

Media Relations

MEDIA ADVISORY: Poverty Expert Available To Discuss Romney's Comments About Poor Americans

February 2, 2012

DURHAM, N.H. – Beth Mattingly, director of research on vulnerable families at the Carsey Institute at the University of New Hampshire, is available to discuss poor and low-income Americans following Mitt Romney’s comments regarding their “safety net.”

“Mitt Romney’s statement that he is ‘not concerned about the very poor’ because the nation has ‘a safety net’ misses key points about families struggling in America,” Mattingly said. “Our research shows that the number of children living in poverty has increased since the recession started, and rural Americans, in particular, face great challenges escaping poverty. Even with the aid of government programs, many of today’s working poor still live below the poverty line.”

Mattingly can be reached at 240-593-4297 and beth.mattingly@unh.edu.

Mattingly’s work at the Carsey Institute examines child poverty, how different family policies influence rural, suburban, and urban families, and how families adjust their labor force behavior during times of economic strain. She also examines poverty-related issues, how families cope with economic distress, childhood maltreatment, and foster care across states.

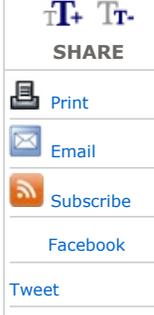
According to the Carsey Institute:

- Between 2009 and 2010, one million more children in America joined the ranks of those living in poverty, bringing the total to an estimated 15.7 million poor children in 2010, an increase of 2.6 million since the recession began in 2007.
- Persistent high poverty is most prevalent among children, with those living in rural America disproportionately impacted.
- Rural Americans face higher poverty rates than their urban neighbors and greater challenges escaping from poverty, even with the aid of government assistance such as the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program.
- The number of Americans turning to the Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program (SNAP), formerly known as food stamps, has substantially increased since the recession began and has continued to climb as many Americans have struggled with the economic hardships of the post-recession, weak economy.

For more information about the Carsey Institute’s extensive research about poverty, visit <http://www.carseyinstitute.unh.edu/policy/poverty.html>.

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