



LIFTING THE HIGH ENERGY  
BURDEN IN AMERICA'S  
LARGEST CITIES: HOW  
ENERGY EFFICIENCY CAN  
IMPROVE LOW INCOME AND  
UNDERSERVED  
COMMUNITIES

Highlights from ACEEE's April 2016 Report

Full Report  
<http://wp.me/a5WT9H-oM>

# Highlights

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## Key Learnings

- This report is chock full of documented causes and impacts of high energy burden (total energy utility spending/total gross household income), making a strong case that by addressing energy affordability, policymakers can help to break the cycle of poverty and increase economic development, educational achievement, and public health. The report is full of researched and cited findings and is an essential read for local government, utility and NGO advocates seeking to better advance energy equity, particularly in the SE.
- The report provides in depth analysis and comparison of energy burden for the largest US metropolitan areas, particularly looking at:
  - Low-income households (including subset living in multifamily housing)
  - Minority households (African American and Latino) and
  - Renting households
- Using American Housing Survey data, ACEEE calculated median energy burden for states and each city analyzed, then plotted cities with highest burdens relative to their state median. Highest median energy burdens were found in:

1. Memphis - 6.2%	18. Jacksonville
2. New Orleans - 5.3%	25. Louisville
3. Birmingham - 5.3%	30. Miami
4. Atlanta - 5.0%	31. Tampa
15. Charlotte	35. Nashville
17. Orlando	
- The report notes findings that many of the metro areas in the SE—a region with relatively low electricity prices and lower average incomes—faced the highest energy burdens compared with cities nationally.
- Further quartile analysis reveals deeper insight into the experiences outside of the median, where in 17 cities, a quarter of low-income households experienced an energy burden greater than 14%. Analysis by city and region shows substantial disparities for African American, low-income, Latino and renter populations in SE cities.
- Policy and programmatic recommendations are detailed, including analysis that finds 81% of all funding support to address low-income energy burdens in the US is directed at helping customers pay energy bills - mitigating symptoms, not causes - while only 14% addresses root causes through EE programs.
- Report concludes with a detailed discussion of strategies to increase participation in low-income EE program offerings, for multifamily and single family housing.

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