

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

September 29, 2016

New Data Show Strong Income Growth, Falling Poverty, and Rising Health Insurance Coverage in Montana

Recent data released by the Census Bureau shows the remarkable progress that American families have made as the recovery continues to strengthen. Nationwide, real median household income grew \$2,800, or 5.2 percent in 2015, the fastest growth on record. Income grew for households across the income distribution, with the fastest growth among lower- and middle-income households. The number of people in poverty fell by 3.5 million, with the largest one-year drop in the overall poverty rate since 1968 and even larger improvements for African Americans, Hispanic Americans, and children. Furthermore, every State has seen declines in its uninsured rate since 2013 as the major coverage provisions of the Affordable Care Act have taken effect.

Solid employment growth and robust real wage growth so far in 2016 point to further growth in household incomes. To build on this progress, the President will continue to push Congress to take steps to further strengthen job creation and wage growth, including increasing investments in infrastructure, raising the Federal minimum wage, expanding the Earned Income Tax Credit for workers without dependent children, and passing the high-standards Trans-Pacific Partnership.

The Census Bureau's new data also show the significant economic progress in Montana in 2015. Some key findings include:

- **Real median household income grew by 6.7 percent for households in Montana, or the equivalent of \$3,123.**
 - The Billings and Great Falls metro areas saw the fastest gains within the State, with typical households' incomes rising 11.9 percent and 8.0 percent, respectively.
- **In 2015, 6,700 people were lifted out of poverty in Montana and the poverty rate fell by 0.8 percentage points.**
- **From 2013 to 2015, as the major provisions of the Affordable Care Act were implemented, the uninsured rate in Montana fell from 16.5 percent to 11.6 percent.**
- **This progress in 2015 in part reflects the continued strengthening of the recovery, especially job creation.**
 - Since early 2010, Montana's economy has added 33,100 jobs, and the unemployment rate in Montana has fallen from a Great Recession peak of 7.4 percent to 4.3 percent as of August 2016.