

Report: High rents, stagnant wages make apartments unaffordable

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The gap between stagnant wages and the increasing cost to rent an apartment is growing.

In the Fresno metropolitan area this year, a renter has to earn \$16.40 an hour to rent a two-bedroom apartment at the fair market rate of about \$853 a month, according to a national report released this week on housing costs. Last year, renters had to make \$15.90 an hour to cover the rent at \$825.

The report, [Out of Reach 2015](#), brings attention to the struggle of millions of Americans, especially the low-income, to afford a place to live as housing costs increase at a faster pace than wages. It also highlights a need for more state money to build and renovate affordable housing rentals for the poor.

There are four bills moving through the state Assembly that would increase funding for affordable development and homeless prevention.

The [National Low Income Housing Coalition](#), a research and advocacy group in Washington D.C. and the [California Coalition for Rural Housing](#) published the report.

“When parents have to choose between rent and food, children can’t thrive,” said the California Coalition’s executive director Rob Wiener in a news release. “When workers can’t afford to set down roots, businesses choose other places to invest in jobs.”

The report can be seen online where it is published with an interactive map of the country that allows users to hover over their home state for information on how much they have to earn to afford a two-bedroom apartment. Click the more info box and find details by county or city.

California is the third most expensive state in the country for renters who have to earn a housing wage of \$26.65 an hour. The state’s most expensive counties are Marin, San Francisco and San Mateo all with housing wages at \$39.65.

In the Hanford and Corcoran area, the housing wage is \$15.52. Madera and Chowchilla renters have to earn \$16.94 to be able to pay for a two-bedroom apartment while those in Visalia and Porterville have to earn \$14.83.

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