

**POOR PEOPLE'S**

DR. KING

**CAMPAIGN**

**NEWS**



## **THIS IS WHY WE FIGHT!**

- The federal poverty line is \$11,892 for individuals and \$23,836 for a family of four.
- The official poverty rate is 14.5%, meaning 45.3 million people in the US live in poverty, up by over 8 million since 2008. An additional 97.3 million (33%) of people living in the United States are low-income, defined as incomes below twice the federal poverty line, or \$47,700 for a family of four. Taken together, this means that 48% of the US population is poor or low income, 1 in every 2 people.
- More than 1 in 5 children in America (21.8%) are living under the official poverty line. Half of all children will be on food stamps before they turn 20, including 9 out of 10 African American children.
- A study measuring "economic insecurity" found that 4 out of 5 (79%) of people in the US live in danger of poverty or unemployment at some point in their lifetime (defined as a year or more of periodic joblessness, reliance on government aid such as food stamps or income below 150 percent of the poverty line).
- The top 1% of the US population owns 43% of wealth (\$24.4 trillion); the top 5% of the population owns 72% of wealth (\$40.8 trillion); the bottom 80% of the population owns 7% of wealth (\$3.9 trillion).
- Globally the richest 1% have seen their share of wealth increase from 44% in 2009 to 48% in 2014. If this trend continues, in 2016 they will own more wealth than the other 99% combined. The top 80 people have more wealth than 3.5 billion people.
- Nearly 1 in 3 Native Americans (29.2%), over 1 in 4 African Americans (27.2%), 1 in 4 Hispanic/Latinos (23.5%), 1 in 10 Asians (10.5%) and 1 in 10 non-Hispanic whites (9.6%) live below the federal poverty line.
- More than half of all children below the poverty line live in families headed by women. Two-thirds of minimum wage earners are women. One in seven women lives below the poverty line.
- 60% of all jobs created between 2008 and 2012 paid the minimum wage. 25% of retail clerks have a college degree.
- For every 4 unemployed people there is 1 job available. 1 in 3 veterans (30.2%) ages 18 to 24 are unemployed.
- The minimum wage today—\$7.25—is worth \$2.00 less than in 1968. In 2011, a full-time year-round worker needed to earn \$11.06 an hour to keep a family of four above the federal poverty line.
- Only 25% of lost manufacturing jobs went to workers overseas; most were replaced by new technology.
- 62.1% of all bankruptcies in 2007 were due to medical debt and three-quarters of them had health insurance.
- 1 in 6 (47.5 million) people received food stamps in April 2013, while 30% of food in the US, worth about \$48.3 billion, is wasted each year.
- 11 million or 23% of all residential mortgages are in a condition of negative equity, meaning they owe more on their mortgage than their property is worth.
- The home foreclosure rate in 2009 was over 10,000 per day.
- A record 14 million (1 in 9) US homes are vacant, yet 3.5 million people experience homelessness each year and 39% of them are children.

Source: Kairos: The Center for Religions, Rights, and Social Justice.  
<https://kairoscenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/Poverty-Fact-Sheet-Feb-2015-final.pdf>