

LIVINGSTON

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Household income drops \$1.32B across Livingston

By Christopher Behnan • DAILY PRESS & ARGUS-
February 6, 2011

Household income dropped by \$1.32 billion across Livingston County between 1999 and 2009, according to recent data from Data Driven Detroit.

The loss in the county's household income is due to a several factors, such as lost wages, less people working per household and unemployment, said William Sleight, director of Livingston County Michigan Works!

"All those factors weigh into that," Sleight said.

The county rates around the middle of household wage loss across southeastern Michigan, with Lenawee County showing the least loss at \$480 million, and Wayne County — including the city of Detroit — with the greatest loss at \$10.83 billion between 1999 and 2009.

However, counties across the region vary greatly in population, with Wayne and Oakland counties being two of the highest-populated.

Wayne, Oakland and Macomb counties combined showed a reduction of \$27 billion in income in the 10-year period, which amounts to a loss nearly \$7,000 in 2009 for every man, woman and child in that tricounty area, the Detroit Free Press reported.

Metzger's figures were compiled using 2000 U.S. Census Bureau data and information from the 2009 American Community Survey.

Sleight said the decline of the automotive industry across the region has played a large role in lost jobs and wages during the past decade. Livingston County has a large base of automotive suppliers but several have gone out of business in recent years.

"It certainly is due to the loss of manufacturing (and construction jobs, which tend to be higher-paying," he said.

While household income has declined in the county, residents have benefited from having extensive education on their resumes, Sleight added.

"In general, because our population in Livingston

County tends to be higher-educated than some of the surrounding counties, the income loss isn't great but still significant," he said.

Michigan ranks 37th in per-capita income nationwide, according to Gov. Rick Snyder's financial outlook report issued last week.

Snyder's data show that personal income across Michigan grew by just 7 percent between 1995 and 2009, compared with personal-income growth of 35 percent nationwide during the same period.

The governor said high unemployment and the state's aging population have contributed greatly to Michigan's slow rate of income growth.

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