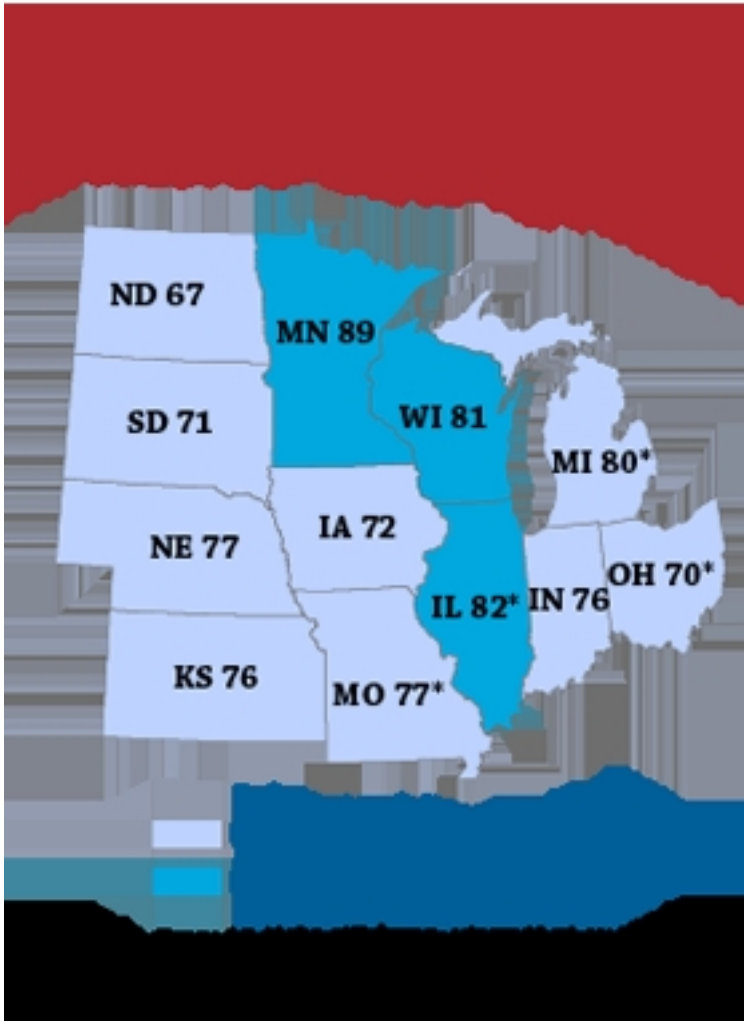


Minimum wage earners must work 89 hours per week to afford modest apartment in Minnesota

Written by
Tuesday, 26 March 2013 10:09



According to a national report released today, a minimum wage earner in Minnesota would have to work 89 hours per week – or hold 2.2 full time jobs -- to afford a modest two-bedroom apartment. Of the twelve states in the Midwest, Minnesota has ranked the worst for affordability for minimum wage workers for three consecutive years.

However, if \$9.50 per hour minimum wage legislation were passed in Minnesota, as has been proposed, the state would move from the worst position in the Midwest for low wage workers for housing affordability to the second best. Yet even with this new wage, affording a 2-bedroom apartment would require a minimum worker to work 68 hours a week.

The Minnesota Out of Reach 2013 report was released jointly by the National Low Income Housing Coalition (NLIHC), a Washington, D.C.-based housing policy organization, and the Minnesota Housing Partnership. The report provides rental affordability data for every state, metro area, and county in the US.

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 \$16.08 per hour, 40 hours a week, all year long. By contrast, the typical renter household in Minnesota earns the equivalent of \$14.09 per hour for a worker. Federal minimum wage pays only \$7.25 per hour.

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Kris Jacobs, of the JOBS NOW Coalition, said, "This report underscores the urgency of raising the minimum wage in Minnesota. It is a tragedy that low-wage workers need to work 89 hours per week just to afford a place to live."

Chip Halbach, Executive Director of Minnesota Housing Partnership added, "When housing is unaffordable to renters, stress and limited budgets take a toll on children and their families. Strategic investments in housing and homelessness programs by Minnesota lawmakers can minimize the harm caused by high and rising rents throughout the state."

An estimated 55% of renters in Minnesota do not earn enough to afford a two-bedroom unit at the "fair market rent" where they live.

More Minnesota Out of Reach Facts:

- **Twin Cities metro rents are the most expensive.** A modest two-bedroom apartment requires a full time worker to earn \$17.69 per hour year-round -- the most expensive in the state.
- **The counties least affordable to renters**, given the incomes they earn, are distributed throughout Minnesota (see map below). The counties with the highest estimated percent of renters unable to afford a modest two-bedroom apartment are Mahnomon (70% unable to afford), Winona (68%), Carlton (68%), Lake of the Woods (68%), Wadena (66%), and St. Louis County (62%). In the 7-County Metro, the county least affordable to the renters living there is Ramsey (60%).

See additional Minnesota maps and data from MHP for Out of Reach 2013 at <http://mhponline.org/publications/reports-and-research/reports>

See national data, analysis, and maps from NLIHC at <http://www.nlihc.org/oor/2013/>

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