

The National Housing Affordability Crisis Demands Real Solutions

A growing number of working Americans are struggling to find housing they can afford. Across the country, state and local governments are grappling with a severe housing crisis and reaching for fast solutions, but some solutions have proven to work better than others. Although viewed as the “quick-fix” solution to helping renters in need, rent control is stifling new housing and raising costs for those who can least afford it.

Here are the facts:

Shortage of over

**3.2
Million**

homes in the US¹

Over

**421
Thousand**

people experiencing homelessness²

About

**21.6
Million**

households are cost-burdened renters³

What is Rent Control?

Rent control (also known as rent stabilization and/or rent caps) is a form of government-enforced price control that limits rents that property owners may charge in market rate rental housing. While the intent of rent control laws is to assist lower-income individuals, history has shown that rent control instead:



✗ Exacerbates Shortages

Rent control policies reduce the number of new units built and limits the overall supply of rental housing in a community.⁴ In San Francisco, rent control reduced the supply of housing by 6% and was responsible for a more than 5% increase in rental prices.⁵



✗ Disproportionally Benefits Higher-Income Households

Rent control and rent stabilization policies do a poor job at targeting beneficiaries, resulting in an inequitable distribution of benefits that hurts renters in need.⁶ In 2022, researchers found that tenants in St. Paul who gained the most from the recently implemented rent control policy had higher incomes, while those who lost the most had lower incomes.⁷



✗ Ultimately Drives Up Rents

As rent control stifles new development and supply remains inadequate, renters are faced with fewer and more expensive housing options in communities of choice. Research suggests that rent control ordinances make rental units more expensive in the overall market rather than less.⁸

We need policies that address regressive zoning and other barriers to make it easier to build housing.

To learn more, visit HousingSolutionsCoalition.org

¹ Axios

² National Alliance to End Homelessness

³ Joint Center for Housing Studies of Harvard University

^{4, 5, 6} American Economic Review

⁷ National Bureau of Economic Research

⁸ California Apartment Association