



SURVEY: 75% of Americans Concerned About Losing Housing

New research by The NHP Foundation also finds 40% of Americans fear losing a job will render them homeless

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With the August Jobs Report cited as the "worst month for job gains" of the year, The NHP Foundation, a not-for-profit provider of service-enriched affordable housing, polled 1000 Americans to gauge their feelings about housing and job security. The survey's highlights include the following:

75% of Americans are concerned about losing housing.

When asked how concerned Americans are that they or a friend or relative could lose housing, 30% consider themselves "very concerned", 27% are "concerned" and another 19% are "somewhat concerned." Eighty-three percent of respondents are concerned about housing costs in America overall.

Over 65% of Americans are "cost-burdened."

Affordable housing is housing for which occupants pay no more than 30% of their income. Those who spend more than that on rent or a mortgage are considered cost-burdened; over 65% of Americans put themselves in that category.

80% welcome more affordable housing in their communities.

With this many Americans feeling "cost-burdened," it's no surprise that 80% welcome affordable housing. Nearly 40% of those polled welcome affordable housing simply because "everyone deserves" it, while twenty-five percent cite the opportunity for "people to live in the community where they work." Nearly 20% agree that affordable housing lets a wider range of individuals share a community, and 16% acknowledge affordable housing's ability to revitalize neighborhoods.

Only 20% of those polled were unlikely to welcome affordable housing in their neighborhoods. The NHP Foundation President and CEO Dick Burns attributes this to "an outdated concept of affordable housing." He adds, "Today's affordable housing is comprised of new and upgraded garden apartments and high-rises; amenity-laden developments that look nothing like 'projects' of the past."

Onsite financial education and workforce development programs rank highest.

Amenities that attend to life improvement needs and goals have become a critical component of high-quality affordable housing. The survey asked respondents to rank such services on a scale of 1-5, with "1" being "most likely" to improve quality of life.

- ▶ "Financial education" and "workforce development programs" had the highest number of "1" rankings (25.82% and 27.5 respectively)
- ▶ "After-school and summer youth programs" (20% ranked number 1)
- ▶ "Fitness and health programs" (14.5% ranked number 1)
- ▶ "Community building social events" (12% ranked number 1)

"Clearly a majority of Americans consider financial wellness 'job one'," said NHPF VP of Resident Services, Ken White. "This finding reinforces the need for affordable housing providers to offer a wealth of onsite educational and other services."

Nearly 40% of respondents fear job loss will lead to loss of housing.

In addition, those polled also felt that the following could lead to a loss of housing: Perceived lack of affordable options (28%), increased rents (24%) and retirement (21%).

"Job loss is the top concern to those who fear losing their housing; the two go hand-in-hand," added Burns.

Despite these fears, CEO Burns is buoyed by the positive attitudes of survey respondents about affordable housing, adding, "It all starts with housing. Without the underpinning of a secure place to live, it's nearly impossible for an individual or head of household to find and keep a job and provide for themselves and their loved ones."

To that end, The NHP Foundation is looking to increase its construction and preservation of affordable housing units substantially this year.

About The NHP Foundation

Headquartered in New York City with offices in Washington, DC, and Chicago, IL, The NHP Foundation (NHPF) was launched on January 30, 1989, as a publicly supported 501(c)(3) not-for-profit real estate corporation. NHPF is dedicated to preserving and creating sustainable, service-enriched multifamily housing that is both affordable to low and moderate income families and seniors, and beneficial to their communities. NHPF also provides a robust resident services program to nearly 18,000 community residents. Through partnerships with major financial institutions, the public sector, faith-based initiatives, and other not-for-profit organizations, NHPF has 36 properties located in Connecticut, District of Columbia, Florida, Illinois, Louisiana, Maryland, Massachusetts, Missouri, New Jersey, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Texas and Virginia.