



New Survey Shows 75 Percent of Americans Concerned About Losing Housing

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 percent of Americans are concerned about losing housing.

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

Over 65 percent of Americans are “cost-burdened.”

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

80 percent welcome more affordable housing in their communities.

With this many Americans feeling “cost-burdened,” it’s no surprise that 80 percent welcome affordable housing. Nearly 40 percent 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 percent agree that affordable housing lets a wider range of individuals share a community, and 16 percent acknowledge affordable housing’s ability to revitalize neighborhoods.

Only 20 percent 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 The NHP Foundation President and CEO Dick Burns attributes this to “an outdated concept of affordable housing.”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 percent and 27.5 respectively)
- “After-school and summer youth programs” (20 percent ranked number 1)
- “Fitness and health programs” (14.5 percent ranked number 1)
- “Community building social events” (12 percent ranked number 1)

“Clearly a majority of Americans consider financial wellness ‘job one’,” says 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 percent 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 percent), increased rents (24 percent) and retirement (21 percent).

“Job loss is the top concern to those who fear losing their housing; the two go hand-in-hand,” adds 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.

For more information, visit www.nhpfoundation.org.