

# The Report on Human Rights Violations in The United States in 2022 (II) 2022年美国侵犯人权报告(下)

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## IV. Worsening Subsistence Crisis Among U.S. Underclass

The nation sees widening wealth gap, worsening living conditions for low-income groups, increasing homeless people, life-threatening drug abuse, and dropping average life expectancy. U.S. underclass is facing a severe survival crisis.

Wealth gap has further widened. The United States is a poor society with many super riches. Through an in-depth analysis of the U.S. society, the *New Class Society: Goodbye American Dream?*, demonstrates the wide range of inequalities based on class, gender and race in the United States. Co-authored by Earl Wysong, professor of sociology at Indiana University Kokomo, Robert Perrucci, professor of sociology at Purdue University, and David Wright, professor of sociology at Wichita State University, the fourth edition of this book shows that a new polarized double-diamond social structure has emerged, featuring a privileged class, consisting of the top 20 percent of the population who are wealthy, and a new working class, consisting of 80 percent of the population who live at the bottom of society and are getting increasingly poor and unstable. According to data published by Statista Research Department, Sept. 30, 2022, the Gini coefficient in the United States rose to a record high of 0.49 in 2021, as the poverty rate rose for the second year in a row with 37.9 million people living in poverty. The U.S. Federal Reserve statistics show that the total wealth of the richest 1 percent of the U.S. population reached a record 45.9 trillion U.S. dollars at the end of the fourth quarter of 2021 and their fortunes have increased by more than 12 trillion dollars, or more than a third, during the COVID-19 pandemic. Of the approximately 1.7 trillion dollars in excess savings held by American families as of mid-2022, about 1.35 trillion dollars was held by the top half of earners, while just 350 billion dollars by the bottom half.

Inflation continues to hurt low-income households. While U.S. residents' savings have run down, necessities like car repair, food and housing become sharply more expensive, *The New York Times* reported on Nov. 25, 2022. At the same time, prices climbed 7.7 percent in the year through October, having the most severe negative impact on low-income groups. Lael Brainard, a governor of the Federal Reserve, said that low-income households spend 77 percent of their income on necessities, compared to only 31 percent by higher-income households. An analysis released by National Energy Assistance Directors Association on April 12,

## 四、底层民众基本生存危机加重

美国社会贫富差距继续拉大，低收入群体生活条件急剧恶化，无家可归者大幅增加，毒品药品滥用严重危及生命健康，人均预期寿命大幅下降。底层民众基本生存面临重大危机。

贫富鸿沟进一步拉大。美国是拥有众多顶级富豪的贫困社会。印第安纳大学科科莫分校教授厄尔·怀松、普渡大学教授罗伯特·佩卢奇和威奇塔州立大学教授大卫·赖特合著的《新阶级社会：美国梦的终结？（第四版）》通过对美国社会的深入分析研究指出，美国社会中存在大范围的以阶级、性别和种族为基础的不平等形式。富裕而稳固的“特权阶级”（20%的人口）和越来越多贫困而不稳固的“新工人阶级”（80%的人口）构成了两极化的双钻石型的新阶级体系。Statista全球统计数据库2022年9月30日公布的数据显示，2021年，美国的基尼系数升至0.49，创历史新高；3790万人处于贫困状态，贫困率连续第二年攀升。美联储的统计数据显示，2021年第四季度末，美国1%人口的总财富达到创纪录的45.9万亿美元，他们的财富在新冠疫情大流行期间增加了12万亿美元以上，增幅超过三分之一。截至2022年年中，在美国家庭保有的约1.7万亿美元超额储蓄中，收入位居前50%的人口拥有约1.35万亿美元，而后一半的收入者仅有3500亿美元。

通货膨胀继续冲击低收入家庭生活。《纽约时报》2022年11月25日报道，在美国居民储蓄减少的同时，汽车维修、食品和住房等必需品的价格却急剧上涨。截至2022年10月，美国物价比2021年同期上涨7.7%，这对低收入群体产生了最严重的负面影响。美国联邦储备委员会理事布雷纳德表示，低收入家庭要将超过70%的收入用于购买必需品，而高收入家庭的这一支出比例仅为31%。美国全国能源援助理事会2022年4月12日的调查发

2022, showed that for low and moderate income families, which make up the bottom 40 percent of households in the U.S. society, sharp rises in energy prices would force many of them out of basic goods and services due to extra energy bills.

The homeless has dramatically increased. According to the 2022 Annual Homelessness Assessment Report released by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, over 580,000 Americans experienced homeless on a single night in 2022, with 40 percent of them living in unsheltered locations such as on the street, in abandoned buildings, or in other places not suitable for human habitation. Over the past three years, the number of people of no fixed abode increased by at least 22,500 to 173,800 in California. However, the state only provides about 5,000 beds for the homeless, down from a maximum of more than 16,000 rooms in August 2020, according to the state Department of Social Services. The *Los Angeles Times* reported on December 21, 2022, that the number of the homeless in Long Beach, California, increased dramatically by 62 percent from that of 2020, including 1,282 chronically homeless people with disabilities.

According to a research published in the *California Law Review* by Sara K. Rankin, a professor at School of Law of Seattle University and the founder and director of the Homeless Rights Advocacy Project, homeless people in the United States are usually the “marginalized groups, such as refugees, people of color, and poor people” who are subjected to persecution, detention, incarceration, or segregation that prevents them from integrating into their communities. This exposes the systemic discrimination that exists in the United States.

Average life expectancy has significantly declined. A report released by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s National Center for Health Statistics in August 2022 showed that U.S. life expectancy fell by a total of 2.7 years between 2019 and 2021 to 76.1 years, the lowest it has been since 1996. Non-Hispanic Native American and Alaska Native peoples saw the biggest decline—a staggering 6.6 years. Dramatic declines in life expectancy are rare in peacetime. Data released by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention show that, as of Dec. 29, 2022, the United States reported more than 1.08 million COVID-19 deaths, including more than 260,000 in 2022. While U.S. politicians are tight-lipped about the country’s average life expectancy, it is probably the most important measure in assessing how good life is in a country and even, to some extent, how great a country is, reported German newspaper *Die Welt* on Jan. 15, 2023. In addition to the COVID-19 pandemic, the causes of the dramatic decline in life expectancy in the United States include drug abuse, gun violence and etc. According to a joint study published in the *British Medical Journal* by scholars from Virginia Commonwealth University, University of Colorado Boulder, and Urban Institute, the deteriorating health situation, high mortality rates and continued injustice against minorities in the United States are largely the product of long-term policy choices and systemic racism. The mass mortality of COVID-19 reflects not only inappropriate U.S. policy choices in response to the pandemic, but also the deep-rooted causes of the deteriorating health situation in the United States over the past decades.

The U.S. government actively promotes the legalization of marijuana regardless of people’s health. Marijuana is a controlled narcotic drug by the UN International Drug Control Conventions. In the 1970s, the United States promulgated the Controlled

Act, for the bottom 40% of the U.S. society, energy prices would force many of them out of basic goods and services due to extra energy bills. For the bottom 40% of the U.S. society, energy prices would force many of them out of basic goods and services due to extra energy bills.

无家可归者大幅上升。根据美国住房和城市发展部的数据，2022年日均有58.25万美国人无家可归，其中40%只能居住在缺乏庇护的街道、废弃建筑或其他恶劣环境中。加利福尼亚州过去3年中没有稳定住所的人数至少增加了2.25万人，达到17.38万人，但该州为无家可归者提供的庇护居所却由2020年8月最多时的16000多个房间减少到约5000个床位。《洛杉矶时报》2022年12月21日报道，加利福尼亚州长滩市的无家可归者相比2020年大幅增长了62%，其中还包括1282名长期无家可归的残疾人。西雅图大学法学院教授、无家可归者权利倡导组织创始人莎拉·兰金在《加州法律评论》上发表的研究指出，美国的无家可归者往往是“残疾人、黑人、移民、难民、性少数等边缘群体”，他们所遭受的迫害、拘留、监禁或隔离使其无法融入社区。这暴露了美国存在的系统性歧视。

人均预期寿命大幅下降。美国疾病控制和预防中心下属全国健康状况统计中心2022年8月发布的报告显示，2019年至2021年，美国人均预期寿命下降了2.7岁，至76.1岁，降至1996年来新低。其中非拉美裔美洲印第安人、阿拉斯加原住民群体的人均预期寿命降幅最大，达到了惊人的6.6岁。在和平时期，人均预期寿命大幅下降是罕见的。美国疾病控制和预防中心发布的数据显示，截至2022年12月29日，美国累计新冠死亡病例超过108万人，其中2022年新冠死亡病例超过26万人。德国《世界报》2023年1月15日报道称，人均预期寿命或许是衡量一个国家生活质量有多好，甚至在某种程度上是衡量一个国家有多伟大的最重要标准，美国政客却对此讳莫如深。除新冠疫情外，造成美国人均预期寿命急剧下降的原因还包括药物滥用、枪支泛滥等。弗吉尼亚联邦大学、科罗拉多大学博尔德分校和城市研究所的学者在《英国医学杂志》上发表的共同研究指出，美国健康水平的不断恶化、死亡率高企以及对少数族裔的持续不公，很大程度上是长期政策选择和系统性种族主义的产物。因新冠疫情造成的大量死亡，不仅体现了美国对疫情大流行的政策选择和不当处理，也反映了几十年来导致美国健康水平恶化的根深蒂固的原因。

美国政府罔顾民众健康积极推进大麻合法化。大麻是联合国禁毒公约中被管制的麻醉药品。美国于20世纪70年代颁布《管控药物法》，将大麻列为联邦一级管控

Substances Act (CSA), which classified marijuana as a federally controlled substance. The federal and state governments of the United States have failed to regulate drugs and substance abuse and even pushed for the legalization of marijuana under the influence of lobbyists groups, resulting in more and more young people becoming victims. In their book *Can Legal Weed Win? The Blunt Realities of Cannabis Economics* published in 2022, Robin Goldstein and Daniel Sumner, researchers with the University of California, Davis, underlined that one of the pipe dreams behind the legalization push is the intention to make legal cannabis a new cash cow for the government through tax. Marijuana sales in the United States have exceeded 30 billion dollars so far, and the U.S. marijuana market is expected to reach 65 billion dollars by 2030. According to the data released by Open Secrets, from 2018 to 2021, some marijuana and products-related enterprises and trade associations in the United States spent more than 16.6 million dollars on political lobbying, with an average annual expenditure of about 10 times that of 2016; In the first three quarters of 2022, more than 5.6 million dollars were spent on marijuana lobbying. Enterprises and organizations profiting from marijuana trade money for power, and form interest groups with politicians, thereby letting drugs and substance abuse go unchecked, a striking demonstration of Washington's failure in social governance.

Drugs and substance abuse endanger life and health. According to a survey released by U.S. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, 59.3 million Americans over 12 years of age abused drugs in 2020, of which 49.6 million smoked marijuana. According to public information on the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), nearly 40 percent of American high school students use marijuana for a long time. According to a report released by the U.S. National Institutes of Health in August 2022, 43 percent of young Americans have smoked marijuana in a year, 8 percent have used hallucinogens, and 11 percent have smoked marijuana every day, the highest level in record. According to a study released by the Manhattan Institute for Policy Studies on August 4, 2022, the number of Americans dying from drugs and drug abuse has increased dramatically in recent years, by more than 100,000 per year. More than 107,000 cases involving deaths from drug overdose occurred in the 12-month period ending in August 2022, according to data from the U.S. CDC. Marta Sokolowska, the Deputy Center Director for Substance Use and Behavioral Health in FDA's Center for Drug Evaluation and Research, pointed out that drug abuse has become one of the most devastating public health crises in the United States.

The absence of governance endangers environmental rights. The American Broadcasting Company reported on June 21, 2022, that in Louisiana, a large amount of industrial waste has led to many "cancer alleys" along the Mississippi River, which has a 95-percent higher risk of cancer due to air pollution than the rest of the country. The *Chicago Tribune* reported on July 13, 2022, that at least one per- and poly-fluoroalkyl substance, known as forever chemicals, that may be harmful to health was detected in the drinking water of more than 8 million residents in Illinois, accounting for about 60 percent of the local population. In the context of the deteriorating environmental situation, the United States Supreme Court ruled in June 2022 that the Environmental Protection Agency had no right to regulate carbon emissions without authorization from Congress, nor could it require power plants to switch from fossil fuels to renewable energy. Stephane Dujarric,

物质。美国联邦和各州政府对毒品和药物滥用监管不力，甚至在利益集团游说下不断推动立法使大麻等合法化，导致越来越多青少年成为受害者。加州大学戴维斯分校学者罗宾·戈尔茨坦和丹尼尔·萨姆纳2022年共同出版的研究专著中指出，推动大麻合法化的“白日梦”之一，是意图通过税收使合法大麻“成为政府新的摇钱树”。目前美国的大麻销售额已超过300亿美元，预计2030年美国大麻市场将达到650亿美元。根据“公开秘密”发布的数据，2018年至2021年，美国一些大麻及制品相关企业、行业协会等累计花费1660多万美元用于政治游说，年均花费是2016年的约10倍；2022年用于大麻的游说金额超过560万美元。大麻利益相关企业、组织和政客进行钱权交易，形成利益集团，放任毒品和药物滥用愈演愈烈，“折射出美政府社会治理的失败”。

毒品和药物滥用危及生命健康。美国药物滥用与心理健康服务局的一份调查显示，2020年有5930万12岁以上的美国人滥用毒品，其中4960万人吸食大麻。美国疾病控制和预防中心网站的公开信息显示，近四成美国高中生长期使用大麻。美国国立卫生研究院2022年8月发布的一份报告显示，一年内吸食过大麻的美国年轻人比例达43%，使用过致幻剂的美国年轻人比例达8%，有11%的年轻人每天吸食大麻，达到历史最高水平。曼哈顿政策研究所2022年8月4日发布的研究报告指出，近年来死于毒品和药物滥用的美国人急剧增加，每年超过10万人。美国疾病控制和预防中心的临时数据显示，在截至2022年8月的12个月期间，发生了超过10.7万起药物过量死亡事件。美国药物评价与研究物质使用和行为健康中心副主任玛尔塔·索科沃夫斯卡指出，药物滥用已经成为美国最具破坏性的公共卫生危机之一。

治理缺位危害环境权。美国广播公司2022年6月21日报道，在路易斯安那州，大量排放的工业废料致使密西西比河沿岸出现诸多“癌症巷”地区，该地区民众因空气污染而患癌的风险较美国其他地区高出95%。《芝加哥论坛报》2022年7月13日报道，在伊利诺伊州，占当地人口约60%的逾800万居民的饮用水中，检测到至少含一种可能有损健康的“永久性化学物质”。在环境形势日趋恶化的背景下，美国联邦最高法院却于2022年6月裁定，美国环境保护局无权在未得到美国国会授权的情况下，在州层面限制温室气体排放量，也不得要求发电厂放弃化石燃料转用可再生能源。联合国秘书长发言人杜加里克指出，美国联邦最高法院的这一裁决，是“全球应对气候变化的一次挫折”。