



ST. JOHN'S NORWOOD
Bethesda - Chevy Chase

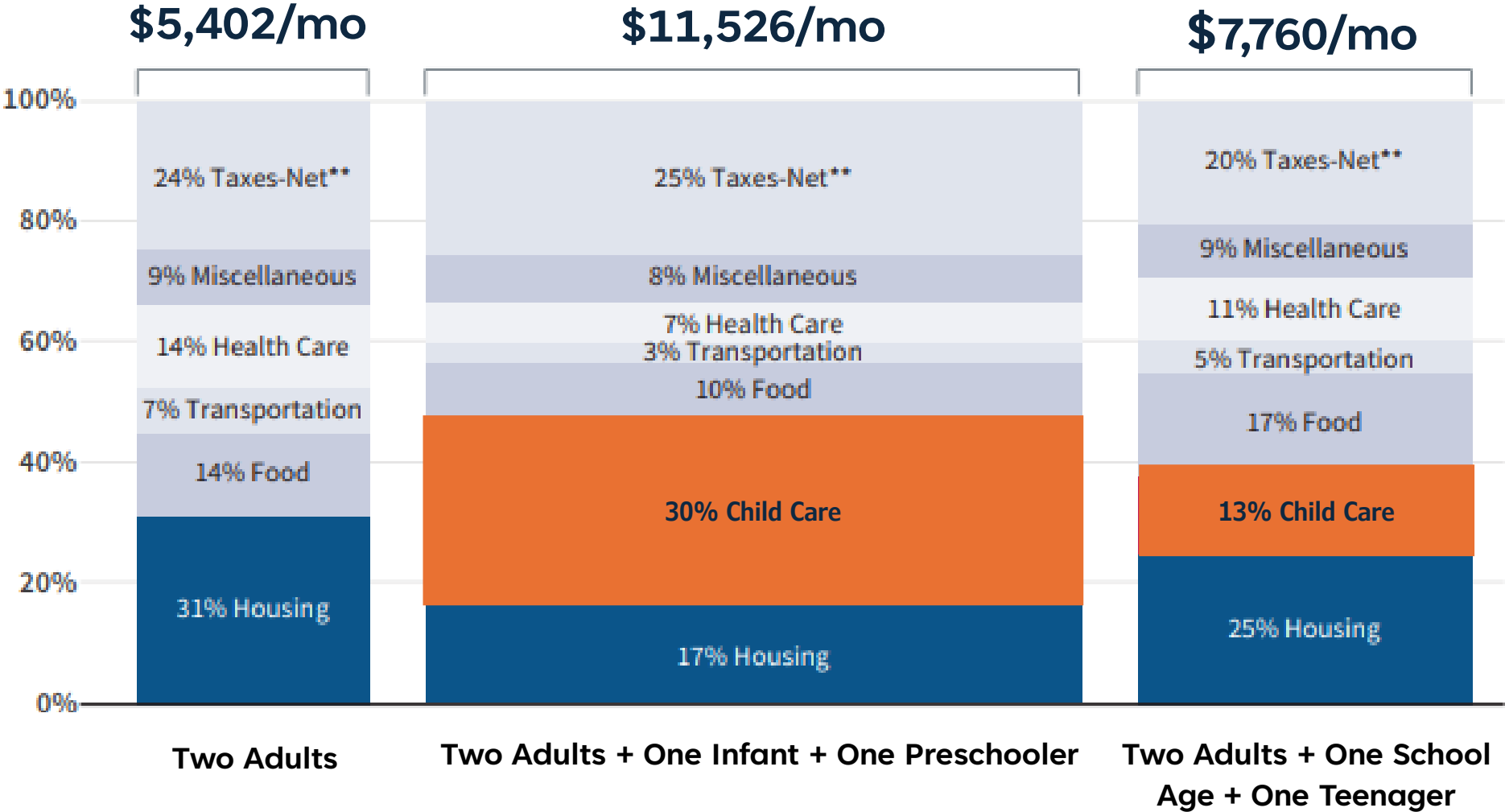
UNEVEN GROUND

A Call for Economic Justice

**Getting Settled Amidst the
Fading American Dream**

March 15, 2026

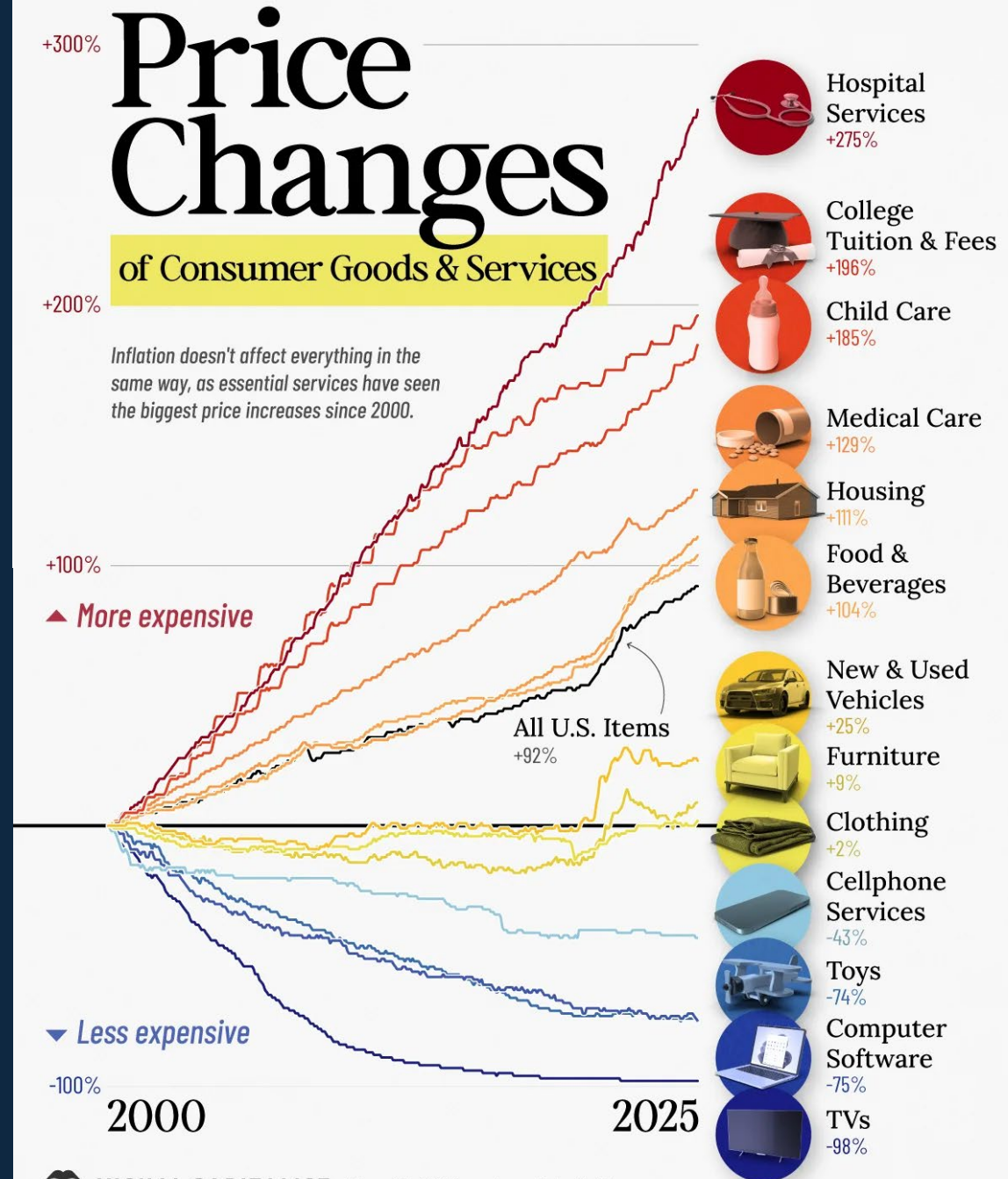
A minimum wage job (\$15.00-17.65/hr) comes nowhere close to supporting a family in Montgomery County



Source: [The Self-Sufficiency Standard for Montgomery County, Maryland 2023](#)

Inflation doesn't affect everything (or everybody) in the same way. Low-income families spend a higher percentage of their income on essentials, which have seen much bigger price increases since 2000.

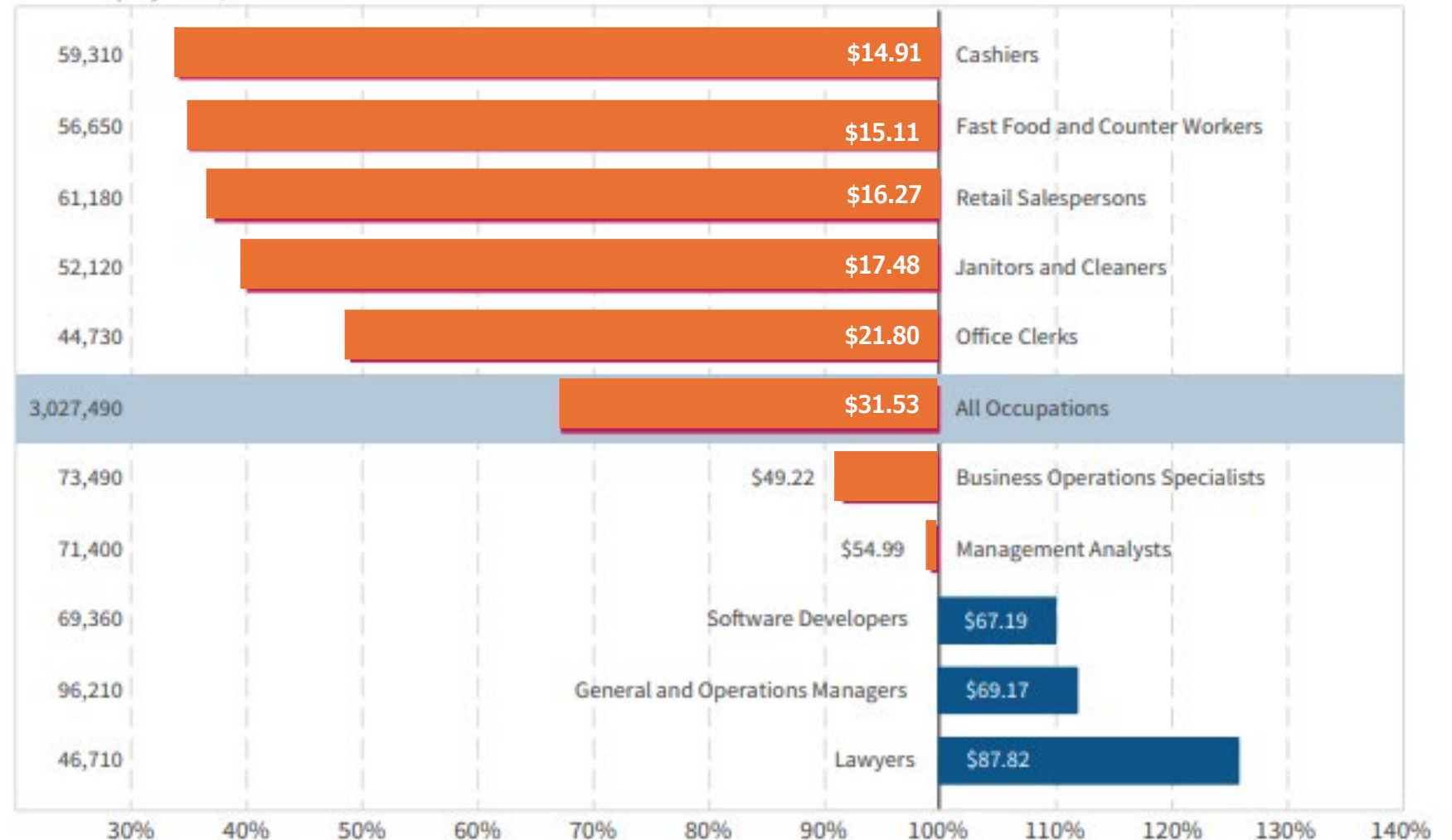
Hospital Services	+ 275%
Child Care	+ 196%
Medical Care	+ 129%
Housing	+ 111%
Food & Beverages	+ 104%
All Items (Average)	+ 92%



Is MoCo's
MEDIAN
wage even
enough?

One median
wage MoCo job
is not enough
for households
with younger
children.

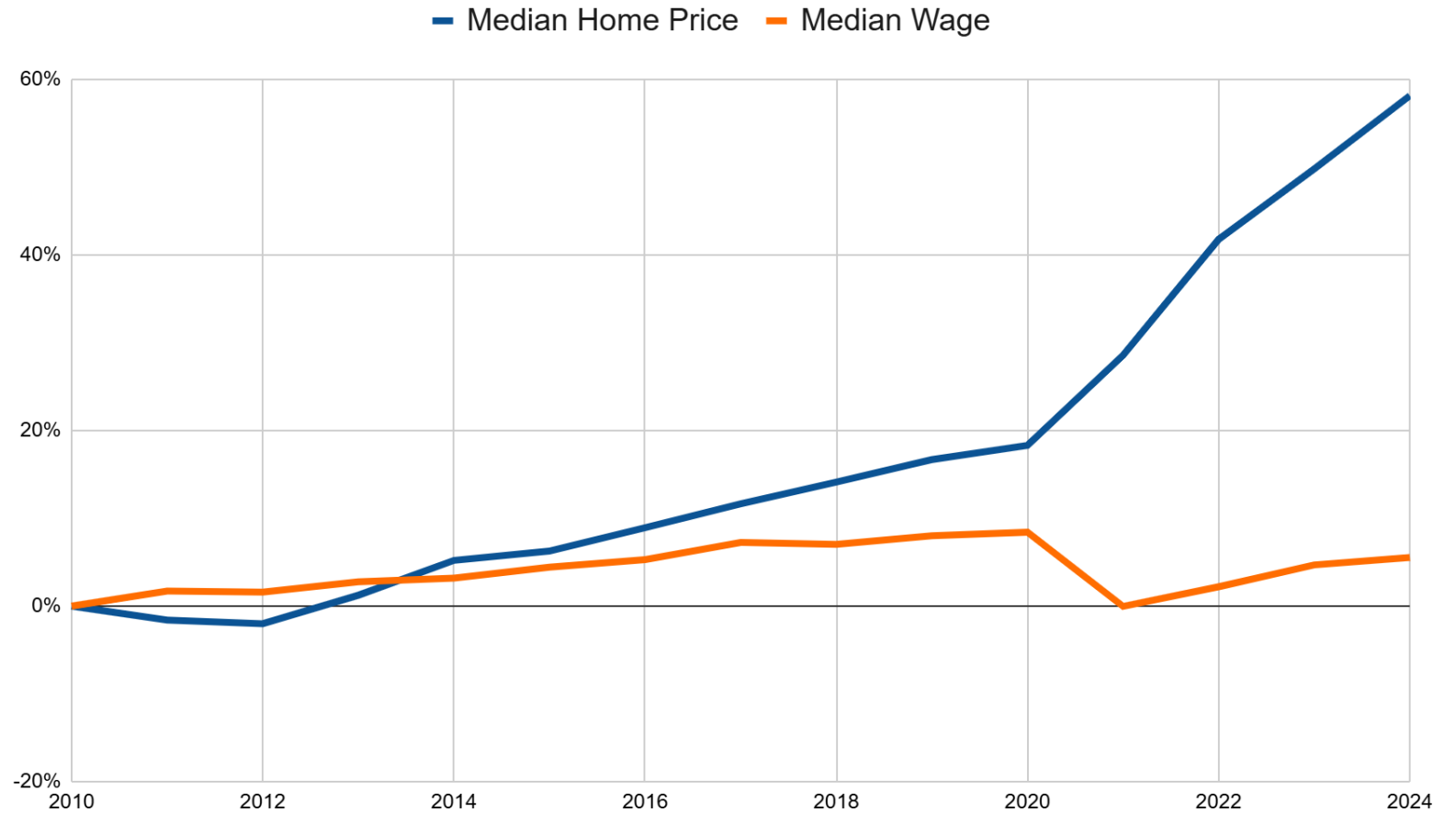
Median Hourly Wages of the Ten Largest Occupations in the DMV, Compared to the Montgomery County Self-Sufficiency Standard for a Household with One Adult, One Preschooler, and One School-Age Child



Source: [The Self-Sufficiency Standard for Montgomery County, Maryland 2023](#)

MoCo's median home price is rising at a much faster rate than MoCo's median wage.

Percent Increase in MoCo's Median Home Price vs. Median Wage

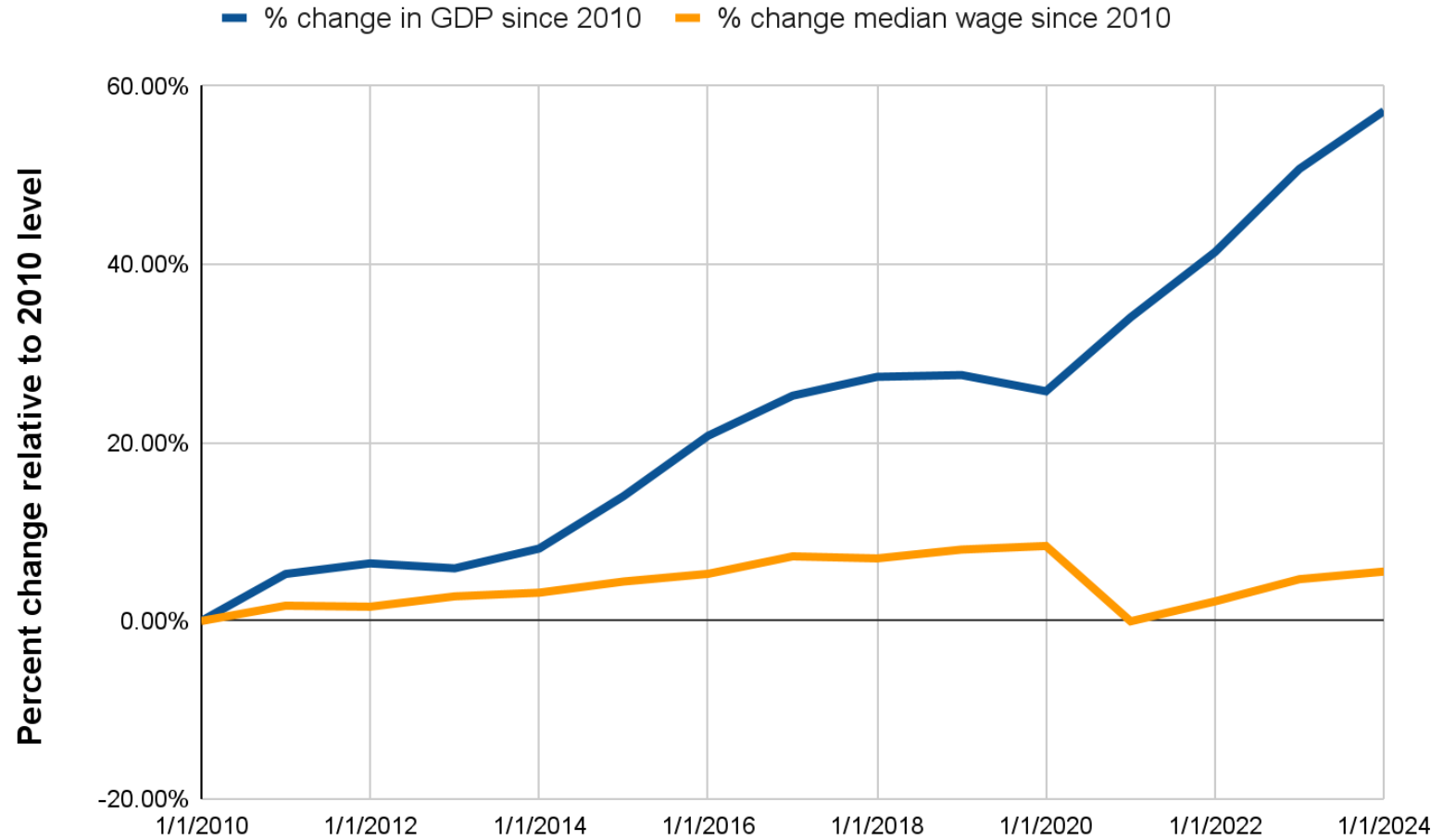


Home price data from fred.stlouisfed.org/series/ATNHPIUS24031A

Wage data from labor.maryland.gov/lmi/emppay/tab4mont.shtml

MoCo's economy is growing...

but little of that growth is benefitting workers.



GDP data from fred.stlouisfed.org/categories/28559

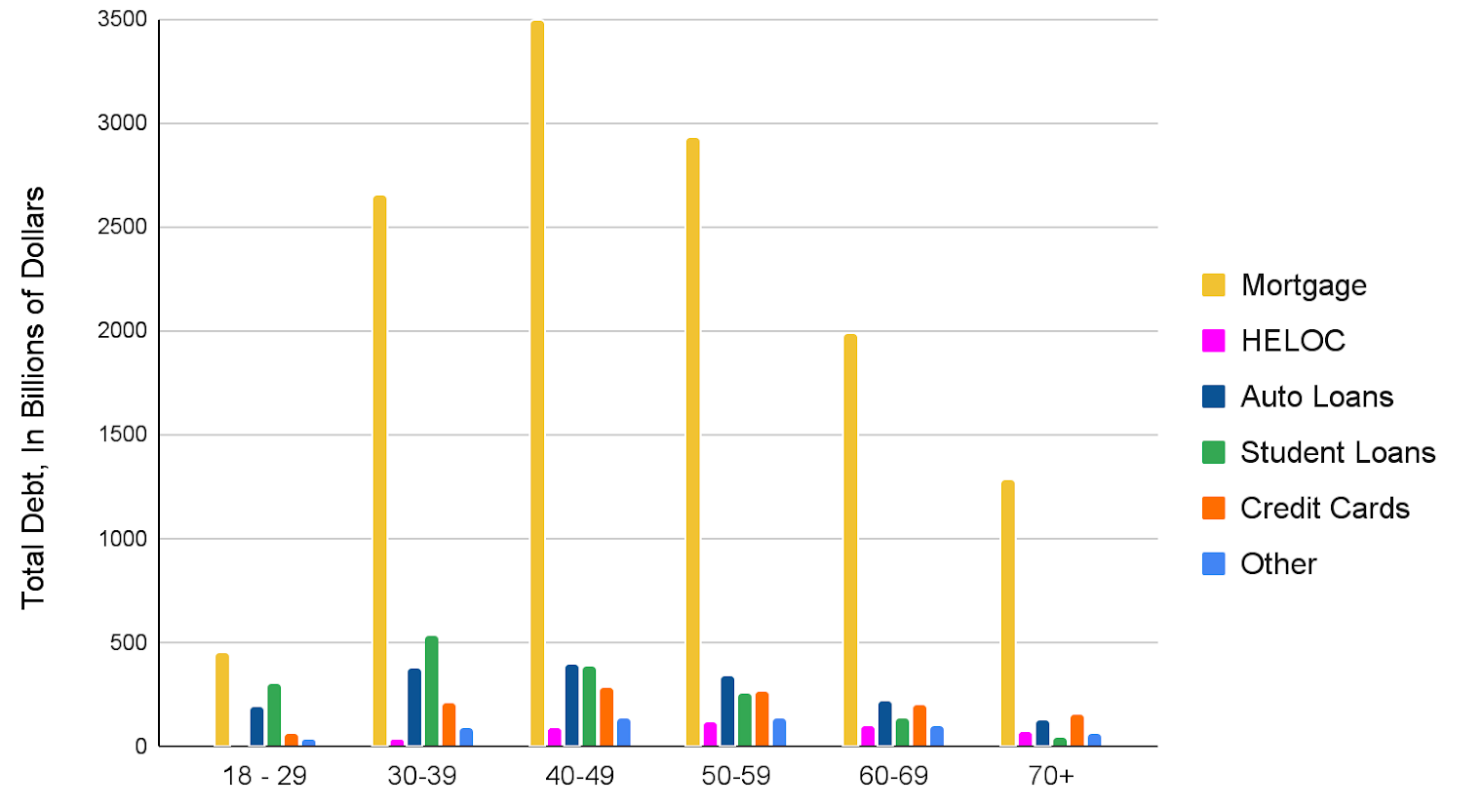
Wage data from labor.maryland.gov/lmi/emppay/tab4mont.shtml

Nationally, in 1973, the top 1 percent took home 9% of the income in the country. In 2023, the top 1 percent took home 26.5% of the country's income.

Last year Maryland led the nation in rising consumer debt.

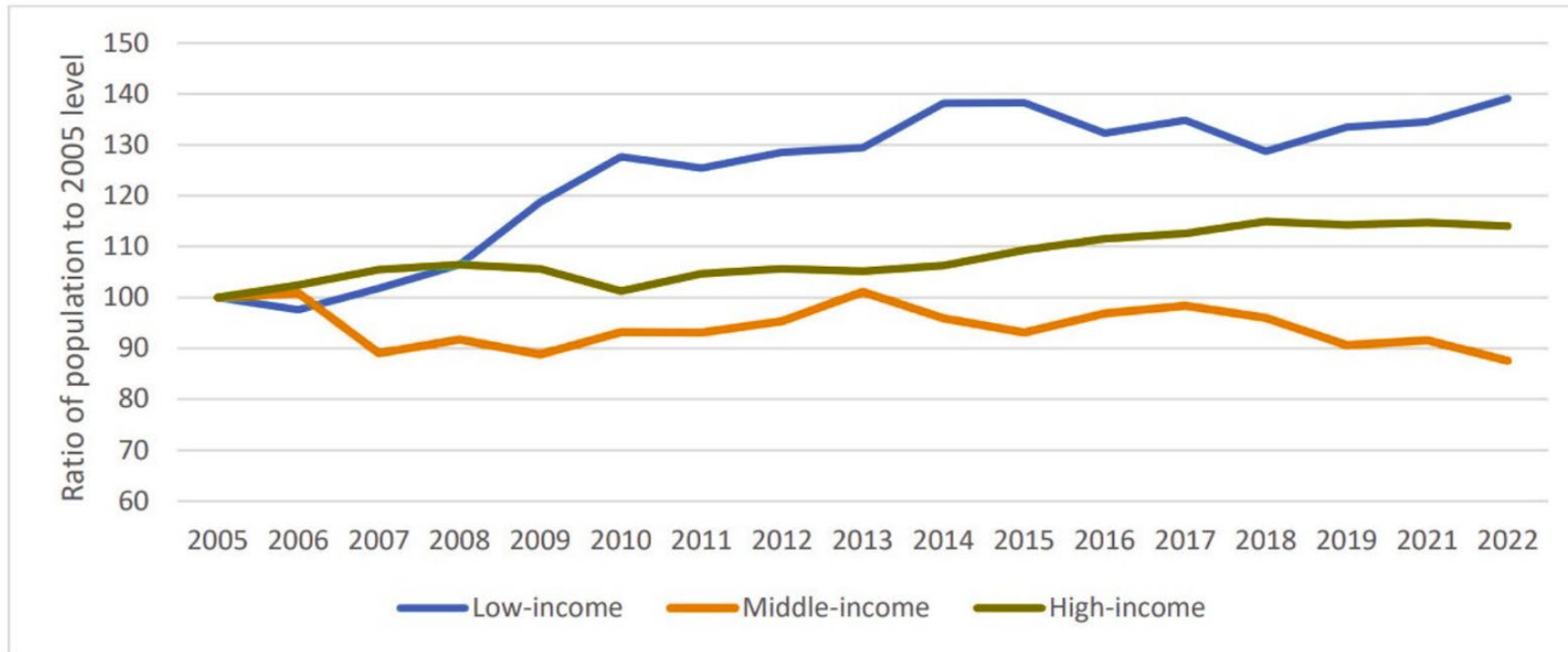
According to analysis from LendingTree, Maryland residents increased their debt balances by 10.3% in 2025 — the largest jump of any state.

Americans' Debt, by Type and Age Group



Data source: debt.org/faqs/americans-in-debt/demographics/

MoCo's middle-income households are disappearing.



Low-income = under 3x federal poverty level (up to \$83,000 for a family of 4 in 2022)

Middle-income = 3 to 5x federal poverty level (\$83,250 - \$138,740 for a family of 4 in 2022)

High-income = more than 5x federal poverty level (\$138,750 and up for a family of 4 in 2022)

Source: "Navigating Income Shifts in Montgomery County: Towards Shared Prosperity,"
montgomeryplanning.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/Income-Shifts-Research-Brief-Final.pdf