

# **The Impact of Place and Segregation on Equal Opportunities and Access to Resources**

**April 28, 2004**

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# Today

- Neighborhoods, segregation and health
- Racial disparities in neighborhood environment and in opportunities in metropolitan areas
- Some examples of room for policy action

# What do we know about neighborhoods, segregation and health?

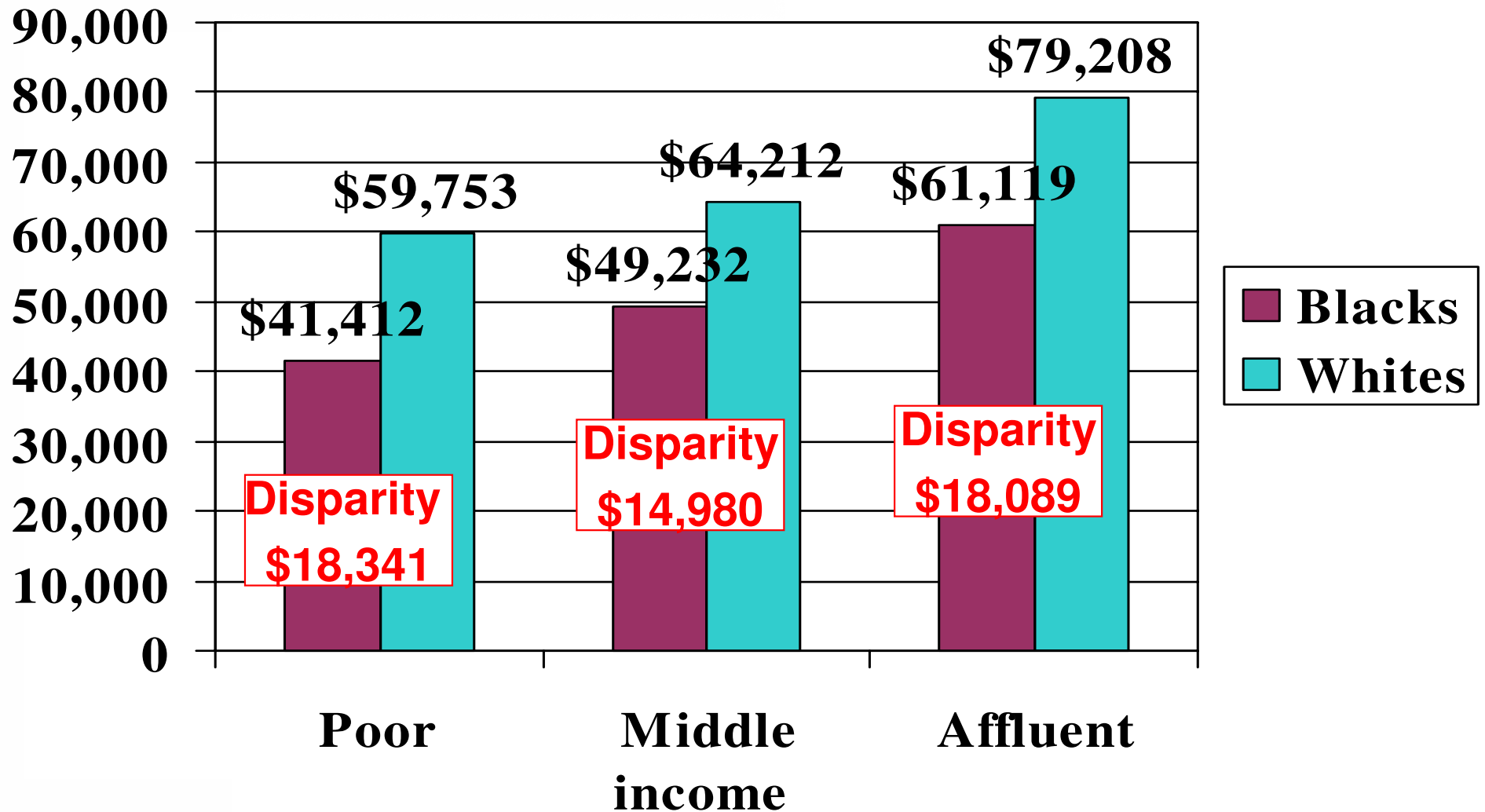
- Comparable individuals experience better health (e.g. better mental health, lower obesity rates) in low-poverty neighborhoods than in high poverty neighborhoods—strongest evidence comes from Moving to Opportunity policy demonstration.
- In metropolitan areas where racial residential segregation is higher, adult and infant mortality rates, and low birthweight rates among African Americans are higher.

# **Why may neighborhoods and metropolitan areas matter for health?**

- Metropolitan areas are highly residentially segregated along racial lines across neighborhoods.
- There are sharp disparities in neighborhood environment along racial lines.
- The opportunities available to racial minorities in metropolitan areas are more limited than the opportunities available to the majority population.

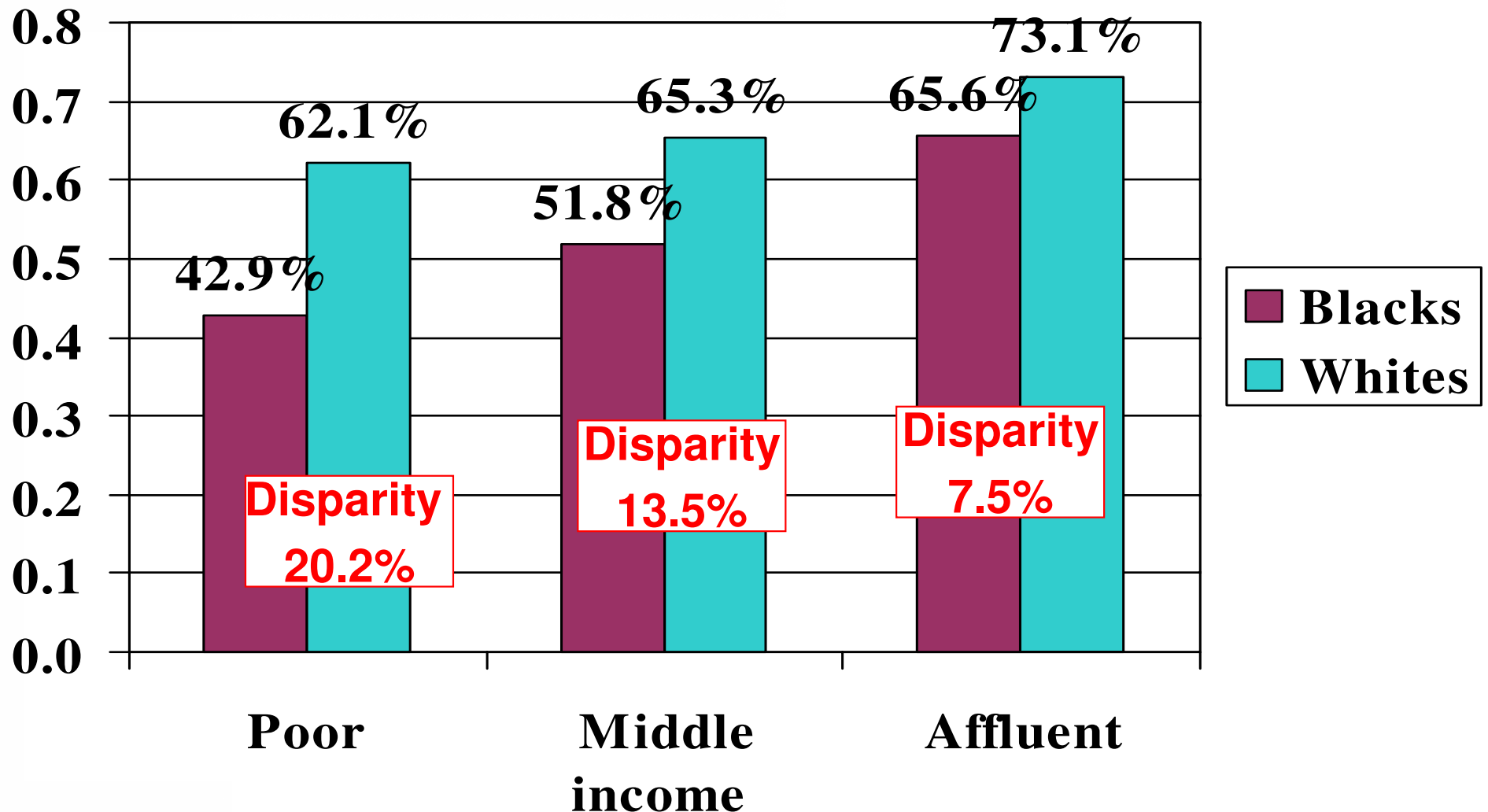
# Washington DC: Racial disparities in neighborhood median income

Source: Lewis Mumford Center for Comparative Urban and Regional Research

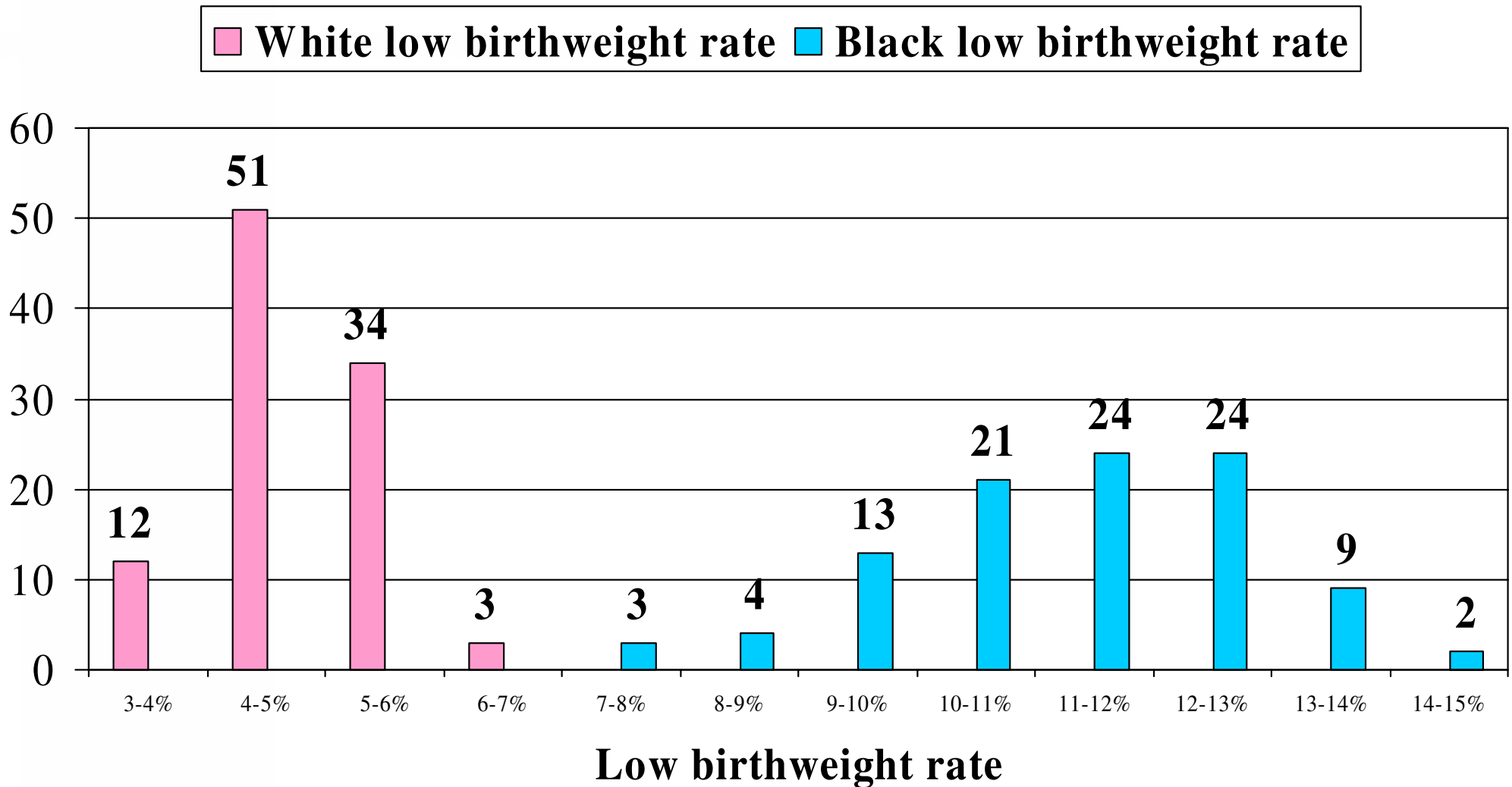


# Washington DC: Racial disparities in neighborhood homeownership rates

Source: Lewis Mumford Center for Comparative Urban and Regional Research

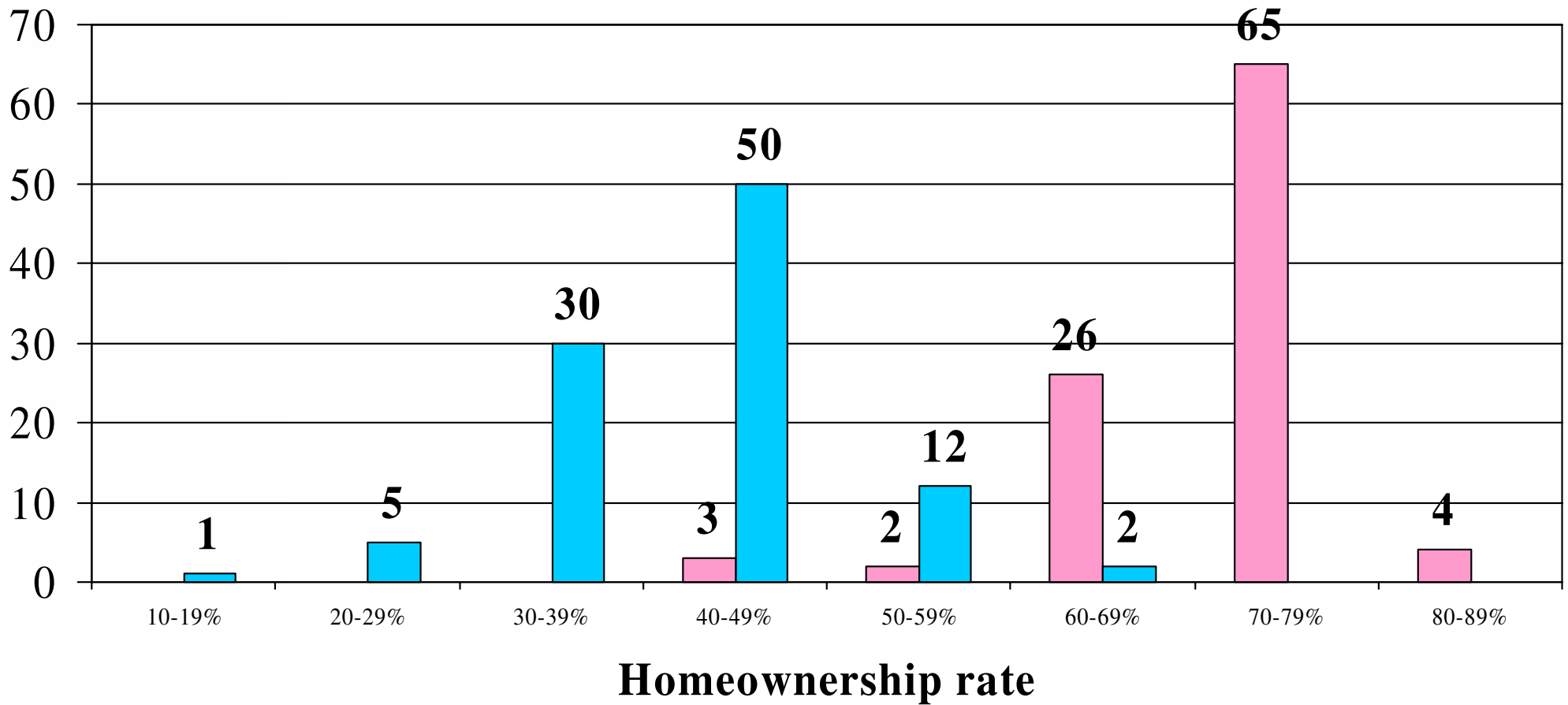


# Distribution of White and Black Rates of Low Birthweight for 100 Largest Metro Areas, 1998



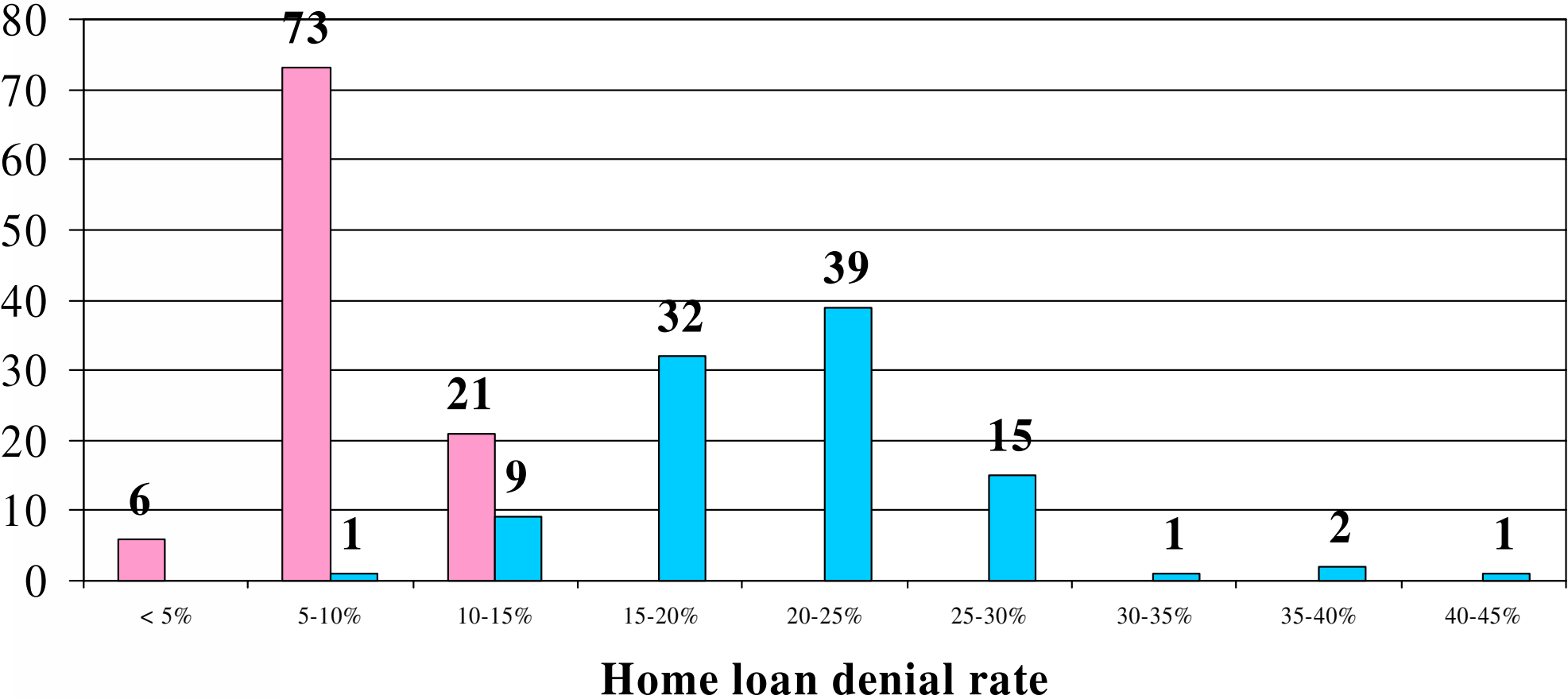
# Distribution of Black vs. White Home Ownership Rates in 100 Largest Metropolitan Areas, 2000

White homeownership rate Black homeownership rate



# Distribution of White vs. Black Home Loan Denial Rates Among Affluent Applicants, Largest 100 Metropolitan Areas, 2000

White home loan denial rate    Black home loan denial rate



# Room for policy action

## **Addressing metropolitan fragmentation:**

- Local control over land use, and taxes/public services creates segmentation of municipalities by property values.
- Therefore, local land use regulations in turn result in segregation by income and race/ethnicity, and unequal spatial access to public goods (e.g. education)

# Room for policy action

## **Strengthening housing mobility:**

- Section 8 voucher program has been shown to improve neighborhood conditions (e.g. lower neighborhood poverty rates) for households receiving housing assistance.

# Room for policy action

## **Strengthening enforcement of housing anti-discrimination:**

- Housing discrimination decreased from 1989 to 2000, but African Americans (and other minorities) still face adverse treatment in rental and sales housing markets.

# Summary

- Poor neighborhood conditions and residential segregation are detrimental to health.
- Metropolitan areas provide markedly different access to opportunities for black Americans than for white Americans.
- Policies to correct disparities in opportunity in metropolitan areas may help address racial disparities in health.