



Demystifying
THE DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
A Quarterly Series

CARE

*Community Awareness,
Response, & Engagement*

**We will begin the
presentation
momentarily.**



Agenda

I. Welcome

II. Housing Justice Team Presentation

III. Questions from Audience

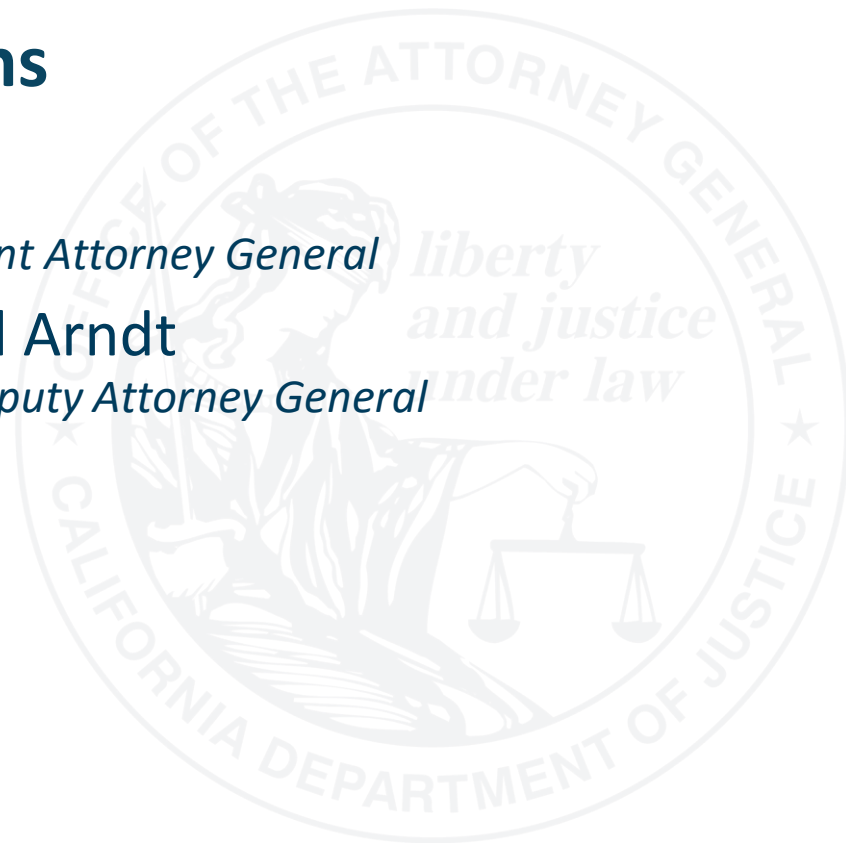
IV. Thank you

Demystifying
THE DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE



Introductions

- Alex Fisch
Special Assistant Attorney General
- Christina Bull Arndt
Supervising Deputy Attorney General



A Sense of Urgency

Housing Justice Team launched by Attorney General Rob Bonta on November 3, 2021

Objectives:

- Enforce state housing and development laws in the Attorney General's independent capacity and on behalf of DOJ's client agencies including the California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD).
- Enforce state and federal law on mortgage origination and servicing, as well as tenant rights and other consumer protection laws.
- Issue consumer alerts advising tenants and homeowners of their protections under state and federal law.
- Issue guidance letters to local governments on state housing laws.
- Defend state housing and tenant protection laws from legal challenges.
- Advocate with the state legislature, federal agencies, and other state agencies to advance housing rights.

“When it comes to addressing our housing crisis, there's not a moment to waste” – Attorney General Bonta



A Sense of Urgency

Delivering results:

- A [settlement](#) with the City of Coronado that will allow for the development of 912 housing units.
- A [settlement](#) with the City of San Bernardino that will allow for the development of 8,123 housing units.
- A [settlement](#) with Green Valley Corporation, a San Jose-based housing developer and property manager also known as Swenson Builders, to resolve allegations that the company violated the California Tenant Protection Act.
- A [\\$3.5 million settlement](#) with Wedgewood, a Los Angeles county-based real estate investment company, resolving allegations that Wedgewood unlawfully evicted tenants from properties purchased at foreclosure sales.

More Results

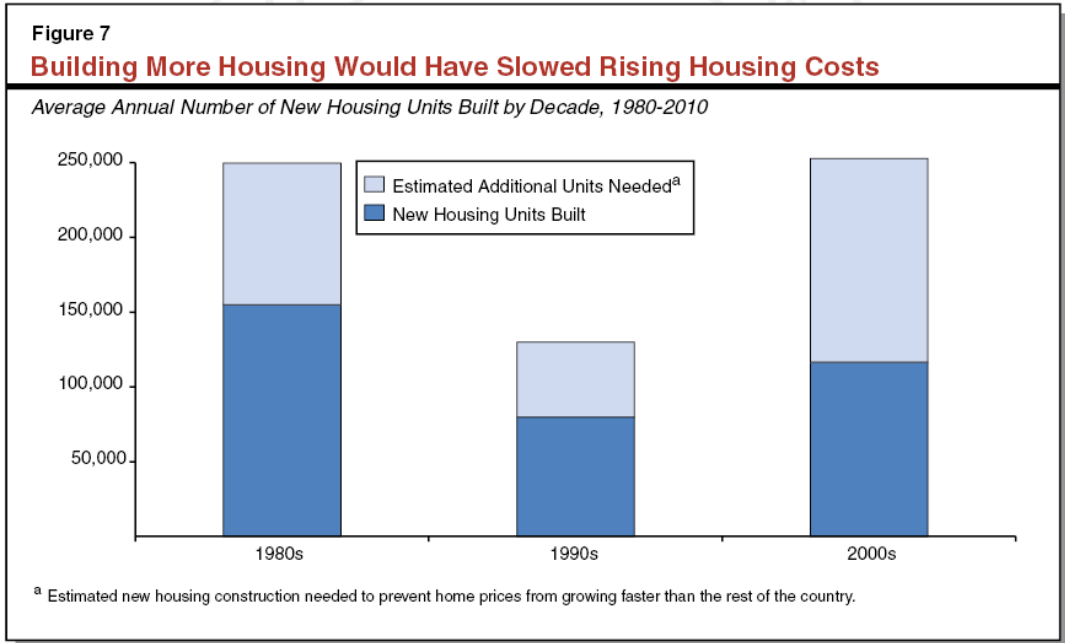
- A [lawsuit](#) against the City of Elk Grove over its failure to approve a housing proposal that would create 66 apartments for lower-income households at risk of homelessness.
- A [lawsuit](#) against the City of Huntington Beach for its failure to adopt a compliant housing element. The housing element is a crucial tool for building housing for moderate-, low-, and very low-income Californians.
- Successfully defending state laws, like the [Regional Housing Needs Allocation \(RHNA\)](#), from jurisdictions challenging their obligation to plan and zone for more housing.
- Sponsoring and supporting housing bills, such as [Assembly Bill 1485](#), which was signed into law by Governor Gavin Newsom and will permit the Attorney General to automatically intervene in lawsuits brought by third parties for alleged violations of state housing laws.

Still more results

- Reminding local governments of the strict requirements for “[urgency zoning ordinances](#),” and discouraging the [abuse](#) of such ordinances to limit or circumvent state housing laws.
- Issuing [letters](#) to all housing authorities in the state, reminding them that tenants who receive Section 8 Housing Choice Vouchers are protected under California’s Tenant Protection Act.
- Issuing [legal guidance](#) about steps law enforcement officers should take to prevent and respond to unlawful lockouts and self-help evictions.
- Reminding California’s tenants of their [rights and protections](#) under state law, including limits on rent increases.
- Announcing [statewide guidance](#) to address Crime-Free Housing policies that disproportionately discriminate against people of color, survivors of domestic violence, people with disabilities, and justice-involved individuals.

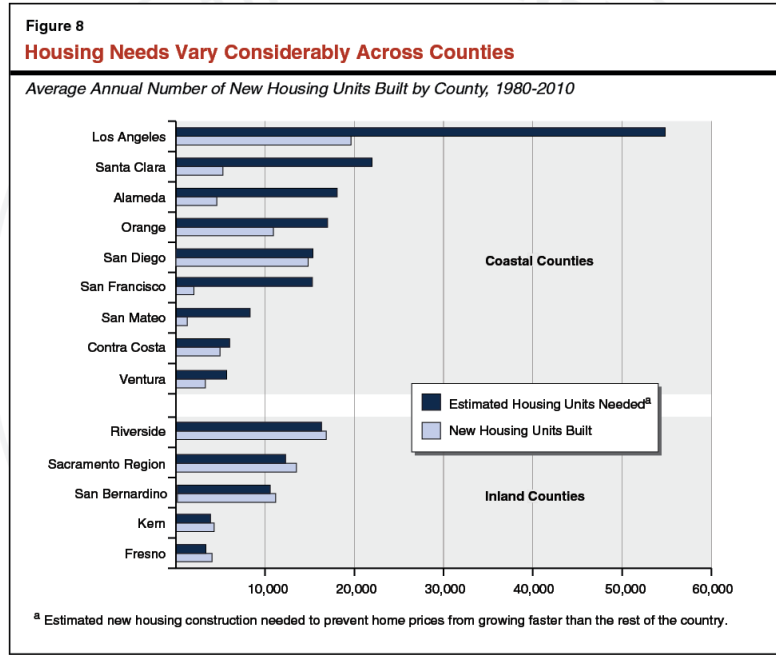
Why focus on housing? Legislative Analyst's Office (2015)

“Building Less Housing Than People Demand Drives High Housing Costs”



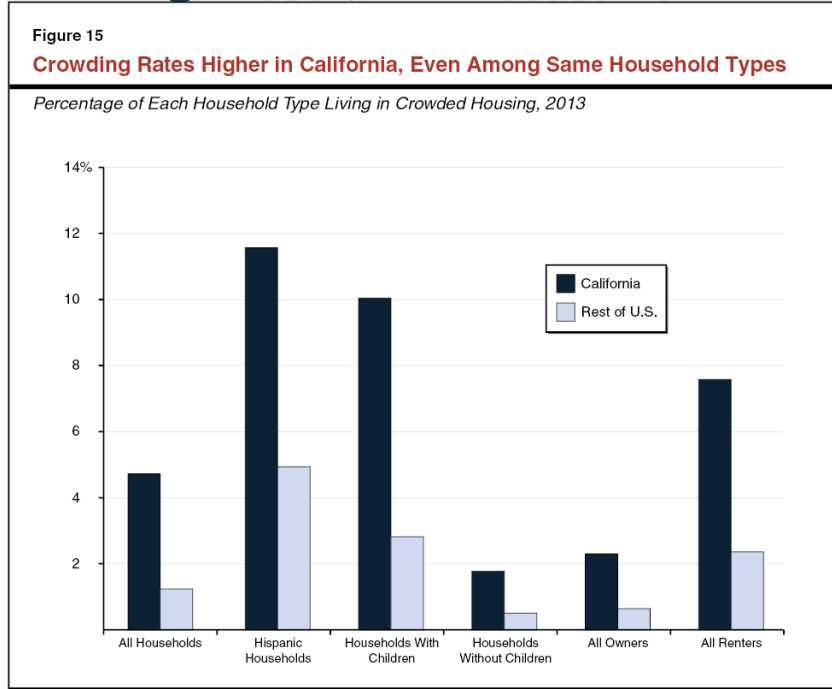
<https://www.oag.ca.gov/reports/2015/finance/housing-costs/housing-costs.aspx>

Why focus on housing? LAO, continued.



<https://lao.ca.gov/reports/2015/finance/housing-costs/housing-costs.aspx>

Why focus on housing? LAO, continued.



<https://lao.ca.gov/reports/2015/finance/housing-costs/housing-costs.aspx>



Why focus on housing?

According to the California Department of Housing and Community Development:

Not enough housing being built: During the last ten years, housing production averaged fewer than 80,000 new homes each year, and ongoing production continues to fall far below the projected need of 180,000 additional homes annually.

Too much of people's incomes going toward rent: The majority of Californian renters — more than 3 million households — pay more than 30 percent of their income toward rent, and nearly one-third — more than 1.5 million households — pay more than 50 percent of their income toward rent.

Fewer people becoming homeowners: Overall homeownership rates are at their lowest since the 1940s.

Disproportionate number of Californians experiencing homelessness: California is home to 12 percent of the nation's population, but a disproportionate 22 percent of the nation's homeless population.

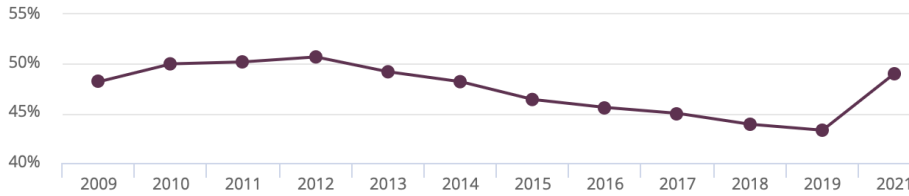
Many people facing multiple, seemingly insurmountable barriers — beyond just cost — in trying to find an affordable place to live: For California's vulnerable populations, discrimination and inadequate accommodations for people with disabilities are worsening housing cost and affordability challenges.

<https://www.hcd.ca.gov/policy-and-research/addressing-variety-housing-challenges>

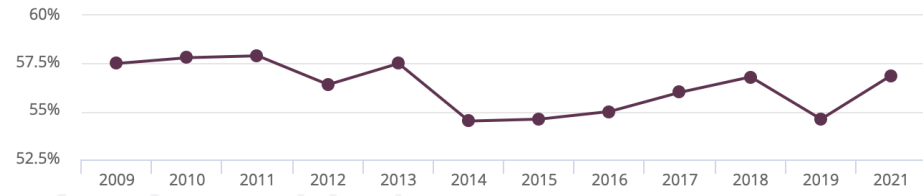


HCD's Claim: "too much income going toward rent"

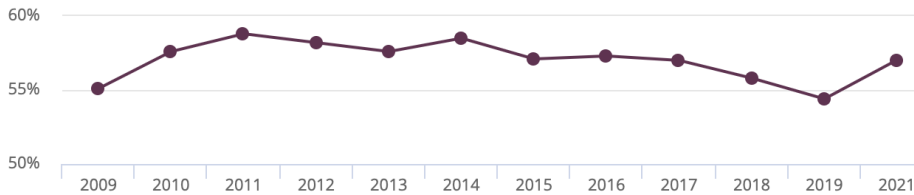
Share of Renters with Cost Burdens in San Francisco-Oakland-Hayward, CA



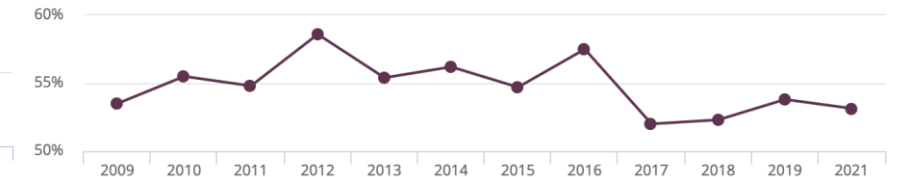
Share of Renters with Cost Burdens in San Diego-Carlsbad, CA



Share of Renters with Cost Burdens in Los Angeles-Long Beach-Anaheim, CA



Share of Renters with Cost Burdens in Fresno, CA



"The State of the Nation's Housing 2023"

Joint Center for Housing Studies of Harvard University

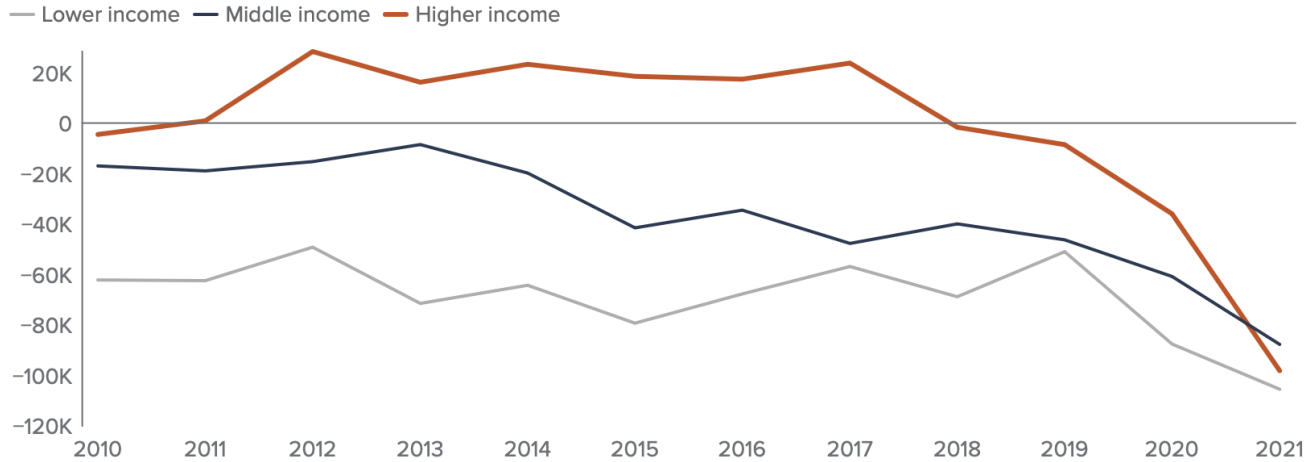
<https://www.jchs.harvard.edu/state-nations-housing-2023>



Housing Costs and Migration

California is losing households at all income levels

Net interstate migration among adults ages 18-64

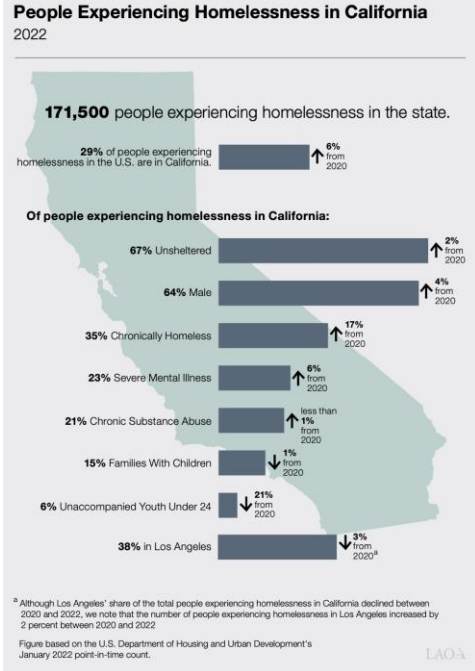


SOURCE: PPIC calculations based on American Community Survey data through 2021.

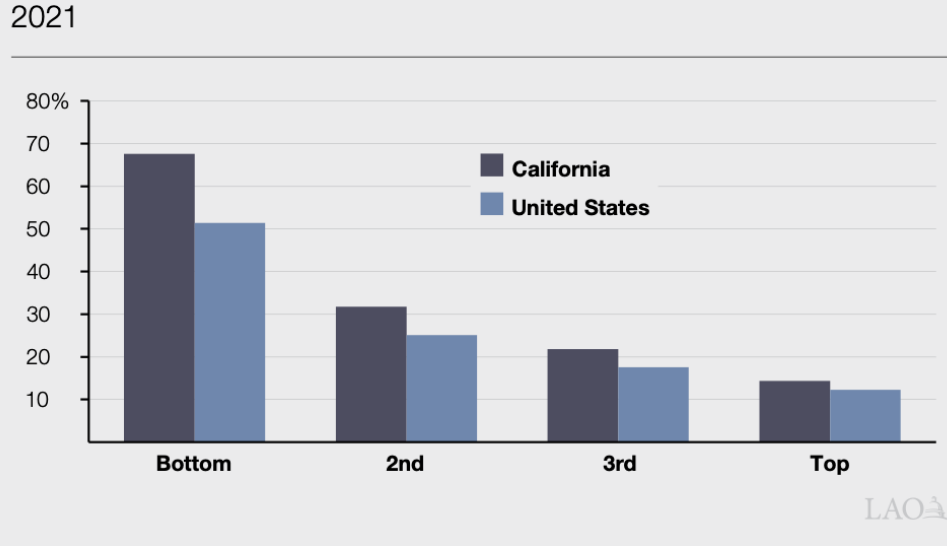
[Get the data](#) • [Embed](#) • [Download image](#)



HCD's Claim: "disproportionate number of Californians experiencing homelessness"



Median Share of Income Spent on Housing by Income Quartile 2021



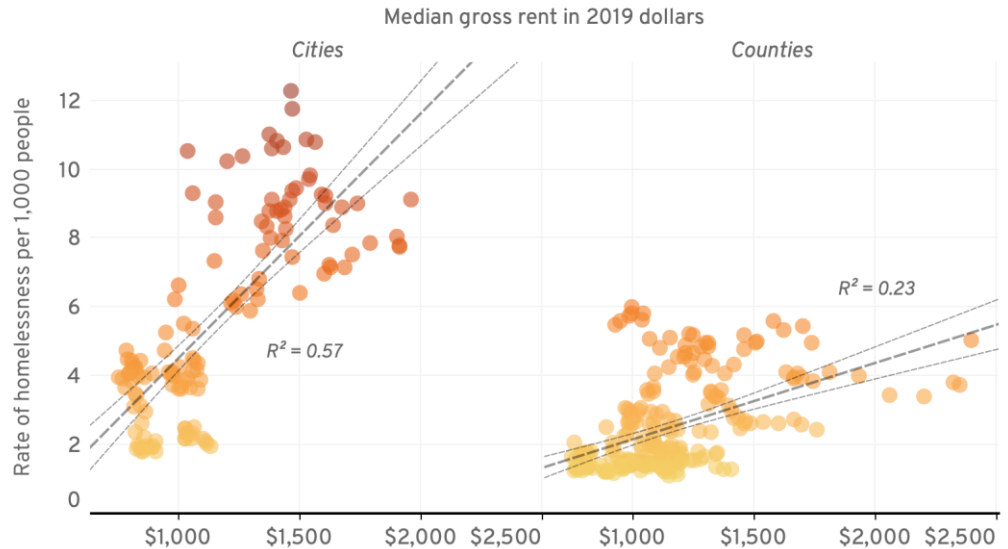
Homelessness, continued

“Regional variation in rates of homelessness can be explained by the costs and availability of housing.”

Gregg Colburn & Clayton Page Aldern,
“Homelessness Is a Housing Problem: How Structural Factors Explain U.S. Patterns”

Median gross rent versus PIT count (per capita)

Dashed lines indicate a linear regression of per capita PIT counts onto median gross rent between 2007 and 2019 for a sample of U.S. regions.



Bands indicate 95% confidence intervals for the slope of the regression line. Figure forthcoming in Colburn & Aldern (2022).

The bottom line on housing:

Planning for a fair share of new homes is required under California law and the right thing to do.

Example Housing Need Determinations for the 6th RHNA Cycle:

- Southern California Association of Governments—1,341,827
- Association of Bay Area Governments—441,176
- San Diego Association of Governments—171,685
- Sacramento Association of Governments—153,512

“Every community must do its part to build housing” – Attorney General Bonta



Housing Justice Team



Resources

General:

<https://oag.ca.gov/housing>

Fair Housing Information:

California Civil Rights Department—<https://calcivilrights.ca.gov/housing/>

For tenants:

Legal aid—LawHelpCA.org

Referrals—<https://www.calbar.ca.gov/Public/Need-Legal-Help/Using-a-Certified-Lawyer-Referral-Service>

Self help—<https://selfhelp.courts.ca.gov/eviction-tenant>

Problems with project entitlement and permitting:

HCD Housing Accountability Unit Portal—<https://www.hcd.ca.gov/planning-and-community-development/accountability-and-enforcement>





Question and Answer

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Thank you for joining!

If you have further questions,
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Visit our website at www.oag.ca.gov/care