



A Better Way To Reduce Poverty And Grow Jobs For A Better Philadelphia

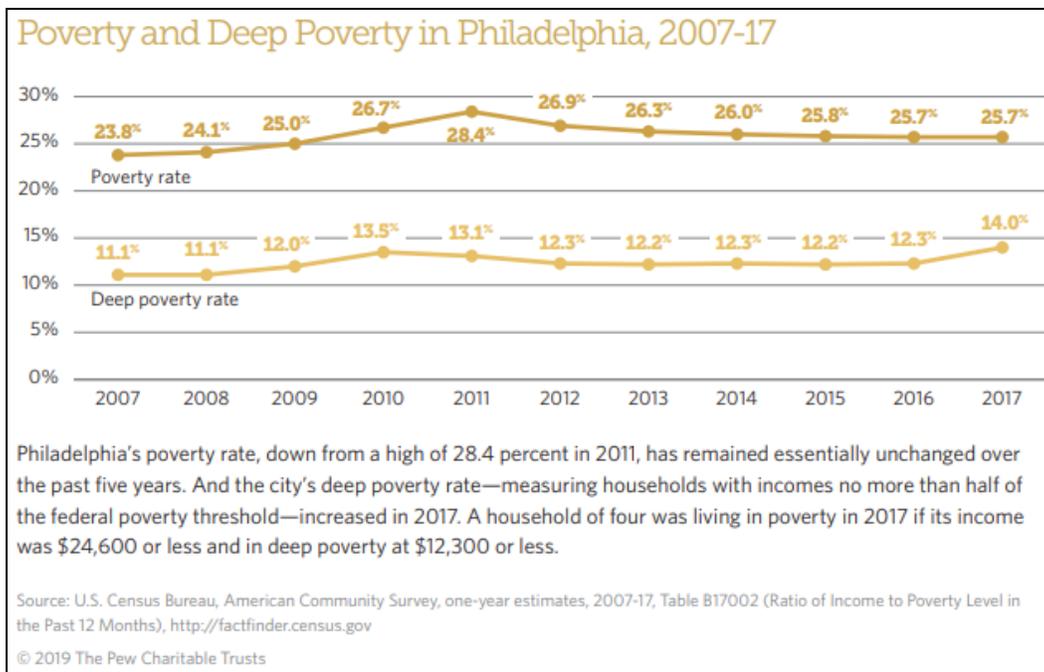
Philadelphia is the poorest big city in the nation with about 26% of residents living below the poverty line. It is unconscionable that about 400,000 Philadelphians – including about 200,000 African-American residents – live in need.

For far too many, Philadelphia is not a city of opportunity. In too many ways, it costs more to be poor in Philadelphia.

We cannot end local poverty alone, but we can do more locally — and working with representatives in Harrisburg and Washington — to reduce poverty in Philadelphia. My goal is to cut Philadelphia’s poverty rate in half before I leave office.

By the end of my mayoralty we will cut Philadelphia’s poverty rate in half.

The numbers are stark and shameful.



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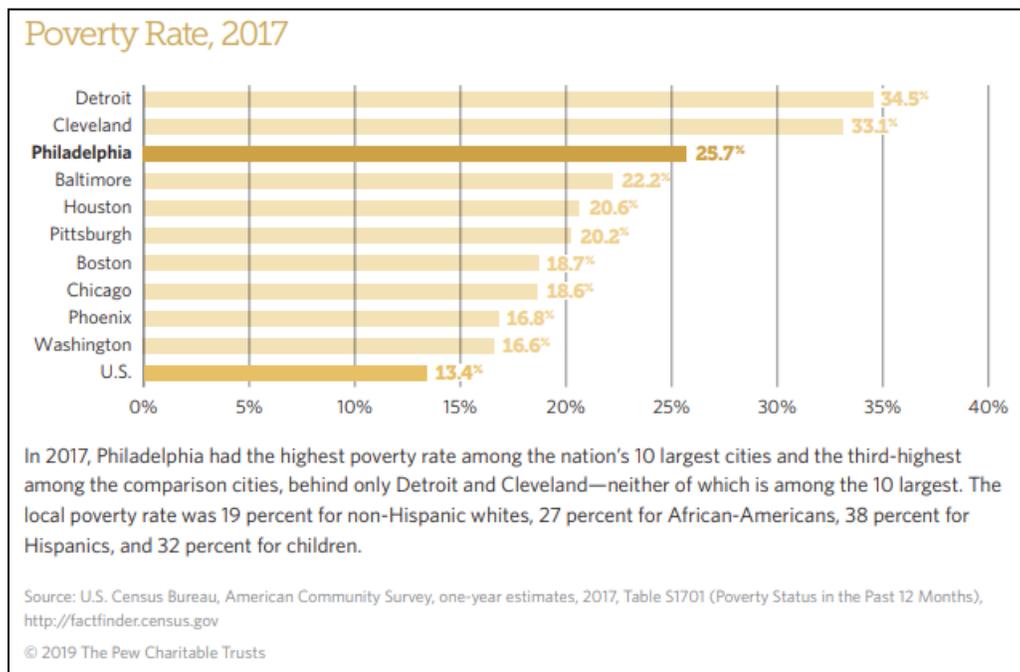
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According to the 2019 “State of the City” report produced by The Pew Charitable Trusts, “The city’s poverty rate has been stuck in the 26 percent range for the past five years, a time when the rate has dropped in many other cities. Philadelphia has nearly 400,000 residents living below the poverty line, a fact that affects numerous aspects of city life.”

Other cities are doing far better creating opportunities and supporting communities. Philadelphia cannot afford to continue to lag behind.



Mayor Jim Kenney promised to reduce poverty in Philadelphia, but his administration has failed to make progress.

To make Philadelphia a city of opportunity and to remove burdens that fall disproportionately upon our low-income residents, I offer **A Better Way To Reduce Poverty And Grow Jobs For A Better Philadelphia.**

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A Better Way To Reduce Poverty And Grow Jobs For A Better Philadelphia

Make Poverty A Priority

Philadelphia's poverty problem will not go away unless we make reducing poverty a priority. As mayor I will:

- Target cutting Philadelphia's poverty rate in half before I leave office as a goal toward which my administration will advance policy and budgetary plans and measure progress annually.
- Appoint a cabinet-level administration official to coordinate an integrated approach to reducing poverty in Philadelphia so all city agencies support our anti-poverty efforts.
- Follow the lead of Allegheny County and establish an integrated data system to link court, city, and school district data to best inform government's ability to meet the needs of people struggling with the multiple challenges related to poverty.
- Publish a program-based summary of the city budget and issue a report card on city services to track results and citizen satisfaction.
- Work with city council to pass legislation to demand that an "anti-poverty financial footnote" be included on every bill introduced, to detail how each piece of legislation will contribute to reducing Philadelphia's poverty rate.
- Cooperate with the City Controller's Office on a performance audit to evaluate how the millions of dollars spent by the Office of Community Empowerment and Opportunity can be best prioritized.
- Transmit to city council and publish each year an economic plan that considers tax policy, infrastructure investments, arts and culture spending, and the leverage of city-owned utility and transportation assets to reach targeted employment goals.

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Grow Jobs In Philadelphia

If Philadelphia grew jobs like other peer cities over the last decade, we would have added 35,000 more jobs. As Mayor I will:

- Reduce the city's unique and job-killing business taxes to drive the economic growth that employs neighborhood Philadelphians.
- Use Philadelphia public spending to ensure that city projects are built by a workforce that looks like Philadelphia and give Philadelphia businesses a boost with stronger local preference rules for city contracts.
- Lower the barrier to entry for small business to win city contracts and grow local businesses by changing the city charter to increase Philadelphia's comparatively low dollar amount that triggers the formal request-for-proposal process.
- Explore creating a public bank in Philadelphia to support the small, neighborhood businesses that create most of the jobs in our city.
- Work with city employers to expand summer jobs and internships for students to provide valuable experience and a pathway for post-graduation employment.
- Connect Philadelphians to work by exploring options to expand the Broad Street subway to the Philadelphia Navy Yard, incorporating mass-transit infrastructure along the Roosevelt Boulevard, and restructuring SEPTA bus service to link neighborhood residents to job centers.

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Unburden Low-Income Philadelphians

We cannot reduce poverty if city actions and policies continue to help make Philadelphians poorer. As Mayor I will:

- Fix our regressive and illegal city assessments so real estate taxation can be fair and reasonable – and make sure that the city refunds money to taxpayers who have paid too much for too long.
- Reduce the city Wage Tax to 3% by the end of my mayoralty to allow more working Philadelphians to keep more of their hard-earned paychecks.
- Repeal the regressive Soda Tax that falls disproportionately on low-income Philadelphians.
- Support an increase in the Pennsylvania minimum wage to \$15/hour to make work pay for Philadelphians.
- Increase funding to provide counsel for low-income tenants at risk of eviction — estimates show that spending \$3.5 million could save the city \$45 million each year, while keeping individuals in their homes and stabilizing neighborhoods and families.
- Expand outreach to make sure low-income families get all the federal, state, and local benefits and tax credits available to them – including Philadelphia’s homestead exemption, low-income senior-citizen tax freeze, loan program for low-income homeowners, and LOOP property-tax-discount program.
- Work to make SEPTA fare policies work for working families by eliminating the \$1 penalty for those who need to transfer between buses, subways, and trolleys to travel to work or shop for groceries and by offering free SEPTA for kids under 12 to make mass transit more affordable for families.

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Support Communities

It will take a city to reduce poverty and so many city agencies can support the efforts to grow opportunities and support our communities. As Mayor I will:

- Deliver universal Pre-K to reach all eligible Philadelphians because ALL of our families need help.
- Work with my former colleagues in Harrisburg for a school-funding formula that takes poverty into account, provides adequate public charter reimbursement, and increases funding for our schools.
- Expand support for the Office of Adult Education to expand literacy training in Philadelphia and reduce a fundamental barrier to employment for too many residents.
- Declare a state of emergency to best marshal and coordinate all city agencies as we simultaneously convene grassroots anti-violence activists to help stem the bloodshed in our communities.
- Serve our neighborhoods – we can repave our streets, implement weekly, citywide street cleaning, and fully staff our libraries and recreation centers so our communities can thrive.
- Budget better to provide city council and tax payers detailed, online programmatic information about the \$5 billion general fund budget to make it easy for our residents and taxpayers to know how we are spending their money.

Philadelphia has been a city of opportunity for more than three centuries, but too many of today's Philadelphians are not sharing in that prosperity. We can do better and, as mayor, I will work every day to reduce poverty and grow jobs for a better Philadelphia.

We Deserve Better

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