



The Californians are coming. So is their housing crisis.

*By Conor Dougherty, The New York Times, February 12, 2021*

“[Californians](#), fleeing high home prices, are moving to Idaho in droves. Idaho has been one of the [fastest-growing states](#), with the largest share of new residents coming from California. This fact can be illustrated with census data, moving vans — or resentment.

“Housing costs are relative, so anyone leaving Los Angeles or [San Francisco](#) will find almost any other city to have a bountiful selection of homes that seem unbelievably large and cheap. But for those tethered to the local economy, the influx of wealthier outsiders pushes housing costs further out of reach.

“As bad as California’s affordable housing problem is, it isn’t really a California problem. It is a national one. From rising homelessness to [anti-development sentiment](#) to frustration among middle-class workers who’ve been locked out of the housing market, the same set of housing issues has bubbled up in cities across the country [in] [Boise](#), [Nashville](#), [Denver](#) and [Austin](#), Texas, and many [other high-growth cities](#). And they will become even more widespread as remote workers [move around](#).

“In city after city, studies have shown that homelessness has a [distinct financial tipping point](#). As soon as the local rent burden reaches the point where renters on average spend more than a third of their income on housing, the number of people on the streets starts to rise sharply, according to researchers at Zillow and elsewhere.

“Cities are built around jobs, and ... over the past four decades the U.S. economy has bifurcated into high-paying jobs in fields like tech and finance and low-paying jobs in retail and personal services.

“Some work has to be done in person — and unless companies [leaving California](#) expect to do without the services of janitors and security guards — the underlying problem will persist in every next city that has the misfortune of becoming desirable.

“The only way to solve the housing crisis is to address it in every city it visits. Otherwise, we’re just spreading it around.”

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