

GOVERNMENT IS NOT ALWAYS HERE TO HELP US!

By

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The following is an editorial from the San Diego Union-Tribune. While some of the reasons for the population exodus from the region are debatable, the impact that government regulations has on housing cost and availability is not. Every year there is a battle between property owners and government at every level which tries to impose new regulations, restrictions or requirements that delay home building.

As Realtors, you have a strong army working for you at local, state and the national level to fight regulations that make it more expensive to purchase a home, create liability for Realtors, restrict housing opportunities or cap market forces in housing development.

In addition to fighting housing restrictions, organized real estate also works to elect candidates at every level who understand your industry, support private property rights and the important role you play in our local, regional and national economy.

We can only accomplish this work through your voluntary contributions to the Realtor Action Fund. Please consider giving generously to RAF when paying your dues. As a Realtor you have strength in numbers. We also need financial strength to communicate with elected officials and support candidates who will support you. Your contributions to the Realtor Action Fund are an investment in your future.

Fleeing paradise - Cities spark exodus with high home prices

"Consider this shocker from the U.S. Census Bureau: Tens of thousands of our San Diego County neighbors have packed up and left us. From 2000 to 2006, 119,636 more people fled San Diego County than moved here from elsewhere in the nation, slowing the region's population growth to a crawl. If not for babies and foreign immigration, our county would be losing population. Last year we joined the list of the nation's top-10 regions experiencing a population exodus, right up there with hurricane-ravaged New Orleans and slumping Detroit. Two thoughts leap to mind: It's getting pretty crowded in paradise, so maybe a little out-migration is good for everybody. But then again, this is San Diego, America's perfect place. Why on earth would people leave? Because we're chasing them off with a government-created hurricane of high home prices, that's why. San Diego County has seen exodus before, most recently in the early 1990s, but only during deep recessions. Today the region boasts strong job growth and ultra-low unemployment. Yet symptoms of a housing crisis are everywhere. For example, average household size has been climbing for

20 years, as we pack more people into homes, bucking the national trend. Most telling are soaring prices; the inflation-adjusted median cost of a resale house has more than doubled in a decade. Rising incomes and market psychology explain part of the rise, but most signs point to an acute housing shortage. In 1986, developers pulled 42,000 residential building permits. Since the 1995 recession, however, builders have averaged just 15,000 homes a year. And that was during an epic run-up in values. With the market's abrupt slowdown, permits plunged to 9,000 last year. This year looks even worse. *[And, it was. San Diego issued roughly 6,000 permits in 2007.]* Meanwhile, San Diego's remarkable economy has been cranking out jobs. The accumulated deficit of housing units for all those workers tops 60,000, estimates Marney Cox, economist at the San Diego Association of Governments. And we're falling behind by 10,000 units a year. *[F]ormer neighbors . . . simply moved to Temecula and other boomtowns in southwest Riverside County. And, to the dismay of environmentally minded slow-growthers, an estimated 50 percent of those new homeowners are driving to jobs in San Diego, where they clog roads, spew pollution and degrade everybody's quality of life. [S]uch problems flow from the conscious choices . . . to block local construction with restrictive zoning and rising housing fees . . . [and] most cities have designed their "smart growth" zoning to cluster housing without significant increases in units. Exporting growth to Temecula is the opposite of smart."*

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