

# Energy Insecurity in Texas

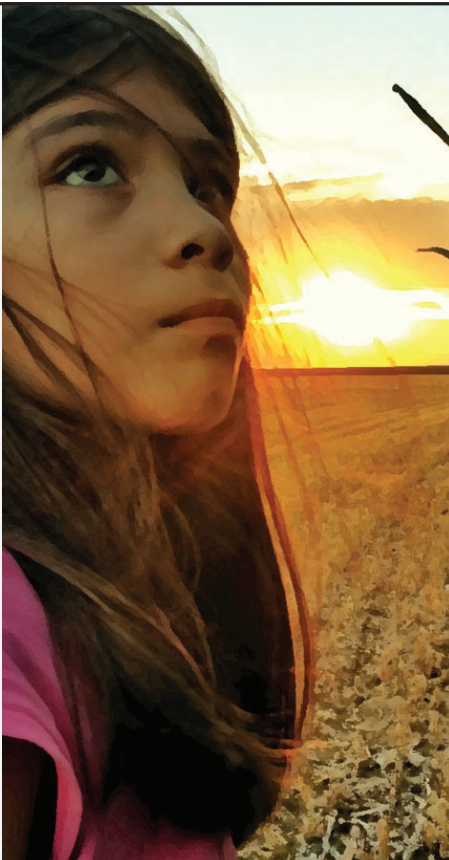
Opportunities for renewable energy in underserved communities



Prepared for UT Renewable Energy Law Institute  
January 25, 2021

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## About TEPRI



### Mission:

Inspire lasting energy solutions

### Approach:

Link community voices with science, data,  
and innovative partnerships

Deliver best available information to  
decision-makers

### Outcomes:

Energy poverty reduction  
Economic development  
Community well-being

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# Definitions

**Energy Poverty:** a household does not have access to essential energy services or it cannot afford the services to maintain a healthy lifestyle

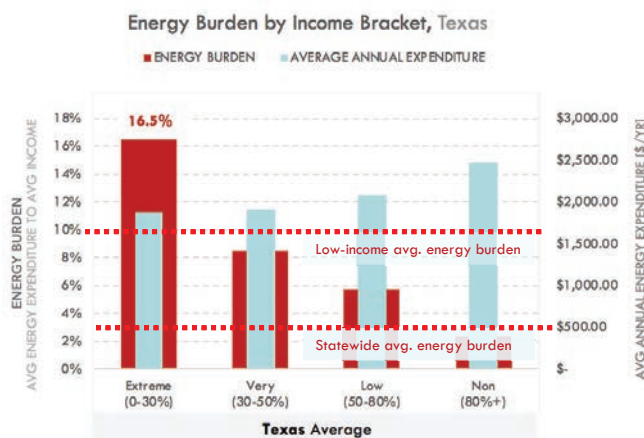
**Energy Burden:** the percentage of household income that is needed to cover home energy expenses

**Energy Affordability Gap:** the difference between actual home energy bills and affordable home energy bills for the entire population where affordable energy is  $\leq 6\%$  energy burden

LEAD DATA ANALYSIS

## Energy Burden in Texas

This chart compares the energy burden average for Texas across the income brackets.



**41% Low-income Population**  
Of the 9+ million households in Texas, 41% are 0-80% AMI (~3.8 million)

**10% Low-income Energy Burden**  
For all low-income households in Texas, the average energy burden is 10%

**3% Statewide Average**  
For all households in Texas, the average energy burden is 3%

# Drivers of Household Energy Burden

## Physical

- Building envelope
- HVAC
- Appliances
- Extreme weather

## Economic

- Chronic hardship
- Sudden hardship
- Inability to invest

## Policy

- Insufficient or inaccessible programs
- Certain rate design practices

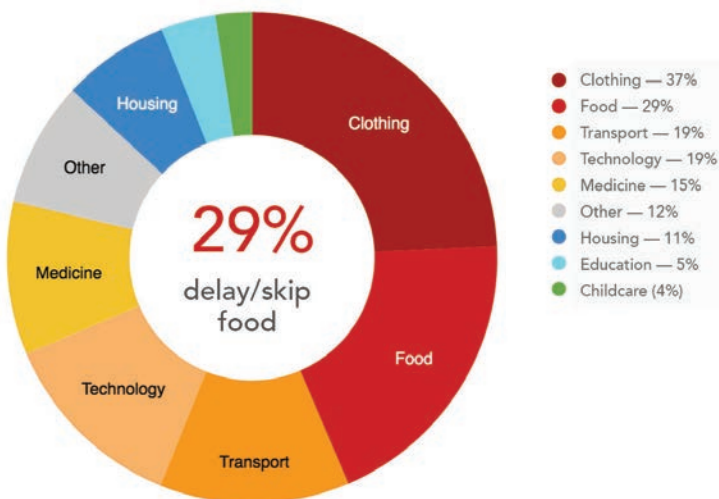
## Behavioral

- Limited program awareness
- Lack of energy conservation education
- Increased usage

Adapted from: *Lifting the High Energy Burden in America's Largest Cities: How Energy Efficiency Can Improve Low Income and Underserved Communities*, by Ariel Dreholz and Lauren Ross

LICP SURVEY INSIGHT

## Trade-offs



36% of the 18- to 24-year-old segment identified that they delay or skip **food** because of their utility bills.



### Survey Question

Do your utility bills cause you to delay or skip necessary spending or payments in any of the following categories? Please select all of that apply.

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First appeared as part of the conference materials for the  
16<sup>th</sup> Annual Renewable Energy Law Institute session

"Energy Insecurity and Other Issues for Underserved Communities"