

Locked Out:
California's Affordable Housing Crisis



HOUSING FACTS: CALIFORNIA

- ✓ California's homeownership rate in 1999 was only 55.7 percent, compared to 66.8 percent for the nation as a whole.
- ✓ Nearly half (47 percent) of renters in California's metropolitan areas pay more than 30 percent of their incomes toward rent. Nearly a quarter (24 percent) pay more than half of their incomes toward rent (1997).
- ✓ Low income renters (those with household incomes under \$15,000 per year) outnumber low cost rental units (those renting for less than \$400 per month) in California's metropolitan areas by a ratio of 2.1-to-1 (1997).
- ✓ California issued building permits for only 1.1 million housing units in the 1990s, compared to 2.0 million in the 1980s and 2.2 million in the 1970s. During the 1980s, multifamily housing constituted nearly half (45 percent) of new permits issued, compared to only a quarter (25 percent) in the 1990s.
- ✓ California needs to add 1.26 million units, consisting of 703,285 owner-occupied units and 561,180 rental units, between 1997 and 2003 in order to meet projected demand. Just 376,896 units of housing were built in the state during the past three years.
- ✓ California added 3.9 jobs for each new unit of housing from 1994 to 1998, more than twice the 1.5-to-1 ratio recommended by housing policy experts.
- ✓ Only 37 percent of California households in 1999 could afford to buy the median priced home in their area, compared to 55 percent nationally.
- ✓ More than 180,000 affordable units in California are at risk of conversion to market rents over the next decade.
- ✓ An estimated 361,700 Californians were homeless in 1996-97, just over one out of every hundred (1.1 percent).