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Inequality is high and growing in Ohio The top 1 percent capture an increasing share of earnings

The top 1 percent of earners in Ohio took home more than 21 times more than the bottom 99 percent in 2012, according to new analysis published by the Economic Policy Institute and released locally by Policy Matters Ohio.

Today, Monday, January 26, at noon, EPI will hold a media teleconference on these alarming findings. The call-in number is 1-800-311-9402 and the passcode is UNEQUAL. RSVP and obtain the embargoed paper by emailing news@epi.org.

In *The Increasingly Unequal States of America: Income Inequality by State, 1917 to 2012*, Estelle Sommelier and Mark Price show that inequality is rising in Ohio and throughout the United States.

The country as a whole is even more unequal than Ohio, with earners in the top 1 percent taking in more than 29 times more than the bottom 99 percent combined. These top national earners make an average of more than \$1.3 million a year, while the top 1 percent in Ohio earns more than \$850,000 annually, on average.

Between 1979 and 2012, the top 1 percent of taxpayers captured an increasing share of earnings in Ohio and in the United States. In Ohio, these top earners more than doubled their incomes between 1979 and 2012, while income of the bottom 99 percent as a whole grew by just over 11 percent. Nearly half (49.4 percent) of the entire growth in our Ohio economy between 1979 and 2012 went to this top 1 percent of earners.

The story is similar for the period since the most recent deep recession. In Ohio, the top 1 percent captured 71.9 percent of income growth in the period following the Great Recession between 2009 and 2012. The situation for the country as a whole is even worse, with the top 1 percent capturing over 105 percent of the growth in the first few years after the downturn.

“Ohio and America are deeply unequal and growing more so,” said Amy Hanauer, Executive Director of Policy Matters Ohio. “Unfortunately, many policies in Ohio serve to worsen the situation by shifting to taxes that fall more heavily on the poor and middle class, and by cutting college aid and other basics that would help middle-income families earn more.”

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Policy Matters Ohio is a nonprofit, nonpartisan state policy research institute with offices in Cleveland and Columbus. The Economic Policy Institute is a nonprofit, nonpartisan think tank based in Washington D.C.