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**IS NEW YORK HEADED IN THE WRONG DIRECTION?
Black and Latino New Yorkers Voice Concerns about Their Future in the City in
CSS's *Unheard Third* Survey**

Black and Latino New Yorkers believe New York City is headed in the wrong direction and are concerned about their ability to find affordable housing, health care, and access to jobs and education in New York. These findings were revealed in the Community Service Society of New York's annual survey of low-income New Yorkers, "***The Unheard Third.***"

The survey interviewed nearly 1,600 New Yorkers on topics from housing to health care to education and reveals their greatest worries as poor people living in a major metropolitan city. The survey also reveals the complex views of the city's Black and Latino residents on conditions affecting the working poor, who comprise 64 percent of New Yorkers.

"We are on the cusp of a historic shift in New York City," said David R. Jones, president and CEO of the Community Service Society (CSS). "Blacks and Latinos in the nation's largest city are poised to make their mark with just one seat shy of a majority in the New York City Council and one-third of the majority within the New York State Assembly. Latinos and Blacks comprise a substantial part of the working poor in the city, which is why we now, more than ever, must listen to what they have to say and develop policies to reflect the needs of these populations."

"***The Unheard Third***" survey reveals that Blacks and Latino experience frequent hardships with 40 percent of low-income Blacks and 41 percent of Latinos experiencing three or more hardships, while 39 percent of Whites experience no hardship.

Other priorities and obstacles to Blacks and Hispanics getting ahead include housing assistance, job training and placement, and public safety. Thirty-nine percent of low-income Hispanics, 38 percent of low-income Blacks, and 29 percent of low-income Whites said housing assistance is most important in helping their families get ahead, followed by health insurance and job training.

Low-income respondents to the survey also identified crime, drugs, gangs, and health care/prescription drugs as important. Lastly, reducing the number of people in poverty is a

higher priority for more Blacks than it is for Hispanics and Whites and all groups believe that the growing gap between rich and poor needs to be addressed immediately.

“While the responses to ***“The Unheard Third”*** provide a snapshot of the challenging future for low-income New Yorkers, it also provides encouraging news that Black and Latino people have identified what it will take to create a more sustainable way of life for them in New York City,” said CSS President Jones. “Both groups want affordable housing, the opportunity for academic advancement and career opportunities, but without health care and other needs, these obstacles will remain and the struggle for poor New Yorkers will continue,” Jones said.

“The Unheard Third,” conducted by CSS and fielded by the national polling firm Lake Research Partners, is a unique snapshot of the policy preferences and experiences of low-income New Yorkers. The survey is partially funded through the generous support of the Independence Community Foundation, The New York Community Trust, The Rockefeller Foundation, and United Way of New York City. CSS has used the survey to inform and guide its research, direct service programs, and policy recommendations. It has served to narrow the focus of the agency's agenda on the working poor and reinforce its belief that public policy aimed at this population must, in part, be guided by the life experiences and ideas of New Yorkers living in poverty.

Learn more about this year's survey at, <http://www.cssny.org/research/unheardthird/index.html>

The Community Service Society of New York (CSS) has been the leading voice on behalf of low-income New Yorkers for 160 years and continues to advocate for the economic security of the working poor in the nation's largest city.