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Arkansas

Delaware

District of Columbia

Florida

Georgia

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Louisiana

Maryland

Mississippi

Missouri

North Carolina

Oklahoma

South Carolina

Tennessee

Texas

Virginia

West Virginia

**SOUTHERN BUSINESS LEADERSHIP COUNCIL
DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA METRO AREA
EMPLOYER INITIATIVE
Project Report**



July 2006

MISSION STATEMENT

The Southern Institute on Children and Families is an independent, non-profit organization that improves the well-being of children and families through knowledge, leadership and action. We educate through research of policies, systems and practices. We generate greater awareness and equip community and business leaders and policymakers with knowledge to make informed decisions. The Southern Institute on Children and Families is funded through grants and contributions. The southern states included in the work of the Southern Institute on Children and Families are:

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Kentucky
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Mississippi
Missouri
North Carolina
Oklahoma
South Carolina
Tennessee
Texas
Virginia
West Virginia

While the primary focus of the Southern Institute on Children and Families is on the South, the Southern Institute directs national programs related to its mission.



**Southern Business Leadership Council
DC Metro Area Employer Initiative
Project Report**

Prepared For

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Washington Area Women's Foundation

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**Southern Business Leadership Council
DC Metro Area Employer Initiative
Project Report
July 2006**

Executive Summary

Employer voices are critical to the development of actions needed in both the public and private sectors to promote stable employment in the lower-income workforce. While there is substantial research available on the perspectives of lower-income workers related to barriers to employment stability, there is little information available on employer views. Engaging employers in sharing their perspectives and their ideas regarding solutions will significantly strengthen the development of action strategies. Also, involvement of employers will greatly enhance the momentum for significant public and private sector action that will mutually benefit employees, businesses and communities as a whole.

The Southern Institute on Children and Families is a non-profit organization that works to improve opportunities for lower-income families and children, with a focus on 17 southern states and the District of Columbia (DC).¹ The Southern Institute established the Southern Business Leadership Council (SBLC) to lead a regional initiative to engage business and public policy leaders in the development and implementation of comprehensive solutions to societal issues that impede stable employment of the lower-wage workforce.

The DC Metro Area Employer Initiative is an important component in the development of the *Southern Business Leadership Council (SBLC) Employment Stability Action Plan*. The DC Metro Area Employer Initiative also yielded pertinent information that can be used immediately by DC Metro Area businesses, foundations, community organizations and public policymakers in assessing workforce stability issues and developing strategies to improve employment stability among lower-wage workers.

The Southern Institute is conducting additional employer projects to gather insights from employers in several southern communities, as was done in the DC Metro Area. The information collected from the DC Metro Area Project and from other southern communities will contribute to the development of the *SBLC Employment Stability Action Plan*. Upon completion of all projects, the Southern Institute will prepare a synthesis report for the SBLC of the information collected on employer perspectives related to the barriers to employment stability of the lower-wage workforce and promising strategies to address the barriers.

The *SBLC Employment Stability Action Plan* will identify public actions, private sector actions and public/private partnerships needed to address identified issues and opportunities, and it will include employment stability action strategies that are central to workforce development, retention and economic development plans. It will provide summaries on public and private

¹ The southern states included in the work of the Southern Institute on Children and Families are Alabama, Arkansas, Delaware, District of Columbia, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Mississippi, Missouri, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia and West Virginia.

sector promising practices that can be replicated in communities across the South and the nation and contacts for information on design and implementation.

High profile dissemination and promotion of the *SBLC Employment Stability Action Plan* is planned for 2008 through business, civic and public policy networks. All business and trade organizations that assisted with the SBLC employer research projects will receive the *SBLC Employment Stability Action Plan* when released. The *SBLC Employment Stability Action Plan* will provide a roadmap for business, community and public policy leaders in 17 southern states and the District of Columbia to improve employment stability in the lower-income workforce.

This report presents findings from the SBLC DC Metro Area Employer Initiative. The report describes employer perspectives on issues related to lower-wage employment stability gathered through DC Metro Area employer interviews and provides summary information on employer views collected during the DC Metro Area Employer Open Dialogue Session held in Washington, DC. The Appendices provide demographic data and other information related to the DC Metro Area Employer Initiative. Some of the findings are included in the sections below.

DC Metro Employer Survey Results

A sample group of employers located in the DC Metro Area, which included counties in southern Maryland and northern Virginia and the District of Columbia, were surveyed via telephone interviews. The survey was designed to gauge employer views regarding work/life issues of their lower-wage employees that may impede employment stability.

Employee Attendance and/or Tardiness

More than one-third (39.2%) of survey respondents *agreed* that they experience problems with employee attendance and/or tardiness.

- 64.3%[◇] of small businesses *disagreed* that attendance and/or tardiness is a problem.
- 66.7%[◇] of large businesses *agreed* that their business experiences problems with employee attendance and/or tardiness

Employers were more likely to indicate that employees in their business are late or miss work because of issues related to employees' health or the health of the employee's family member(s).

- Child care was stated by 50%[◇] of large businesses as a major reason employees in their business are late or miss work.

[◇] Statistically significant at the 90% level

Employee Turnover

Employers with a retention problem were more likely to *agree* that employees leave their business to become employed with another business paying higher wages, offering better benefits and better advancement opportunities.

- Small businesses were more likely to *disagree* that their business experiences problems with employee turnover because employees seek better benefits and advancement opportunities.

Employee Health Benefits

More than two-thirds (68.6%) of all survey respondents offer health insurance.

- 61.9% of small businesses offer health insurance to employees.
- 100%* of large businesses offer health insurance to employees.

Of small businesses that do not offer health insurance the most commonly stated reason for not offering the benefit was cost – too expensive – followed by not enough employees.

DC Metro Employer Open Dialogue Session

The DC Metro Employer Open Dialogue Session was held on April 25, 2006, in Washington, DC. The purpose of the DC Metro Employer Open Dialogue Session was to gain insight on employer perceptions of barriers to employment stability in the lower-wage workforce, strategies they have tried to improve employment stability and recommendations for public and private sector actions and public/private partnerships to improve employment stability in the lower-wage workforce. DC Metro employers attending the dialogue session shared their perceptions on issues that affect the ability of lower-wage employees in their workplace to be stable and reliable employees. Some of the employment stability issues identified by employers, which are described in greater detail in the DC Metro Employer Open Dialogue Session section of this report, are listed below:

- Lack of affordable housing in the District of Columbia drives relocations that lead to long commutes and less family time
- Some lower-income employees cannot afford to take advantage of health benefits offered by their employer
- Public benefit application and eligibility renewal requirements interfere with attendance at work
- Lack of basic life skills contributes to absenteeism, tardiness and unreliability
- Working multiple jobs affects employment stability

Employers participating in the DC Metro Employer Open Dialogue Session also were asked to share their thoughts and recommendations on public and private sector actions that can be taken

* Statistically significant at the 95% level

to improve employment stability in the lower-wage workforce. Some of the employer recommendations are listed below:

- Look for ways to form partnerships to improve access to health coverage benefits
- Create relevant messages that engage business leaders to take action to improve employment stability
- Communicate with human resources staff and supervisors about issues and actions that can be taken related to employment stability

The last section of this *SBLC DC Metro Area Employer Initiative Project Report* summarizes next steps. For additional information on the Southern Institute and the SBLC, please visit www.thesoutherninstitute.org.

Introduction

Economic development plans in the southern region of the United States have given little attention to the need for comprehensive public and private sector actions to build the capacity of lower-wage workers, particularly parents, to be stable employees. Investments in education and training are essential, but there also must be recognition of the “off-the-job” challenges that can and do negatively impact job performance and employment stability of lower-wage workers.

Providing greater opportunities for lower-wage workers to achieve employment stability requires business and public policy leaders to actively and effectively collaborate on development and implementation of policies and programs that will mutually benefit lower-wage employees, businesses and communities as a whole. Business, public and civic leaders who are armed with a strategic plan of action will achieve far reaching economic and societal gains.

The Southern Institute on Children and Families is a non-profit organization that works to improve opportunities for lower-income families and children, with a focus on 17 southern states and the District of Columbia (DC).¹ The Southern Institute established the Southern Business Leadership Council (SBLC) to lead a regional initiative to engage business and public policy leaders in the development and implementation of comprehensive solutions to societal issues that impede stable employment of the lower-wage workforce. The SBLC is chaired by the Honorable Richard W. Riley, former United States Secretary of Education, former South Carolina Governor and Southern Institute Board Member. SBLC members represent southern-based businesses, corporate philanthropy and local, state and national business organizations. A listing of SBLC members appears in Appendix D.

The SBLC is currently developing the *SBLC Employment Stability Action Plan*, which will provide specific public and private sector strategies to promote stable employment in the lower-income workforce. The first phase of the SBLC Employment Stability Action Plan Initiative is focused on research. Research activities began in December 2005 and will continue into 2007. The research phase will be followed by the development of the *SBLC Employment Stability Action Plan* and promotion of its recommendations through business, civic and public policy networks.

The southern region of the United States is the nation’s target area for investment of resources aimed at improving opportunities for lower-wage employees. Some of the employment statistics that point to the need for leadership and action are:

- One out of five southern workers lives below 200% of the federal poverty level (\$33,200 annual income for a family of three in 2006).
- Southern per capita wages are the lowest in the nation.
- Labor turnover rates are higher in the South than the national average.
- More than one out of four lower-wage workers in the South work in retail trade, an industry with high turnover and low rates of health insurance coverage.

¹ The southern states included in the work of the Southern Institute on Children and Families are Alabama, Arkansas, Delaware, District of Columbia, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Mississippi, Missouri, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia and West Virginia.

- The South's generally low unemployment rate is misleading because it is affected by lower than average labor force participation.

The children of lower-wage workers in the South will benefit greatly from efforts to improve the employment stability of their parents thereby enhancing their opportunities for child development. Conditions placing children in the South at risk include:

- Eleven (11) southern states and the District of Columbia have a higher percentage of children living in poverty than the nation as a whole.
- Nine southern states and the District of Columbia have a greater percentage of fourth-grade students reading below grade level than the rest of the nation.
- Nearly half (46%) of all lower-income uninsured children in the United States live in the South.

Employers are key players in achieving bold action at the local, state and national levels to promote greater employment stability in the lower-wage workforce. Establishing effective partnerships with business and industry is essential. Providing employers with information they can use is an important building block in creating effective partnerships. Employers especially want information on promising practices they can implement in the workplace and they also are interested in having information on how they can encourage action in the public sector to improve employment stability, especially among lower-income parents and caretakers.

Development of comprehensive employment stability action strategies begins with research and analysis. While there is substantial research available on the perspectives of lower-income workers related to barriers to employment stability, there is little information available on employer views. Engaging employers in sharing their perspectives and their ideas regarding solutions will significantly strengthen the development of action strategies. Also, involvement of employers will greatly enhance the momentum for significant public and private sector action that will mutually benefit employees, businesses and communities as a whole.

DC Metro Area Employer Initiative

The Southern Institute on Children and Families received support from the Annie E. Casey Foundation and the Washington Area Women's Foundation to conduct the DC Metro Area Employer Initiative described in this report. The District of Columbia, Maryland and Virginia are included in the Southern Institute's primary geographic focus described on the previous page. The DC Metro Area Employer Initiative engaged local employers in the identification of issues related to employment stability and captured their views on opportunities for improvement.

The District of Columbia has a high concentration of businesses that have the highest rates of employee turnover – leisure and hospitality, health, retail and construction. The DC Metro Area also has a high percentage of lower-income families who fall within the target group that will benefit from implementation of employment stability action strategies. Data on the District of Columbia illustrates a compelling need to identify and address actions that will promote employment stability in the lower-wage workforce:

- 48% of families are lower-income (\$33,200 annual income for a family of three).

- 40.6% of families with a female head of household and children under 18 years old live below poverty (\$16,600 annual income for a family of three).
- 64% of low-income families have at least one parent who is employed full-time or part-time.
- 32% of all workers in the DC Metro earn at or below the median hourly wage of \$18.39.

This *DC Metro Area Employer Initiative Project Report* contributes information to support efforts in the DC Metro Area to improve employment stability in the lower-wage workforce, particularly parents. It also provides valuable information for the Southern Business Leadership Council (SBLC) in its development of the *SBLC Employment Stability Action Plan*. The Southern Institute will conduct employer research projects similar to the DC Metro Area Employer Initiative in several other southern communities. Upon completion of all projects, the Southern Institute will prepare a synthesis on the employment stability barriers and strategies collected from the employer research projects, enabling the SBLC to have data from frontline employers as it develops the *SBLC Employment Stability Action Plan*. The *SBLC Employment Stability Action Plan* will provide a blueprint for public and private leaders across the southern region to enact progressive policies and programs to promote employment stability in the lower-wage workforce. It also will provide the information business leaders and front line employers say they need on promising practices. Summaries of public and private sector promising practices that can be replicated in communities and states across the southern region and the nation will be included in the *SBLC Employment Stability Action Plan* and contacts will be provided for information on design and implementation of the promising practices.

This report presents findings from the DC Metro Area Employer Initiative. It describes employer perspectives on issues related to lower-wage employment stability gathered through DC Metro Area employer interviews and provides summary information on employer views collected during the DC Metro Area Employer Open Dialogue Session held in Washington, DC. The Appendices provide demographic data and other information related to the DC Metro Area Employer Initiative.

DC Metro Employer Survey Results

The District of Columbia (DC) Metro Employer Survey was conducted as a part of the Southern Business Leadership Council (SBLC) DC Metro Area Employer Initiative. A sampling of employers located in the DC Metro Area, which included counties in southern Maryland and northern Virginia and DC, were surveyed via telephone interviews. Employers were interviewed to gather their perspectives and insights on the barriers to employment stability and to identify potential promising practices and opportunities related to increasing employment stability in the lower-wage workforce.

Survey Instrument

The DC Metro Employer Survey instrument was developed by the Southern Institute on Children and Families. The questions were designed to gather information about work life issues faced by lower-wage employees from the perspective of their employers. Field tests were performed with employers outside of the DC Metro area and modifications to the questions and the design of the survey instrument were implemented based on the feedback provided. The type of questions included in the DC Metro Employer Survey fell into two categories.

The first category of questions was designed to gather demographic information about employers that were being interviewed. Respondents were asked to describe their role in the business and then to describe certain features about their business. The survey asked for demographic information such as the number of employees, the number of full-time and part-time employees, the business industry classification and occupation classification.

In addition, respondents were asked to indicate the percentage of their employees who were lower-wage workers. For the survey, lower-wage was defined as less than \$18.00 per hour. This amount was based on November 2004 Metropolitan Area Occupational Employment and Wage Estimates for the District of Columbia and parts of Virginia, Maryland and West Virginia collected by the US Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS). To define the baseline for lower-wage, the median hourly wage, which is \$18.39 for all occupations in metropolitan DC, was adopted. To simplify calculations and provide ease of answering for respondents, \$18.00 per hour was used for the survey instrument.

The survey also included one optional demographic question related to whether the business' workforce was unionized, not unionized, or partially unionized and partially non-unionized.

The second category of questions was designed to assess the extent to which a business had problems with the employment stability of its workforce and to assess the extent to which benefits were provided to employees, including referrals for assistance from public programs. Several questions were included regarding issues related to absenteeism, tardiness and turnover. Follow-up questions were asked in some instances to gather employers' impressions of why they did or did not have problems with employees reporting to work and doing so on time. Also, follow-up questions were asked about why employers did or did not have a turnover problem. In addition, respondents were asked to identify benefits and incentives that they make available to

employees. Additional questions were asked to gather more in-depth detail about the provision of health insurance.

Respondents were not required to identify themselves or their business names and were assured that survey responses will be kept confidential and no individual employer will be identified in reporting the data.

In an attempt to increase participation, respondents were given the opportunity to win an iPod by entering their name and contact information into a drawing. This identifying information about the respondents was used only for that purpose and identities are confidential.

Methodology

The Southern Institute contracted with MarketSearch, a Columbia, South Carolina based market research firm to perform telephone interviews using the survey instrument with employers in the DC Metro area. MarketSearch has extensive experience in designing and conducting studies for business, government and non-profit organizations worldwide.

MarketSearch obtained a random sample of 1,500 businesses in Washington, DC, Fairfax County, Montgomery County and Prince George's County using Standard Industrial Classification (SIC) codes provided by the Southern Institute (See Appendix C). These codes were selected based on the Southern Institute's knowledge and statistical data related to industries that are more likely to employ lower-wage workers.

MarketSearch staff dialed a total of 996 numbers between May 19 and May 30, 2006. Fifty-one telephone interviews were completed. Twenty-six respondents entered their names in the drawing to win the iPod.

Results Analysis

Demographics of Respondent Employers

Previous research commissioned by the Southern Institute provided a profile of the southern economy.

- The South has a low labor force participation rate.
- More than one out of four lower-income individuals work in Retail Trade – an industry with high turnover and low rates of health insurance coverage.
- Approximately one out of 60 lower-income workers in the South works for the government – an employer offering low rates of turnover and high rates of health insurance coverage.

- More than 40% of lower-income workers are employed in very small businesses where benefits are often scarce.

The results from the DC Metro Area Employer Survey show the following:

- Almost 20% of employers described their industry classification as Retail Trade.
- Approximately 14% of employers indicated their occupational classification was related to healthcare practitioner and technical occupations.
- Most (82.4%) of employers were for-profit organizations with a non-unionized employee workforce.
- More than three-fourths (82.4%) of the businesses have less than 50 employees, while 17.6% have 50 or more.
- More than one-third (39.2%) of businesses have no part-time employees and 33.3% have 5 or fewer who work part-time.
- Most businesses participating in the survey (51%) have no lower-wage workers or less than half of their staff earns lower wages.
- More than one-third (39.2%) of businesses have 50% or more of their workforce earning less than \$18.00 per hour.

Employee Attendance, Tardiness and Turnover

Lower-wage workers often face challenges that interfere with job stability, attendance and tardiness. Workforce related issues such as lack of stable child care and transportation can negatively impact employers of lower-income individuals. The challenges faced by lower-wage workers are reflected in high employee absenteeism, high turnover and low morale. Employee issues such as attendance, tardiness and turnover are stressful to families and contribute to higher training costs and lost productivity for businesses. Results from the DC Metro Employer Survey regarding attendance, tardiness and turnover issues are outlined below.

Employee Attendance and/or Tardiness

Employee absenteeism and tardiness can prove to be costly for employers. An annual survey on unscheduled absences conducted by CCH Inc. found that the average per-employee cost for unscheduled absenteeism is \$660. Absenteeism could cost some large employers as much as \$1 million a year. The high cost of employee absenteeism not only hurts individuals who risk losing their jobs but also can result in lost productivity, low morale and temporary labor costs for employers.

Findings:

- 39.2% of employers *agreed* that they experience problems with employee attendance and/or tardiness.
- 58.8% of employers *disagreed* that they experience problems with employee attendance and/or tardiness.
- 52.6%* of employers with 5 or more lower-wage workers *agreed* that they have an employee attendance and/or tardiness problem.
- 86.7%[◇] of employers with less than 5 lower-wage workers *disagreed* that employee attendance and/or tardiness is a problem.

Survey respondents who indicated they had an attendance and/or tardiness problem were asked to identify what they perceive as the major reasons their business experienced these problems.

- Employers were more likely to indicate that employees in their business are late or miss work because of issues related to employees' health or the health of the employees' family member(s).
- 60%* of employers with 5 or more lower-wage workers were significantly more likely to report health of a family member as a reason for attendance and/or tardiness problems.

Contrary to past research on workers in the South, employers in the DC Metro area were less likely to perceive that there is an attendance and/or tardiness problem with their employee workforce for reasons associated with child care, dependent adult care, transportation or housing. Some employers also raised the issue of irresponsibility and a lack of work ethics as other reasons why employees in their workplace are late or miss work.

Employee Turnover

High rates of turnover, absenteeism and staff vacancies have been identified as having a negative impact not only on the families of lower-wage workers but also on employers and consumers as well. Direct costs for replacing workers, which include recruitment, orientation, training and termination of the worker being replaced, are expensive. In a study of paraprofessional direct care workers, lower-wage workers in the health care industry, the estimated recurring annual cost of training due to direct care worker turnover was more than \$34 million. A commonly used conservative rule-of-thumb calculates the per worker cost of turnover at 25% of the employee's annual compensation amount. Using the 25% rule-of-thumb estimate would yield a total cost of turnover in the range of \$4,200 to \$5,200 per direct care worker.

Findings:

- Slightly more than one-fourth (25.5%) of respondents *agreed* that their business experiences difficulty retaining employees.

* Statistically significant at the 95% level

◇ Statistically significant at the 90% level

- Employers with a retention problem were more likely to *agree* that employees leave their business to become employed with another business paying higher wages, offering better benefits and better advancement opportunities.

Employers with retention issues were less likely to perceive that disciplinary problems, such as unacceptable work performance, are an issue for their employee workforce and contribute to employee turnover. Work hours also were less likely to be viewed by employers as an issue for their workforce. For those few employers who noted work hours as an issue related to employee turnover, irregular work hours and long work hours were stated as reasons for employee turnover in their business.

Major Reasons for High Employee Retention Among Respondent Businesses

The majority of DC Metro Employer Survey participants (64.7%) *disagreed* that their business experiences problems with employee turnover. These respondents also reported a low employee turnover rate. Forty-three percent (43.1%) reported a 0% employee turnover rate and 35.3% reported a 1%-24% employee turnover rate. These respondents offered the following explanations as to why they believe employee turnover is not a problem for their businesses.²

- 51.5% cited excellent work environment/team spirit/job satisfaction.
- 30.3% cited long-term dependable employees/loyalty.
- 18.2% cited flexible work options/hours and understanding about home issues.
- 15.2% responded small company/don't have that problem.
- 12.1% cited good pay.
- 6.1% cited good incentive programs and perks.
- 6.1% cited good benefits.
- 18.2% cited other reasons for their low employee turnover rates.

Benefits and Incentives Employers Made Available to Employees

Research shows that employee benefits and incentives are important to employee retention, morale and job satisfaction. Offering benefits to employees, particularly to part-time workers who are most likely to also be lower-wage workers, is increasing and serves as a turnover reduction tool for employers. Making benefits available to part-time workers can have a significant impact on retention, particularly in service occupations where there is a higher rate of lower-wage workers.

² The percentages add up to greater than 100% because employers indicated more than one explanation for why turnover is not a problem for their businesses.

The DC Metro Employer Survey responses about benefits and incentives offered to employees, as well as previous research done regarding the relationship between benefits, perks and employee retention, support the idea that offering benefits and incentives to employees can assist in increasing workforce retention. Listed below are benefits and incentives employers participating in the DC Metro Employer Survey made available to their employees.

TABLE 1	
DC Metro Employer Survey Results	
Benefits/Incentives Made Available to Employees	
Benefits/Incentives	Response Rate[~]
Health Insurance	68.6%
Paid Vacation	64.7%
Flexible Work Options	49.0%
Paid Sick Leave	39.2%
Pension/Retirement Plans	39.2%
Long-term Disability	31.4%
Tuition Reimbursement	31.4%
Short-term Disability	29.4%
Paid Maternity Leave	29.4%
Health Insurance for Dependents	29.4%
Investment Planning	19.6%
Employee Assistance Programs	15.7%
Cafeteria Plan/Flexible Spending Accounts	13.7%
Paid Paternity Leave	13.7%
Child Care	11.8%
Transportation	9.8%
Information About Public Benefits and Programs	7.8%
Paid Sick Dependent Leave	7.8%
Housing Assistance	5.9%
Advance Earned Income Tax Credit	3.9%
Adoption Assistance	3.9%
Dependent Adult Care	2.0%
Other	9.8%
Don't know	5.9%
None	7.8%
Source: Southern Institute on Children and Families. <i>SBLC DC Metro Employer Survey, 2006.</i>	
~Column 2 refers to the percent of all employers who responded to the question of what benefits/incentives they offered to their employees. Respondents were asked to choose all that they offer.	

Employee Benefit: Health Insurance

Employer-sponsored health insurance is one of the most commonly offered benefits to employees. Although employer-sponsored health care coverage is continuing to erode in America due to costs, this form of health insurance remains the primary way working families obtain health care coverage. Yet, lower-income families with at least one full-time worker are much less likely than middle-income families to receive employer-sponsored health insurance (49% versus 77%). DC Metro Employer Survey results are listed below.

Findings:

- Most (68.6%) employers offer health insurance as a benefit.
- A significant percentage (88.9% *) of employers with no lower-income workers report a 75%-100% participation rate in the company's health insurance plan.
- Almost one-third (31.4%) of employers surveyed do not offer health insurance, all of which are small businesses (less than 50 employees).
- A significant percentage (66.7% *) of small businesses with up to four lower-wage workers stated cost as the major reason for not offering health insurance to their workforce.

Of the employers offering health insurance:

- 42.9% indicated that all of their employees participate in the employer-sponsored plan.
- 17.1% of employers pointed out that their employees do not participate in the employer-provided health care coverage plan because they are enrolled in a health insurance plan offered through a family member's employer.
- 8.6% of employers indicated ineligibility of employee as a reason some employees do not participate in the employer-sponsored health care plan.
- 5.7% of respondents indicated cost (too expensive) as the reason employees do not participate in the employer-sponsored health care plan.
- 5.7% of employers indicated participation in public health insurance programs as a reason employees do not participate in the employer-sponsored health insurance plan.

Other reasons for not offering health insurance to employees include not enough employees and not enough participation from employees.

* Statistically significant at the 95% level

Business Size and Lower-Income Workforce Stability

In this report, small businesses are defined as businesses with less than 50 employees. Small scale cross analyses on whether there were any differences between employer responses based on the size of the business were conducted. Survey data from employers responding were grouped into two categories: 1) employers having less than 50 employees; and 2) employers having 50 or more employees.

Findings:

- 82.4% of the businesses participating in the study are small businesses (<50 employees).
- 17.6% of respondents are large businesses (50+ employees).
- 54.8% of small business respondents have less than 10 workers.
- 21.4% of the small business respondents are in the Retail Trade industry.
- 19% were classified as a part of the Health Care and Social Assistance industry.

Survey results from the DC Metro employer interviews do not align with findings from previous research on small businesses, including studies conducted by the Southern Institute. Previous research has shown that small businesses commonly pay lower wages, offer little or no benefits and often have part-time positions.

Findings:

- Of all the businesses participating in the study, small businesses were more likely to pay a wage greater than \$18.00 per hour.
 - Among participating small businesses 54.8% have none or less than half of their employees earning less than \$18.00 per hour.
 - About 40.5% of the small businesses have 50% or more employees earning lower wages.
- Most (42.9%) of participating small businesses have no part-time workers, 38.1%* have one to five and 19% have six or more who work part-time.
- About 56%* of large businesses have six or more part-time workers.

Additional survey findings based on business size for the DC Metro Employer Survey are reviewed on the following page.

* Statistically significant at the 95% level

Employee Attendance and/or Tardiness Based on Business Size

Findings:

- 64.3%[◇] of small businesses *disagreed* that attendance and/or tardiness is a problem for their workforce.
- 66.7%[◇] of large businesses *agreed* that their business experiences problems with employee attendance and/or tardiness.

The reasons cited by large businesses for employee attendance and/or tardiness problems were as follows.

- Health of a family member was cited as a major reason for attendance problems for employees according to 83.3%* of businesses.
- Child care was identified by 50%[◇] of employers as a major reason employees in their business are late or miss work.
- Transportation, housing and health of the employee were more likely to be indicated as reasons of employee attendance and/or tardiness problems.

Of those small businesses that indicated they had an employee attendance and/or tardiness problem, 53.3%[◇] gave other reasons. Lack of work ethics and sense of responsibility were cited most often by small businesses as the other reasons for attendance and/or tardiness problems in the workplace.

Almost two-thirds (64.3%[◇]) of small businesses *disagreed* that their business experiences attendance and/or tardiness problems.

- 37% of small businesses credited good employee attendance to an excellent work environment, a “like family” environment and job satisfaction.
- 33.3% of small businesses indicated that attendance is not a problem for their workforce because they are a small company.

Employee Turnover Based on Business Size

Unlike other research findings, all of the businesses in the DC Metro Area that responded to the survey were more likely to report high employee retention.

Findings:

- Almost 70% of small businesses *disagreed* that they have an employee turnover problem.
- Fifty percent (50%*) of small businesses reported having a 0% turnover rate.

[◇] Statistically significant at the 90% level

* Statistically significant at the 95% level

- Almost 78% * of large businesses reported a 1%-24% turnover rate.

Small and large businesses provided the following reasons for retention of their employees.

- 55.2% of small businesses cited excellent work environment/team spirit/job satisfaction.
- 34.5% of small businesses cited long-term/dependable/loyal employees.
- 50% [◊] of large businesses cited flexible work options.

Slightly more than one-fourth (25.5%) of all businesses participating in the study indicated that employee turnover was a problem for their workforce.

Findings:

- Small and large employers were more likely to *agree* that employees leave their business to become employed with another business paying higher wages.
- Small businesses were more likely to *disagree* that their business experiences problems with employee turnover because employees seek better benefits and advancement opportunities.
- Large businesses were more likely to *agree* that people leave for reasons of benefits and advancement opportunities.
- Small businesses were split on whether or not their business experiences problems with turnover because of disciplinary problems such as unacceptable work performance.
- Large businesses were more likely to *disagree* that disciplinary problems are a reason for turnover.
- Large businesses (60% *) were more likely to be unsure of whether work hours contributed to employee turnover.
- Small businesses were less likely to view work hours as a turnover problem for their workforce.

Benefits and Incentives Small and Large Businesses Made Available to Employees

The findings in this study are similar to other research that has shown that businesses with a greater number of employees usually make more benefits available to workers than businesses with fewer employees. Businesses with a large employee workforce usually offer more attractive and a greater range of employee benefits including retirement benefits and paid holidays and vacations. Businesses with few workers find themselves financially unable to match the benefits offered by large companies.

* Statistically significant at the 95% level

◊ Statistically significant at the 90% level

Data results from the DC Metro Employer Survey show that health insurance and paid vacation are two of the most frequently available benefits to employees from all size businesses.

Findings:

- 68.6% of all businesses offer health insurance.
- 64.7% of all businesses offer paid vacation time.

Although a large percentage of participating businesses of all sizes make health insurance and paid vacation available, there are differences between small and large businesses in the rate at which these benefits are offered.

- 61.9% of small businesses offer health insurance to employees.
- 100% *of large businesses offer health insurance to employees.
- A slightly smaller percentage of small businesses offer paid vacation to employees than large businesses.

Four (9.5%) small businesses did not offer any benefits to employees, whereas all of the large businesses offered one or more benefits to employees. Survey results also showed some statistically significant differences between the types of benefits large employers offer compared to small employers. These differences are outlined in Table 2 below.

TABLE 2 DC Metro Employer Survey Results Benefits/Incentives More Likely to be Offered by Large Businesses (50 or More Employees)		
Benefit/Incentive	Small Business Response Rate[~]	Large Business Response Rate[~]
Health Insurance	61.9%	100.0%*
Pension/Retirement Plans	33.3%	66.7% [◇]
Long-term Disability	23.8%	66.7%*
Tuition Reimbursement	23.8%	66.7%*
Short-term Disability	23.8%	55.6% [◇]
Health Insurance for Dependents	23.8%	55.6% [◇]
Investment Planning	14.3%	44.4% [◇]
Cafeteria Plan/Flexible Spending Accounts	7.1%	44.4%*
Source: Southern Institute on Children and Families. <i>SBLC DC Metro Employer Survey, 2006.</i> [~] Columns 2 and 3 refer to the percent of all employers who responded to the question of what benefits/incentives they offered to their employees. Respondents were asked to choose all that they offer.		

Table 4 in Appendix A shows all of the benefits and incentives participating small businesses made available to their employees by percentage of those responding.

* Statistically significant at the 95% level
 ◇ Statistically significant at the 90% level

Health Insurance Benefit

Businesses of all sizes are reducing the availability of health insurance to their employees due to growing costs associated with health care coverage. Studies reveal a strong association between business size and whether employees have health insurance coverage through their employer. Employees of businesses with few employees are at greatest risk for lacking employer-sponsored health care coverage. Further, lower-wage workers in all size businesses are at higher risk of being uninsured.

Results from the DC Metro Employer Survey, however, veered from what is usually observed about the relationship between business size, lower-wage workers and the availability of and participation in health insurance plans offered through employers. As previously indicated, 61.9% of small businesses participating in this study offer health insurance as a benefit to their employees.

In addition, all DC Metro respondents offering employer-sponsored health care, reported high participation rates in their employer-sponsored health insurance program. Although other research has found that rising health care costs are a number one concern for small businesses nationally, these costs do not appear to influence the small businesses in this survey from offering health care as a benefit. It also does not appear that costs deter employees from participating in the plans.

Of the 68.6% of employers that offer health insurance as a benefit:

- About 63% of the employers report an employee participation rate of 75%-100%.
- Almost 58% of small businesses have an employee participation rate of 75%-100%.
- The majority of large businesses also have high participation rates in the employer-sponsored health insurance plan.

For small businesses that do not offer health insurance the most commonly stated reason for not offering the benefit was cost – too expensive – followed by not enough employees.

DC Metro Employer Open Dialogue Session

The DC Metro Employer Open Dialogue Session was held on April 25, 2006, in Washington, DC. The Southern Institute on Children and Families worked in collaboration with DC area chambers of commerce and trade associations to recruit a mix of local employers to participate in the session. Five representatives of public and private businesses employing lower-wage workers participated in the dialogue.³ The Southern Institute commissioned a professional moderator to facilitate the employer discussion. The purpose of the DC Metro Employer Open Dialogue Session was to gain insight on employer perceptions of barriers to employment stability in the lower-wage workforce, strategies they have tried to improve employment stability and recommendations for public and private sector actions and public/private partnerships to improve employment stability in the lower-wage workforce.

This section summarizes the dialogue among employers participating in the DC Metro Employer Open Dialogue Session. The summary is presented by major themes and includes first-hand insights offered by the DC Metro employers in attendance.

Employer Perceptions of Employment Stability Issues Related to the Lower-Wage Workforce

DC Metro employers attending the dialogue session shared their perceptions of issues that affect the ability of lower-wage employees in their workplace to be stable and reliable employees. The issues are described below.

Lack of Affordable Housing in the District of Columbia Drives Relocations That Lead to Long Commutes and Less Family Time

Lower-wage employees living in the District of Columbia experience difficulties finding affordable housing. More lower-wage employees must move outside the District of Columbia to Prince George's and Prince William Counties to locate affordable housing. As lower-income people move outside of the District of Columbia to locate affordable housing, transportation becomes more of a problem. According to one participant, "They spend one to two hours one-way trying to commute to work... and they have less time with their children because they spend up to four hours a day commuting."

Lack of a Personal Support System Negatively Impacts Reliability

The support systems for lower-income parents are not what they used to be. When single parents do not have personal support available to help with unexpected personal and job-related events, the likelihood these employees will miss work or be unable to fulfill certain work requirements is much higher. An issue of particular concern is child care. One dialogue participant with knowledge of the child care industry stated that "During breaks when children aren't in school, people will take off from work or try to take their kids to work because they don't have another

³ DC Metro Employer Dialogue Session participants' identities are kept confidential.

option.” This employer also noted that when lower-income workers move outside of the District of Columbia, they lose public benefits they previously had been eligible to receive, such as the District of Columbia child care subsidy, and must apply in their new jurisdiction under different eligibility rules.

Some Lower-income Employees Do Not Place High Value on the Employer Benefits Package

There was agreement that some lower-wage workers are focused on the amount of the wage and don't place high value on benefits as part of a total compensation package. One participant said, “I counsel people and I say, ‘You’ll be making two dollars more an hour, but look at your benefits. Will you have insurance coverage? Are you going to earn leave if you need to take off because you or your children are sick?’” Some lower-wage workers tend to use their leave within the same period they earn it, which prevents them from accumulating enough leave for a time when they really need it. As one participant indicated, “They earn their leave and use it in the same period...they have these breaks in employment because they don't have sufficient leave to carry them over. It impacts their pensions. I don't think they understand that benefits are an investment and a hidden paycheck.”

Some Lower-income Employees Cannot Afford to Take Advantage of Health Benefits Offered by Their Employer

Even when benefits are offered, many lower-wage employees cannot afford to take advantage of them. For example, employers reported that many of their businesses' employees cannot afford to take advantage of the employer sponsored health insurance plans. One participant said, “What happens is we have so few people on the plan that it causes the rates to be higher...because some lower-income workers might have a family of five, it is expensive and they don't take it...I give them my talk about how you need to have health insurance. Either they go for the public coverage or go without it.”

Public Benefit Application and Eligibility Renewal Requirements Interfere with Attendance at Work

Many lower-income families are eligible for public benefits that support lower-wage workers and their children, such as health coverage through Medicaid or the State Children's Health Insurance Program, food stamps, child care subsidies, housing subsidies and more. Employees who receive these benefits are often required to take time off from work in order to gather required eligibility documents and to keep face-to-face appointments required to apply for or continue receiving benefits. This time away from work affects their job performance and productivity on the job. According to one dialogue participant, “Some workers receive Women, Infants and Children (WIC) nutrition benefits, health care coverage and housing subsidies and they are called off their jobs to come and fill out papers. The agencies think nothing about it as far as the employer is concerned.”

Negative Employee Work Attitudes Affect Job Performance

Several employers described employees who exhibit negative attitudes in the workplace that affect their work performance. Employers indicated that these employees lack the skills or experience to professionally handle communications with managers who are often direct in their communications about job expectations. One participant said, “All we are asking them to do is to come to work each day and do what we need them to do.”

Lack of Basic Life Skills Contributes to Absenteeism, Tardiness and Unreliability

Many lower-income workers lack basic life, time management and problem solving skills that could help them better manage their work and family life. The lack of these skills creates instability problems for employers and contributes specifically to absenteeism and tardiness. One participant shared, “...there are a whole lot of things pulling at them....A lot of them need basic life skills. Because you need to get to work on time, maybe you can prepare lunches the night before or set out clothes the night before.”

Working Multiple Jobs Affects Employment Stability

Many lower-wage employees work a second job to supplement the income of their primary job, which can leave them exhausted and impact their attendance and productivity. One employer noted that the existence of multiple jobs “impacts productivity where we are.”

Employer Recommendations to Improve Employment Stability

Employers participating in the DC Metro Employer Open Dialogue Session were asked to share their thoughts and recommendations on public and private sector actions that can be taken to improve employment stability in the lower-wage workforce. The employer recommendations are outlined below.

Look for Ways to Form Partnerships to Improve Access to Health Coverage Benefits

Bringing together organizations within a specific industry to collaborate on how they can offer benefits to their employees, such as health coverage, was recommended as an effective strategy. Within industry groups or through trade associations, employers can work together to provide health coverage benefits that they are unable to provide individually. Potential benefits of these partnerships include lower rates for employees and an increase in the number of employees who have insurance for themselves and their families.

Educate Employers About the Value of Providing Benefits for Lower-wage Workers

Dialogue participants pointed out the need to develop strategies to educate employers of lower-wage workers about the value of providing benefits, such as health insurance and paid leave, in the hiring and retention of employees. One participant shared, “When you offer a package to a

person that says ‘I care about you and I care about what goes on with you.’ I am finding the more you try to put those things in place the more stable your workforce becomes.”

Public Agencies Should Be More Aware of Business Productivity Issues When Requiring Lower-Wage Workers to Leave Work in Order to Apply for and Retain Benefits

Dialogue session participants recognized the value of public benefits in supporting lower-wage workers, but they also discussed the need for public agencies to be more aware of employer work hours when requiring documentation regarding eligibility status. They stressed that lower-income employees are in jobs where they may not get paid when they take time away from work to respond to public agency requirements. Employers stated that employees find it necessary to leave work to comply with eligibility requirements because they do not want to risk losing the benefits. One employer said, “If you have to go get WIC or your health care renewed, then that is a priority...survival for the family is the focus...”

Use Technology to Provide Information About Public Benefits

Dialogue session participants suggested that businesses could provide information to their lower-wage employees about the availability of public benefits. Dialogue session participants recommended that the public sector establish a central hub, such as a Web site that provides comprehensive information on all benefits available to lower-income working families. Such a Web site would be extremely helpful to both employers and employees.

Create Relevant Messages That Engage Business Leaders to Take Action to Improve Employment Stability

Dialogue session participants indicated that “putting a face on the issue” for the business community, in addition to the general public, can help them relate to the needs of lower-wage employees. Providing data on who is included in the lower-wage workforce, the issues and challenges faced by the lower-wage workforce, and collecting data that addresses the economic impact of lower-wage workers can be effective in communicating to public and private sector decision makers about employment stability issues. Engaging key leaders that can get others to listen has been used effectively by one participant to get the attention of business leaders.

Communicate with Human Resources Staff and Supervisors About Issues and Actions That Can Be Taken Related to Employment Stability

Dialogue session participants indicated that working with Human Resources (HR) staff and front-line supervisors is a potentially effective entry point to engage employers on the issues related to employment stability in the lower-wage workforce. Attending meetings of professional HR staff, trade associations and chambers of commerce were identified as venues for providing information on lower-wage workforce issues and actions that can be taken.

Next Steps

Employer voices are critical to the development of actions needed in both the public and private sectors to promote stable employment in the lower-income workforce. The DC Metro Area Employer Initiative yielded pertinent information that can be used immediately by DC Metro Area businesses, foundations, community organizations and public policymakers in assessing workforce stability issues and developing strategies to improve employment stability among lower-wage workers.

The DC Metro Area Employer Initiative is an important component in the development of the *Southern Business Leadership Council (SBLC) Employment Stability Action Plan*. The Southern Institute on Children and Families is conducting employer projects to gather insights from employers in several southern communities, as was done in the DC Metro Area. The information collected from the DC Metro Area Project and from other southern communities will contribute to the development of the *SBLC Employment Stability Action Plan*. Upon completion of all projects, the Southern Institute will prepare a synthesis report for the SBLC of the information collected on employer perspectives related to the barriers to employment stability of the lower-wage workforce and promising strategies to address the barriers.

The *SBLC Employment Stability Action Plan* will identify public actions, private sector actions and public/private partnerships needed to address identified issues and opportunities, and it will include employment stability action strategies that are central to workforce development, retention and economic development plans. It will provide summaries on public and private sector promising practices that can be replicated in communities across the South and the nation and contacts for information on design and implementation.

High profile dissemination and promotion of the *SBLC Employment Stability Action Plan* is planned for 2008 through business, civic and public policy networks. All business and trade organizations that assisted with the SBLC employer research projects will receive the *SBLC Employment Stability Action Plan* when released. The *SBLC Employment Stability Action Plan* will provide a roadmap for business, community and public policy leaders in 17 southern states and the District of Columbia to improve employment stability in the lower-income workforce.

For additional information on the Southern Institute and the SBLC, please visit www.thesoutherninstitute.org.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A
SELECT DC METRO EMPLOYER SURVEY DATA

TABLE 3		
DC Metro Employer Survey Results		
Percent of Workforce That is Lower-Wage (Earning Less Than \$18 Per Hour)		
Number of Employees	Number of Employees Earning Less Than \$18 Per Hour[~]	Percent of Employees Earning Less Than \$18 Per Hour[~]
1	1	100%
1	1	100%
3	3	100%
6	6	100%
7	7	100%
8	8	100%
30	30	100%
30	30	100%
40	39	98%
60	56	93%
20	18	90%
9	8	89%
5	4	80%
4,000	3,000	75%
40	28	70%
3	2	67%
12	8	67%
300	200	67%
32	20	63%
4	2	50%
7	3	43%
10	4	40%
3	1	33%
30	10	33%
4	1	25%
20	5	25%
25	5	20%
100	20	20%
6	1	17%
6	1	17%
19	2	11%
40	3	8%
98	5	5%
42	1	2%

TABLE 3 (CONTINUED)
DC Metro Employer Survey Results
Percent of Workforce That is Lower-Wage (Earning Less Than \$18 Per Hour)

Number of Employees	Number of Employees Earning Less Than \$18 Per Hour[~]	Percent of Employees Earning Less Than \$18 Per Hour[~]
1	0	0%
2	0	0%
4	0	0%
4	0	0%
6	0	0%
8	0	0%
12	0	0%
13	0	0%
15	0	0%
25	0	0%
25	0	0%
20,259	0	0%
6	Don't Know	N/A
7	Refused to Answer	N/A
90	Refused to Answer	N/A
115	Don't Know	N/A
97,000	Don't Know	N/A

Source: Southern Institute on Children and Families. *SBLC DC Metro Employer Survey, 2006.*

[~]Column 2 refers to the percent of all employers who responded to the question of what benefits/incentives they offered to their employees. Respondents were asked to choose all that they offer.

TABLE 4
DC Metro Employer Survey Results
Benefits/Incentives Made Available by Small Businesses (< 50 Employees)

Benefit/Incentive	Response Rate [~]
Health Insurance	61.9%
Paid Vacation	64.3%
Flexible Work Options	52.4%
Paid Sick Leave	35.7%
Pension/Retirement Plans	33.3%
Long-term Disability	23.8%
Tuition Reimbursement	23.8%
Short-term Disability	23.8%
Paid Maternity Leave	28.6%
Health Insurance for Dependents	23.8%
Investment Planning	14.3%
Employee Assistance Programs	11.9%
Cafeteria Plan/Flexible Spending Accounts	7.1%
Paid Paternity Leave	11.9%
Child Care	11.9%
Transportation	7.1%
Information About Public Benefits and Programs	4.8%
Paid Sick Dependent Leave	4.8%
Housing Assistance	4.8%
Advance Earned Income Tax Credit	2.4%
Adoption Assistance	2.4%
Dependent Adult Care	2.4%
Don't Know	7.1%
None	9.5%

Source: Southern Institute on Children and Families. *SBLC DC Metro Employer Survey, 2006.*

[~]Column 2 refers to the percent of all employers who responded to the question of what benefits/incentives they offered to their employees. Respondents were asked to choose all that they offer.

**APPENDIX B
DEMOGRAPHICS OF THE DC METRO AREA**

TABLE 5 Median Income for the District of Columbia and Parts of Maryland, Virginia and West Virginia		
	Median Hourly	Median Annual
DC and Parts of MD, VA and WV	\$18.39	\$38,251
National	\$13.98	\$29,078
<p>Source: US Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics. <i>November 2004 Metropolitan Area Occupational Employment and Wage Estimates: Washington, DC-MD-VA-WV PMSA</i>. Washington, DC: US Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Metropolitan Area Occupational Employment and Wage Estimates, January 2006.</p> <p>Note: These estimates are calculated with data collected from employers in all industry sectors in the Washington, DC-MD-VA-WV PMSA, a primary metropolitan statistical area that includes the District of Columbia, and parts of Maryland, Virginia, and West Virginia.</p>		

TABLE 6
**Lower-Wage Workers in the District of Columbia and Parts of Maryland,
Virginia and West Virginia (PMSA)**

Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) Major Groups in DC and parts of MD, VA and WV (PMSA):	Number of Occupations with Incomes at or less than \$18.39 [~] per hour under each SOC Major Group	Number of Employees with Incomes at or less than \$18.39 [~] per hour under each SOC Major Group
00-0000 All Occupations		
11-0000 Management Occupations	1	1,160.00
13-0000 Business and Financial Operations Occupations	2	2,460.00
15-0000 Computer and Mathematical Occupations	1	40.00
17-0000 Architecture and Engineering Occupations	3	970.00
19-0000 Life, Physical, and Social Science Occupations	4	4,910.00
21-0000 Community and Social Services Occupations	6	7,490.00
23-0000 Legal Occupations	1	1,640.00
25-0000 Education, Training, and Library Occupations	6	16,980.00
27-0000 Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports, and Media Occupations	7	3,980.00
29-0000 Healthcare Practitioner and Technical Occupations	9	16,800.00
31-0000 Healthcare Support Occupations	10	33,170.00
33-0000 Protective Service Occupations	7	41,230.00
35-0000 Food Preparation and Serving Related Occupations	5	40,380.00
37-0000 Building and Grounds Cleaning and Maintenance Occupations	5	27,980.00
39-0000 Personal Care and Service Occupations	12	22,860.00
41-0000 Sales and Related Occupations	7	42,290.00
43-0000 Office and Administrative Support Occupations	42	362,140.00
45-0000 Farming, Fishing, and Forestry Occupations	4	640.00
47-0000 Construction and Extraction Occupations	37	84,010.00
49-0000 Installation, Maintenance, and Repair Occupations	22	42,150.00
51-0000 Production Occupations	65	42,770.00
53-0000 Transportation and Material Moving Occupations	18	91,000.00
Total Number of Occupations with Income =<\$18.39 per hour	274	
Total Number of Workers Earning =<\$18.39 per hour		887,050
Total Number of Workers in DC-MD-VA-WV PMSA		2,802,410
Percentage of Lower-wage Workers in DC-MD-VA-WV PMSA		32%

Sources: US Department of Labor, Occupational Safety & Health Administration. *Standard Industrial Classification (SIC) System*. Washington, DC: US Department of Labor, 2005, http://www.osha.gov/pls/imis/sic_manual.html.

US Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics. *November 2004 Metropolitan Area Occupational Employment and Wage Estimates: Washington, DC-MD-VA-WV PMSA*. Washington, DC: US Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Metropolitan Area Occupational Employment and Wage Estimates, January 2006.

[~] Refer to the survey instrument discussion on page four.

Note 1: SOC Major Groups in bold have an overall median hourly income at or below the median hourly income for the PMSA.

Note 2: Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) system: This system is being adopted by Federal statistical agencies to classify workers into occupational categories for the purpose of collecting, calculating, or disseminating data. All workers are classified into 1 of more than 800 occupations according to their occupational definition. To facilitate classification, occupations are combined to form 23 major groups, 96 minor groups, and 449 broad occupations. Each broad occupation includes detailed occupations requiring similar job duties, skills, education, or experience.

Note 3: Primary Metropolitan Statistical Area is now obsolete. Metropolitan Division is most equivalent and generally comparable in concept.

TABLE 7
Percentage of Population 16 Years and Over in Labor Force with Children Under 6 Years Old

	Population 16 Years and Over in Labor Force	With Children Under 6 Years	Percentage
District of Columbia	287,899	38,516	13.4%
Alexandria City	80,949	8,857	10.9%
Arlington County	120,803	11,531	9.5%
Fairfax County	564,270	84,646	15.0%
Montgomery County	501,345	78,365	15.6%
Prince George's County	458,244	70,995	15.5%
National	145,437,824	22,863,721	15.7%

Sources: American Community Survey. *American FactFinder*. Washington, DC: US Census Bureau, 2004, http://factfinder.census.gov/home/saff/main.html?_lang=en.

American Community Survey. *American FactFinder*. Washington, DC: US Census Bureau, 2000, http://factfinder.census.gov/home/saff/main.html?_lang=en.

Note: All information based on 2004 American Community Survey, except Alexandria City and Arlington County which is based on the 2000 Census.

TABLE 8
Percentage of Families with Below Poverty Income in Last 12 Months

	All Families	Families with Female Householder no Husband Present	Female Householder no Husband Present with Related Children Under 5 Years	Female Householder no Husband Present with Related Children Under 18 Years
District of Columbia	16.9%	33.2%	30.8%	40.6%
Alexandria City	6.8% [~]	18.0%	29.8%	24.3%
Arlington County	5.0% [~]	13.2%	23.4%	20.0%
Fairfax County	3.7%	19.2%	33.3%	22.7%
Montgomery County	2.5%	12.2%	34.1%	17.7%
Prince George's County	4.2%	5.9%	5.8%	8.3%
National	10.1%	29.2%	46.2%	37.6%

Sources: American Community Survey. *American FactFinder*. Washington, DC: US Census Bureau, 2004,
http://factfinder.census.gov/home/saff/main.html?_lang=en.

American Community Survey. *American FactFinder*. Washington, DC: US Census Bureau, 2000,
http://factfinder.census.gov/home/saff/main.html?_lang=en.

[~] *Poverty Status as of 1999*

Note: All information based on 2004 American Community Survey, except Alexandria City and Arlington County which is based on the 2000 Census.

TABLE 9
Demographics of District of Columbia, Maryland and Virginia
(Figures are Percentages of Population)

FAMILIES						
	DC		MD		VA	
Poor	27		10		12	
Low Income	48		24		27	
Above Low Income	52		76		73	
PARENTAL EDUCATION						
	Low Income			Above Low Income		
	DC	MD	VA	DC	MD	VA
Less than High School	31	22	23	6	3	3
High School Diploma	41	37	39	20	20	21
Some College or More	28	42	37	74	77	76
PARENTAL EMPLOYMENT						
	Low Income			Above Low Income		
	DC	MD	VA	DC	MD	VA
Employed Full-Time, Year Round	38	51	56	87	91	92
Employed Part-Year or Part-Time	26	25	26	9	7	6
No Parent Employed	37	24	18	4	2	2
PARENTAL MARITAL STATUS						
	Low Income			Above Low Income		
	DC	MD	VA	DC	MD	VA
Married Parents	16	38	37	56	76	80
Single Parents	84	62	63	44	24	20
AGE OF CHILDREN IN FAMILY						
	Low Income			Above Low Income		
	DC	MD	VA	DC	MD	VA
Less Than 6 Years Old	29	30	37	35	30	30
At Least 6 Years Old	71	70	63	65	70	70
HOME OWNERSHIP						
	Low Income			Above Low Income		
	DC	MD	VA	DC	MD	VA
Own Home	23	46	42	61	81	86
Rent Home	77	54	58	39	19	14

TABLE 9 CONTINUED
Demographics of District of Columbia, Maryland and Virginia
(Figures are Percentages of Population)

FAMILY STRUCTURE						
	Low Income			Above Low Income		
	DC	MD	VA	DC	MD	VA
At Least One Parent Present in the Household	85	84	91	95	97	97
No Parent Present in the Household	15	16	9	5 [~]	3 [~]	3 [~]

Source: National Center for Children in Poverty (NCCP). *50-State Demographics Data Wizards*. New York, NY: NCCP, 2005, <http://www.nccp.org/wizard/wizard.cgi?action=B>.

[~] *This estimate should be used with caution. It may be unreliable due to a small sample size.*

Note 1: Poor is defined as families and children with a family income below the federal poverty threshold.

Note 2: Low Income is defined as families and children with a family income less than twice the federal poverty threshold.

Note 3: Above Low Income is defined as families and children with a family income at or above twice the federal poverty threshold.

Note 4: The Federal Poverty Threshold is \$9,800 in 2006 for an individual. These thresholds vary by family size, for example the Federal Poverty Threshold for a family of three is \$16,600 in 2006.

Note 5: State data were calculated from the Annual Social and Economic Supplement (the March supplement) of the Current Population Survey from 2003, 2004 and 2005, representing information from calendar years 2002, 2003 and 2004. NCCP averaged three years of data because of small sample sizes in less populated states. The national data were calculated from the 2005 data, representing information from the previous calendar year.

TABLE 10 DC Ward Average for Female Headed Families with Kids			
	1980	1990	2000
Percentage of Female Headed Families with Kids	48%	54%	52%

TABLE 11 DC Ward Average for Population 25+ without High School Degree			
	1980	1990	2000
Percentage of Population 25+ without High School Degree	33%	27%	22%

TABLE 12 DC Ward Average for Poverty			
	1980	1990	2000
Poverty Rate	19%	17%	20%
Percentage of Children in Poverty	N/A	25%	32%

TABLE 13 DC Ward Average for Low Weight Births and Births to Teen Mothers			
	1998	2000	2002
Percentage of Low Weight Births	13%	12%	11%
Percentage of Births to Teen Mothers	15%	14%	13%

TABLE 14 DC Ward Average for Number of Occupied Housing Units			
	1980	1990	2000
Number of Occupied Housing Units	31,643	31,204	31,042

TABLE 15 DC Ward Average for Rental Vacancy and Home Ownership Rates			
	1980	1990	2000
Rental Vacancy Rate	6%	8%	6.2%
Home Ownership Rate	35%	39%	41%

Source for Tables 10-15: NeighborhoodInfo DC. *Neighborhood Profiles: Council Wards*. Washington, DC: NeighborhoodInfo DC, 2005, <http://www.neighborhoodinfodc.org/>.

APPENDIX C STANDARD INDUSTRIAL CLASSIFICATION (SIC) SYSTEM

The SIC system has been used throughout the Federal Government to group establishments into industries. Listed below is the SIC Division Structure.

Division A: Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing

- Major Group 01: Agricultural Production Crops
- Major Group 02: Agriculture production livestock and animal specialties
- Major Group 07: Agricultural Services
- Major Group 08: Forestry
- Major Group 09: Fishing, hunting and trapping

Division B: Mining

- Major Group 10: Metal Mining
- Major Group 12: Coal Mining
- Major Group 13: Oil and Gas Extraction
- Major Group 14: Mining and Quarrying Of Nonmetallic Minerals, Except Fuels

Division C: Construction

- Major Group 15: Building Construction General Contractors and Operative Builders
- Major Group 16: Heavy Construction Other Than Building Construction Contractors
- Major Group 17: Construction Special Trade Contractors

Division D: Manufacturing

- Major Group 20: Food and Kindred Products
- Major Group 21: Tobacco Products
- Major Group 22: Textile Mill Products
- Major Group 23: Apparel and Other Finished Products Made From Fabrics and Similar Materials
- Major Group 24: Lumber and Wood Products, Except Furniture
- Major Group 25: Furniture and Fixtures
- Major Group 26: Paper and Allied Products
- Major Group 27: Printing, Publishing and Allied Industries
- Major Group 28: Chemicals and Allied Products
- Major Group 29: Petroleum Refining and Related Industries
- Major Group 30: Rubber and Miscellaneous Plastics Products
- Major Group 31: Leather and Leather Products
- Major Group 32: Stone, Clay, Glass and Concrete Products
- Major Group 33: Primary Metal Industries
- Major Group 34: Fabricated Metal Products, Except Machinery and Transportation Equipment
- Major Group 35: Industrial and Commercial Machinery and Computer Equipment
- Major Group 36: Electronic and Other Electrical Equipment and Components, Except Computer Equipment
- Major Group 37: Transportation Equipment

Division D: Manufacturing (continued)

Major Group 38: Measuring, Analyzing and Controlling Instruments; Photographic, Medical and Optical Goods; Watches and Clocks

Major Group 39: Miscellaneous Manufacturing Industries

Division E: Transportation, Communications, Electric, Gas and Sanitary Services

Major Group 40: Railroad Transportation

Major Group 41: Local and Suburban Transit and Interurban Highway Passenger Transportation

Major Group 42: Motor Freight Transportation and Warehousing

Major Group 43: United States Postal Service

Major Group 44: Water Transportation

Major Group 45: Transportation By Air

Major Group 46: Pipelines, Except Natural Gas

Major Group 47: Transportation Services

Major Group 48: Communications

Major Group 49: Electric, Gas and Sanitary Services

Division F: Wholesale Trade

Major Group 50: Wholesale Trade-durable Goods

Major Group 51: Wholesale Trade-non-durable Goods

Division G: Retail Trade

Major Group 52: Building Materials, Hardware, Garden Supply and Mobile Home Dealers

Major Group 53: General Merchandise Stores

Major Group 54: Food Stores

Major Group 55: Automotive Dealers and Gasoline Service Stations

Major Group 56: Apparel and Accessory Stores

Major Group 57: Home Furniture, Furnishings and Equipment Stores

Major Group 58: Eating and Drinking Places

Major Group 59: Miscellaneous Retail

Division H: Finance, Insurance and Real Estate

Major Group 60: Depository Institutions

Major Group 61: Non-depository Credit Institutions

Major Group 62: Security and Commodity Brokers, Dealers, Exchanges and Services

Major Group 63: Insurance Carriers

Major Group 64: Insurance Agents, Brokers and Service

Major Group 65: Real Estate

Major Group 67: Holding and Other Investment Offices

Division I: Services

Major Group 70: Hotels, Rooming Houses, Camps and Other Lodging Places

Major Group 72: Personal Services

Major Group 73: Business Services

Division I: Services (continued)

Major Group 75: Automotive Repair, Services and Parking

Major Group 76: Miscellaneous Repair Services

Major Group 78: Motion Pictures

Major Group 79: Amusement and Recreation Services

Major Group 80: Health Services

Major Group 81: Legal Services

Major Group 82: Educational Services

Major Group 83: Social Services

Major Group 84: Museums, Art Galleries and Botanical and Zoological Gardens

Major Group 86: Membership Organizations

Major Group 87: Engineering, Accounting, Research, Management and Related Services

Major Group 88: Private Households

Major Group 89: Miscellaneous Services

Division J: Public Administration

Major Group 91: Executive, Legislative and General Government, Except Finance

Major Group 92: Justice, Public Order and Safety

Major Group 93: Public Finance, Taxation and Monetary Policy

Major Group 94: Administration of Human Resource Programs

Major Group 95: Administration of Environmental Quality and Housing Programs

Major Group 96: Administration of Economic Programs

Major Group 97: National Security and International Affairs

Major Group 99: Nonclassifiable Establishments

Source: Standard Industrial Classification (SIC) system. US Department of Labor, Occupational Safety & Health Administration. http://www.osha.gov/pls/imis/sic_manual.html.

APPENDIX D
ABOUT THE SOUTHERN BUSINESS LEADERSHIP COUNCIL

The Southern Institute established the Southern Business Leadership Council (SBLC) to engage southern business and public policy leaders in the development of comprehensive solutions to societal issues that impede stable employment of the lower-income workforce, and to support efforts to achieve greater opportunities for child development. The SBLC is chaired by the Honorable Richard W. Riley, former United States Secretary of Education, former South Carolina Governor and Southern Institute Board Member. SBLC members represent southern-based businesses, corporate philanthropy and local, state and national business organizations. The SBLC is focused on developing research-based employment stability action strategies that will mutually benefit families and employers in communities across the South.

Southern Business Leadership Council		
<p>Richard W. Riley, Esq. SBLC Chairman Nelson Mullins Riley & Scarborough, LLP Columbia/Greenville, SC</p>	<p>George L. Johnson BlueCross BlueShield of South Carolina Columbia, SC</p>	<p>Elaine Mendoza Conceptual MindWorks, Inc. San Antonio, TX</p>
<p>Cindy Cox BellSouth Columbia, SC</p>	<p>Stephen Jordan US Chamber of Commerce Washington, DC</p>	<p>Paul Montgomery Eastman Chemical Company Kingsport, TN</p>
<p>John E. Davis Republic Powdered Metals, Inc. Houston, TX</p>	<p>Donna M. Klein Corporate Voices for Working Families, Inc. Washington, DC</p>	<p>William F. O'Connor, Jr. Results, LLC Montgomery, AL</p>
<p>Anne Doss Wachovia Corporation Charlotte, NC</p>	<p>Ray Marshall The University of Texas at Austin Austin, TX</p>	<p>Diane D. Rath Texas Workforce Commission Austin, TX</p>
<p>Julio Fuentes Florida Hispanic Chamber of Commerce Palm Beach Gardens, FL</p>	<p>Donald G. (Ike) McLeese Greater Columbia Chamber of Commerce Columbia, SC</p>	<p>Kevin C. Sass, FACHE Columbus Regional Healthcare System Columbus, GA</p>
<p>Rai Glover Bank of America Charlotte, NC</p>	<p>Penelope McPhee The Arthur M. Blank Family Foundation Atlanta, GA</p>	<p>John Tully Michelin North America, Inc. Greenville, SC</p>
<p>Note: The Southern Business Leadership Council (SBLC) is an initiative of the Southern Institute on Children and Families.</p>		

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