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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Wednesday, March 10, 2010

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Read the report and visit interactive foreclosure map:

<http://www.policymattersohio.org/ForeclosureGrowthOhio2010.htm>

Ohio foreclosure filings set new record in 2009, top 89,000 **Cuyahoga County Again Ranks First in Rate, Non-Urban Counties Lead in Growth Rates**

Sixty-four of Ohio's 88 counties saw an increase in foreclosure filings last year, and in 34 counties, filings grew by double-digit rates. While urban counties continue to lead the state in foreclosure filings, smaller and less urban counties are experiencing larger growth rates.

A new report released today by Policy Matters Ohio analyzes foreclosure filings and other housing trends in Ohio and its counties. Statewide, foreclosure filings continued to grow in 2009 with 89,053 new foreclosure filings, a 3.8 percent increase since 2008. Compared to ten years ago, when Ohio had 31,229 new foreclosures, this is a 185 percent increase. The latest numbers indicate that there was one foreclosure filing for every 56 housing units in the state last year.

The gain in filings is particularly crippling to the state, coming after years of increased filings and the broadest foreclosure prevention attempts to date, according to the study. Statewide, filings have more than quintupled since 1995. The study reviews federal efforts such as the HAMP program to curb foreclosures, finding dismal results. Nearly one-third of Ohio mortgage holders are "under water", owing more than their houses are worth, and one in every six homeowners is either delinquent or in foreclosure.

"The number of foreclosures in the state remains at crisis levels and all signs point to more growth," said David Rothstein, Policy Matters researcher and author of the report.

Cuyahoga County led the state once again in foreclosure filings per person, followed this year by Lucas, Clinton, and Highland counties. Morgan County led the state in foreclosure-filing growth between 2008 and 2009, with a 129 percent increase. Seven of the top ten counties in foreclosure-filing growth – each of which saw at least a 26 percent increase last year – were in the Northwest and Appalachian regions of the state.

Foreclosure filings continue to be most heavily concentrated in the state's urban counties, accounting for 61 percent of filings. However, non-urban counties continue to experience large foreclosure growth



rates. The report chronicles that counties with populations less than 200,000 had higher foreclosure growth rates than the state average. For instance, the 60 counties with a population of below 100,000 saw overall foreclosure filing growth rate of 8.78 percent, up from 3.3 percent the previous year.

"It is up to Ohio," said Rothstein. "Federal efforts are falling short and the state has the ability to help homeowners and stabilize communities."

The report recommends that the Ohio legislature pass reasonable reforms to encourage real loan modifications and reduce the foreclosure filing rate. These include regulating loan servicers, funding housing counselors, increasing tenant notifications and protections during foreclosure, and preventing foreclosure rescue scams.