

ADDENDUM TO HINESBURG HOUSING NEEDS ASSESSMENT
 July 24, 2018

FR: John Ryan
 TO: Hinesburg Affordable Housing Committee
 RE Poverty Data Provided in 2017 Housing Needs Assessment

In response to questions about the poverty data provided in the December 2017 Housing Needs Assessment, I reviewed the last five five-year American Community Surveys (ACS) including the recently published 2012-2016 ACS. The ACS reports the following:

S1701: POVERTY STATUS IN THE PAST 12 MONTHS

Below poverty level										
	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	Ave	Ave Pop	Ave % of Pop	2016 County	2016 State
Population for whom poverty status is determined	439	386	269	271	149	303	4441	6.8%	11.5%	11.6%
Under 18 years	215	179	102	105	10	122	1021	12.0%	12.5%	15.1%
18 to 64 years	193	194	154	154	125	164	2890	5.7%	12.2%	11.6%
65 years and over	31	13	13	12	14	17	530	3.1%	6.5%	7.4%

If we take each of the ACS survey numbers to be accurate then the overall poverty rate in town has increased from 3.4% to 9.8% from 2012 to 2016 and the child poverty has increased by more than 20 fold during that period. I did not uncover anything in the data that corroborates this kind of increase. At this point, I can see three options:

- 1) Don't provide any poverty data by age as there is no way to accurately predict where in the margin of error in these number lie.
- 2) Use just the 2016 number including the Margin or Error and footnote it as being of questionable validity as follows:

	2016	Margin of Error	Town %	Margin %	2016 County	2016 State
Population for whom poverty status is determined	439	+/-228	9.8%	+/- 5.1%	11.5%	11.6%
Under 18 years	215	+/-145	19.2%	+/- 13.8%	12.5%	15.1%
18 to 64 years	193	+/-92	6.9%	+/- 3.4%	12.2%	11.6%
65 years and over	31	+/-34	5.5%	+/- 6.2%	6.5%	7.4%

3) Print the average of the five rolling five-year surveys as show at the outset of the report and consider that to be the most accurate representation of the current reality. There is nothing about this approach that I would consider better than Option 1 except that it gives us a number. When we look a the state and county numbers for 2016, this averaging approach produces numbers for child poverty that are consistent with state and county numbers; while the work age and senior poverty rates are less than half of these other entities

In the end, my recommendation is to drop the Poverty by Age numbers entirely, given the wide margins of error and focus on what is a clear trend showing an overall increase in the town's poverty rate of several years.