wage for a black worker.<sup>38</sup>

SPOTLIGHT ON

### GRADUATION RATE BY INCOME

**36th**  
*in the nation.*



Ohio ranks 36th for graduation rate among economically disadvantaged students (69.2%) compared to our overall graduation rate of 81.8%. The national average for economically disadvantaged students is 74.6%.<sup>20</sup> It is said that an education is the key to eradicating poverty, but how can we eradicate poverty through education when you need income to graduate?



# ECONOMY & EMPLOYMENT INEQUALITY

**INEQUALITY IN OUR ECONOMY IS BECOMING HARDER AND HARDER TO IGNORE. HERE ARE SOME OF THE AREAS WORTH A SECOND LOOK:**

## RACE AND MEDIAN WAGES.

In 2014, the median wage of African Americans in Ohio was \$12.81 an hour compared to \$16.87 for whites — a difference of about 32%. However, in 1979, that same gap was only about 10%. Since 1979, the median wage of African Americans has fallen 20% compared to a drop of 3.7% for whites.<sup>38</sup> So, while the median wage for white Ohioans has declined some over the past generation, it is a much smaller decline than the drop for African Americans.

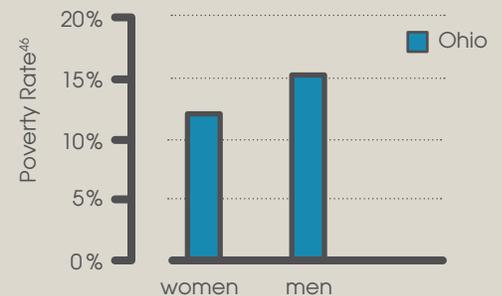
## JOB GROWTH IS UNEQUAL.

Among African Americans, job growth has remained sluggish. The African American unemployment rate is 11.0% compared to 4.3% for white Ohioans. Ohio has the 8th worst African American unemployment rate in the nation, and an African American Ohioan is 156% more likely to be unemployed than a white Ohioan.<sup>45</sup>

SPOTLIGHT ON

## WOMEN'S POVERTY

**28th**  
*in the nation.*



Ohio has the 28th lowest poverty rate for women and women are 32% more likely than men to live in poverty. Women continue to face discrimination in the workplace, despite obtaining more bachelor's degrees since the 1980s.

# METHODOLOGY

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## OUR EXECUTIVE SUMMARY RANKING SYSTEM: THUMBS

A thumbs up (👍) was given for national rankings where Ohio performed better than half of the states. A thumbs down (👎) was given when Ohio was below the national average. However, settling for middle of the pack should not be acceptable on many of these indicators. We are disappointed when The Ohio State University football team is ranked 25<sup>th</sup>, we should not settle for a similar ranking for things as important as high school graduation or poverty rates.

## WHY THESE METRICS?

The data points selected from the hundreds of possibilities attempted to address issues that everyday Ohioans see and feel - quality of life issues that impact all of us and should be the way we know if our state is being successful. People wonder if they'll be able to afford a home, if our neighbors have enough to eat, and what is happening with our schools. These statistics are by no means completely inclusive of all the intricacies of data that reflect on a particular issue. These metrics are intended to paint a "big picture" view of Ohio. Also, as noted in the Executive Summary, we sought metrics that would allow us to put Ohio in context with the country.

## NOTES ON THE DATA USED

Data can be used to shed a lot of light or to confuse and mislead the reader. With the data points selected, we attempted to demonstrate the most basic definition with the most commonly used statistic on that measure. Definitions of the statistic are incorporated into each page to explain what the statistic means. For some measures, Ohio and other states differ slightly or changes indicated over time might be small. Most data sets we referenced indicated the level of statistical confidence and statistical significance in their footnotes. If you are looking for a more mathematical understanding of these data points, we encourage you to look to the original data sources for their analysis.

## WHAT IS A YEAR?

Because of calculation limitations, some annual data is released toward the end of the following year. So, while data may say 2014, it is the most current data available. Other data sets are averages over a period of time (such as 2011–2014). This is often done to avoid statistical anomalies that can occur in a given snapshot. To the best of our ability, we compared similar time frames. Three main years are used in this data and mentioned throughout: Ohio's fiscal year (July 1–June 30), the calendar year (January 1–Dec. 31), and the school year (August–June).

# SOURCES

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# RECOGNITIONS

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Clintonville for Change

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Ohio AFL-CIO

Ohio Alliance for Retired Americans

Ohio Association of Community Action Agencies (OACAA)

Ohio Association of Free Clinics

Ohio Association of Professional Fire Fighters (OAPFF)

Ohio Association of School Business Officials (OASBO)

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Ohio Domestic Violence Network (ODVN)

Ohio Education Association (OEA)

Ohio Environmental Council

Ohio Farmers Union

Ohio Federation of Teachers (OFT)

Ohio National Organization for Women (NOW)

Ohio Organizing Collaborative (OOC)

Ohio Partners for Affordable Energy (OPAEE)

Ohio Poverty Law Center

Ohio School Boards Association (OSBA)

Ohio Student Association (OSA)

Ohio Voice

Ohio Voter Fund

Ohio Votes

Ohio Youth Voices

Organize! Ohio

Over-the-Rhine Community Housing

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