



HOUSING ASSISTANCE COUNCIL

# Housing Occupancy & Vacancy in Rural America

According to the 2010 Census, there are approximately 132 million housing units (both occupied and vacant) in the United States. This number represents an increase of roughly 16 million houses, or 14 percent, from the year 2000. Among all housing units approximately 116 million, or 89 percent, were occupied in 2010.

In rural and small town communities there are just over 30 million housing units, making up 23 percent of nation's housing stock. Of these, approximately 25 million, or 82 percent, of rural homes are occupied. The number of housing units in rural and small town communities increased by nearly 3 million (11 percent) between 2000 and 2010.

There are 62 million housing units in suburban and exurban communities, comprising 47 percent of the nation's

housing units. Similar to population trends, the growth in housing units was largest in suburban and exurban communities over the past decade. Between 2000 and 2010, nearly 70 percent of growth in housing units nationally was in suburban areas. Urban communities contain about 30 percent of the nation's total homes with approximately 39 million housing units.

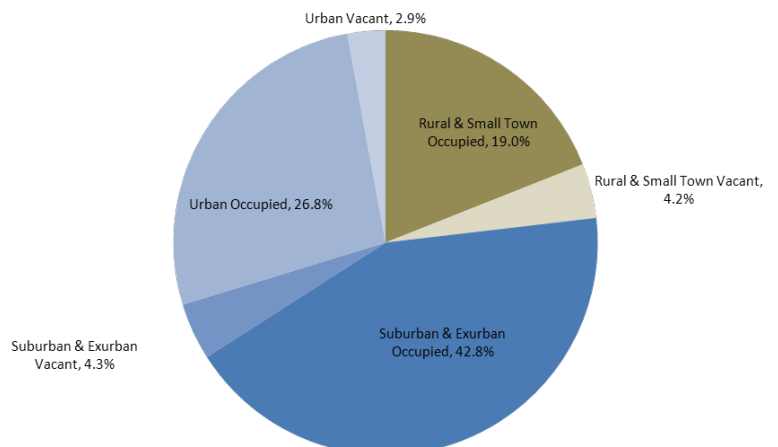
## ABOUT THIS SERIES

*Housing Occupancy & Vacancy in Rural America* is the fourth in a series of *Rural Research Briefs* presenting data and findings from the 2010 Census and American Community Survey (ACS).

The Housing Assistance Council (HAC) presents *Rural Research Briefs* highlighting various social, economic, and housing characteristics of rural Americans.

The *Rural Research Briefs* series complements HAC's decennial **Taking Stock** report - a comprehensive assessment of rural America and its housing. Since the 1980s, HAC has presented *Taking Stock* every ten years following the release of Census data. The newest *Taking Stock* report was published in 2012.

## Housing Units by Location, 2010



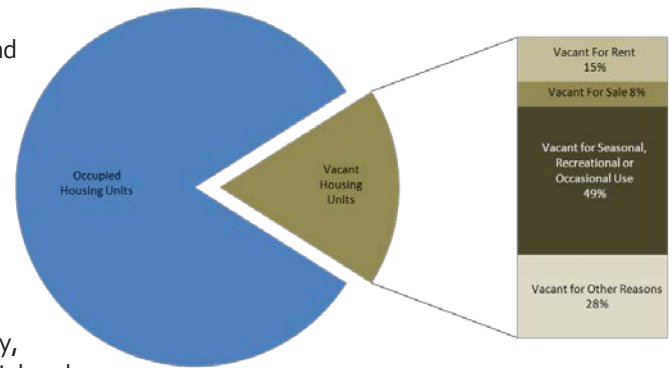
# Seasonal and recreational homes contribute to higher housing vacancy rates in rural & small town America

Of the nearly 132 million housing units nationwide, approximately 89 percent are occupied. However, in rural and small town communities, the housing occupancy rate is lower at 82 percent. Much of the higher vacancy rate in rural areas is due to the number of homes unoccupied for seasonal, recreational, or occasional use. Often referred to as "vacation homes," these units comprise approximately half of all rural and small town vacancies. Vacation homes are much more common in amenity-rich rural locales. In fact, nearly 60 percent of all vacant seasonal, or recreational homes nationwide are located in rural and small town areas.

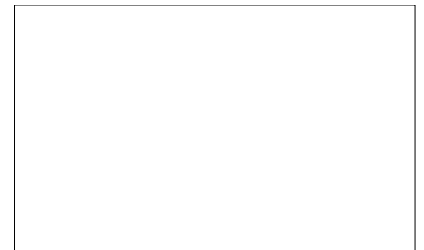
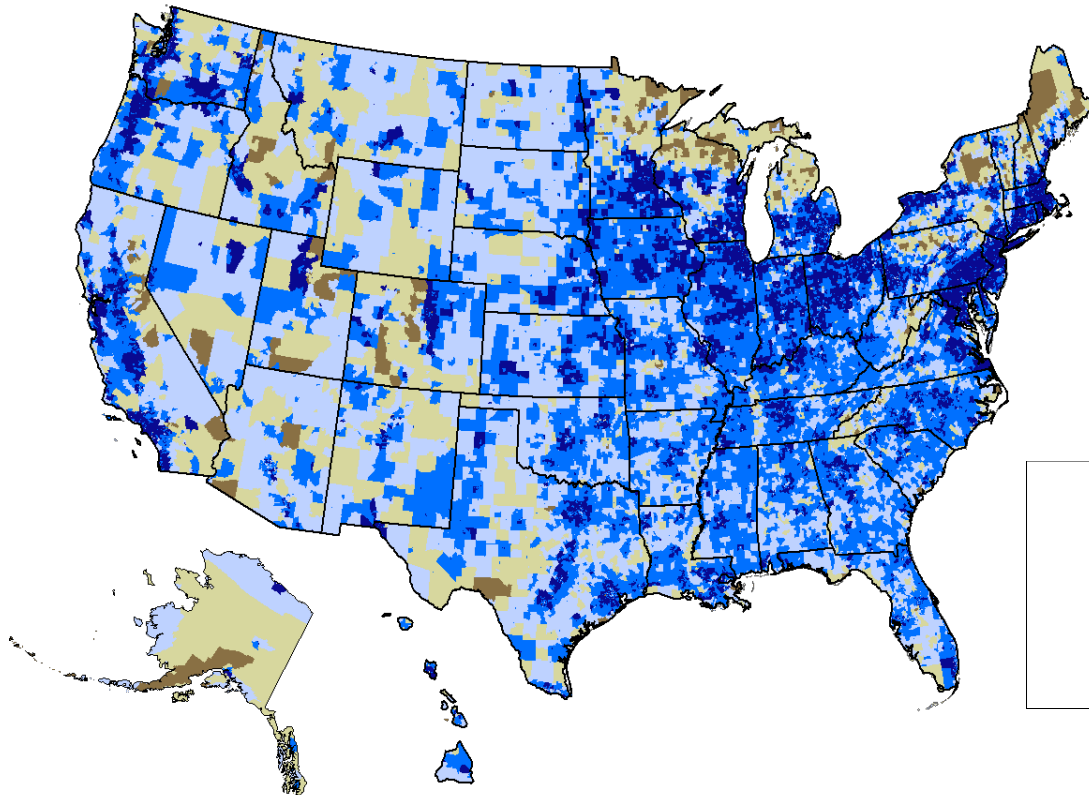
In contrast, the rate of rural and small town vacant units classified as "for rent," (14.9 percent) is nearly half the national rate of (27.6 percent)

Rural and small town housing vacancies are greatest in states with substantial numbers of vacation homes. States such as Delaware, Maine, Michigan, and Colorado all have rural and small town housing vacancy rates above 25 percent. In each of these states, seasonal or recreational homes comprise more than half of the rural and small town vacancies. States such as New Jersey, Iowa, Illinois, Ohio, and Nebraska all have relatively low rural and small town vacancy rates, as well as low rates of seasonal or vacation homes.

**Rural & Small Town Housing Vacancy, 2010**



## Occupied Housing Units, 2010





FAST FACTS

30.5 Million

Housing units in Rural and Small Town areas of the United States in 2010

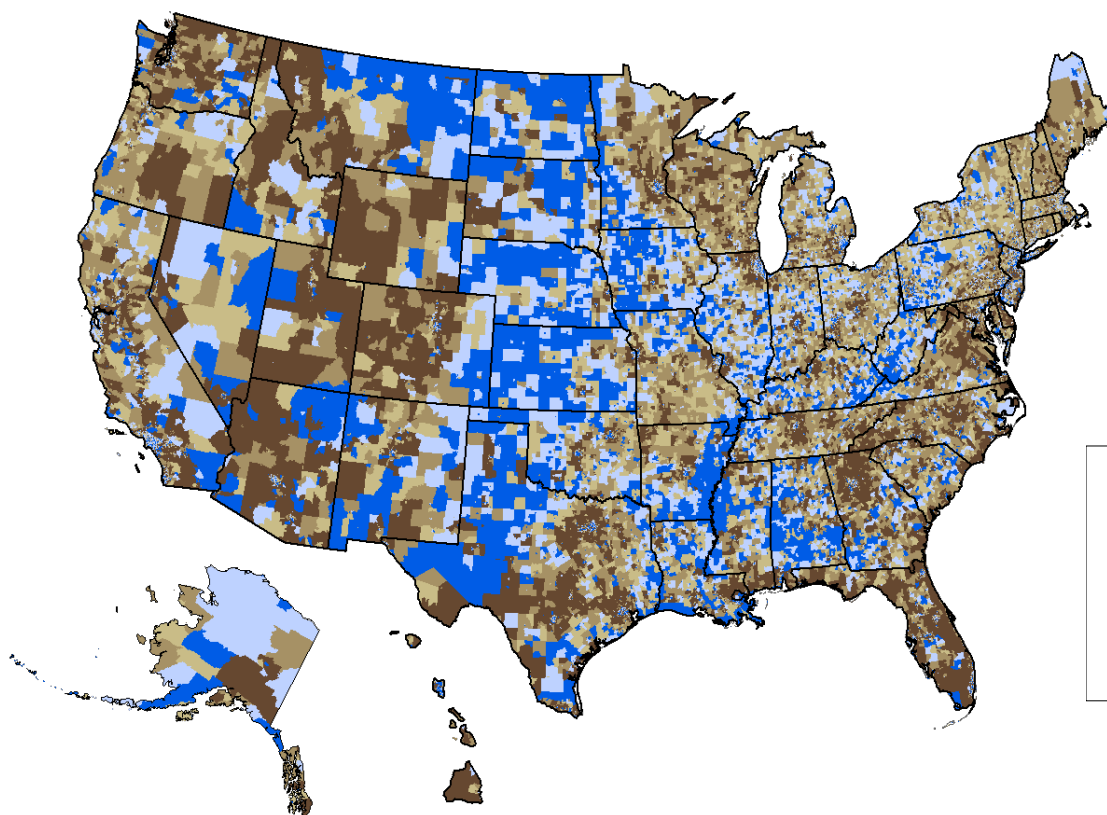
17.9%

Housing vacancy rate in Rural and Small Town areas in 2010

10.8%

Increase in the number of housing units in Rural and Small Town areas between 2000 and 2010

### Housing Unit Change, 2000 - 2010



### 10 States with the largest number of Rural & Small Town housing units, 2010

- Texas-- 1,915,938
- North Carolina-- 1,463,334
- California-- 1,280,085
- Pennsylvania-- 1,127,820
- Ohio-- 1,122,239
- Georgia-- 1,064,415
- Michigan-- 1,049,274
- New York-- 1,038,549
- Wisconsin-- 981,386
- Kentucky-- 975,743

### Rural Housing Growth – 10 States with the largest increase in Rural & Small Town housing units, 2000-2010

- Arizona -- 159,152 35.4%
- Utah-- 54,793 35.3%
- Delaware-- 30,535 32.5%
- Florida-- 172,687 27.6%
- Hawaii-- 39,204 26.5%
- Colorado-- 92,634 23.6%
- Nevada-- 23,873 20.7%
- Alaska-- 28,150 20.2%
- Idaho-- 47,555 18.9%
- Wyoming-- 31,265 18.6%

#### ABOUT THE DATA

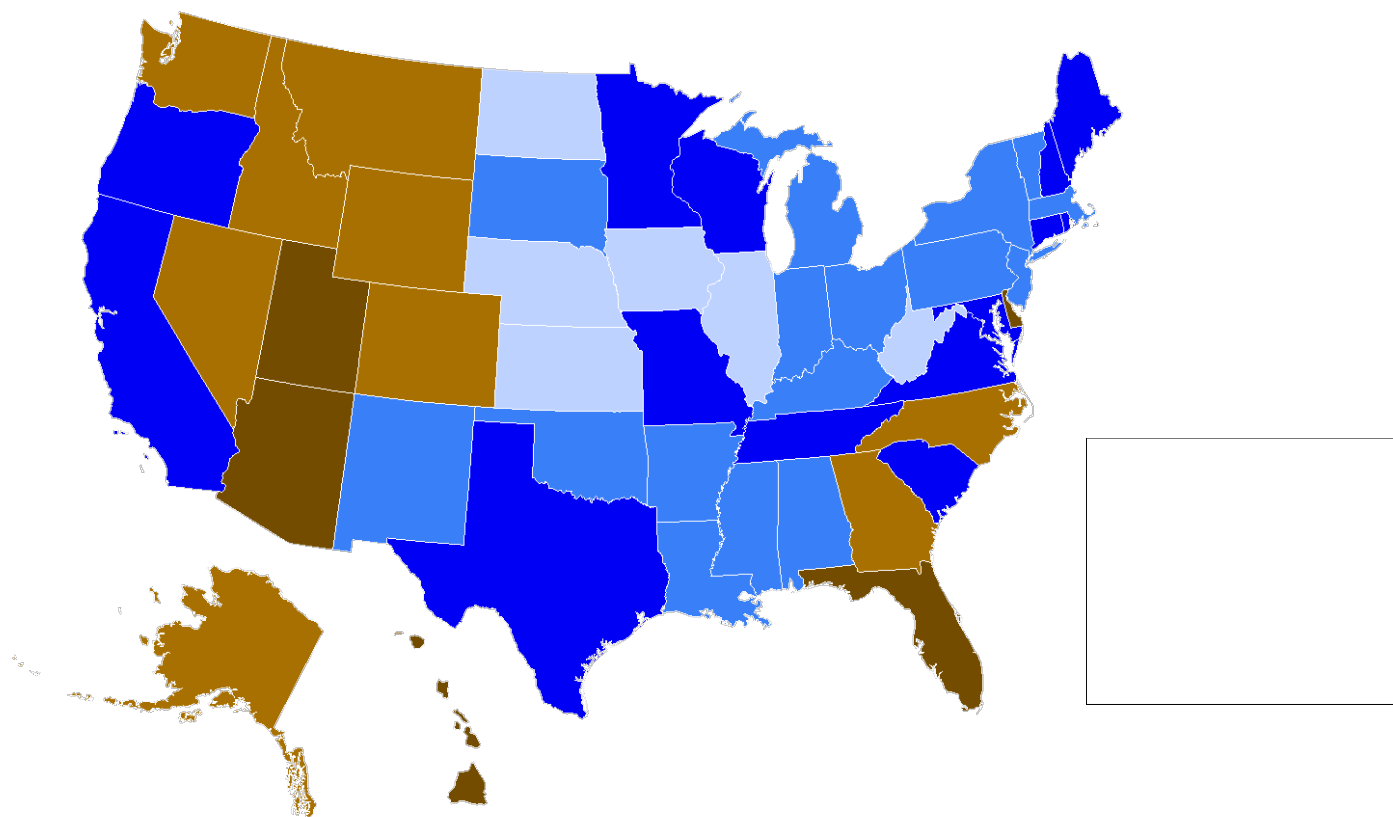
Unless otherwise noted, all data presented in this Research Brief are based on HAC tabulations of the 2010 Census, Summary File -1.

For more information on this Research Brief contact the Housing Assistance Council

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## Rural & Small Town Housing Unit Change, 2000-2010



**HOUSING OCCUPANCY BY LOCATION, 2010**

Source: HAC Tabulations of 2010 Census of Population and Housing.

	Rural & Small Town		Suburban & Exurban		Urban		United States	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
<b>HOUSING UNITS</b>								
Total housing units	30,482,556	100.0	62,077,185	100.0	39,144,989	100.0	131,704,730	100.0
Occupied housing units	25,015,071	82.1	56,365,400	90.8	35,335,821	90.3	116,716,292	88.6
Vacant housing units	5,467,485	17.9	5,711,785	9.2	3,809,168	9.7	14,988,438	11.4
<b>HOUSING VACANCY</b>								
Vacant housing units	5,467,485	100.0	5,711,785	100.0	3,809,168	100.0	14,988,438	100.0
For rent	815,052	14.9	1,635,783	28.6	1,686,732	44.3	4,137,567	27.6
Rented, not occupied	49,124	0.9	82,519	1.4	75,182	2.0	206,825	1.4
For sale only	449,952	8.2	963,459	16.9	483,385	12.7	1,896,796	12.7
Sold, not Occupied	128,947	2.4	192,487	3.4	99,598	2.6	421,032	2.8
For seasonal, recreational or occasional use	2,692,229	49.2	1,481,890	25.9	475,179	12.5	4,649,298	31.0
For migrant workers	15,353	0.3	7,512	0.1	1,296	0.0	24,161	0.2
Other	1,318,320	24.1	1,347,368	23.6	987,071	25.9	3,652,759	24.4

## HOUSING UNITS IN RURAL &amp; SMALL TOWN COMMUNITIES BY STATE, 2010

State	Total Housing Units	Rural & Small Town					
		Total		Occupied		Vacant	
		Housing Units	%	Housing Units	%	Housing Units	%
Alabama	2,171,853	784,969	100.0	646,654	82.4	138,315	17.6
Alaska	306,967	167,821	100.0	126,797	75.6	41,024	24.4
Arizona	2,844,526	608,535	100.0	457,855	75.2	150,680	24.8
Arkansas	1,316,299	677,091	100.0	576,550	85.2	100,541	14.8
California	13,680,081	1,280,085	100.0	1,030,696	80.5	249,389	19.5
Colorado	2,212,898	485,383	100.0	353,594	72.8	131,789	27.2
Connecticut	1,487,891	87,447	100.0	76,909	87.9	10,538	12.1
Delaware	405,885	124,520	100.0	80,471	64.6	44,049	35.4
District of Columbia	296,719	0	100.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Florida	8,989,580	797,652	100.0	608,538	76.3	189,114	23.7
Georgia	4,088,801	1,064,415	100.0	889,004	83.5	175,411	16.5
Hawaii	519,508	187,283	100.0	148,281	79.2	39,002	20.8
Idaho	667,796	299,750	100.0	239,786	80.0	59,964	20.0
Illinois	5,296,715	893,908	100.0	799,784	89.5	94,124	10.5
Indiana	2,795,541	773,236	100.0	677,428	87.6	95,808	12.4
Iowa	1,336,417	710,665	100.0	635,291	89.4	75,374	10.6
Kansas	1,233,215	571,910	100.0	502,734	87.9	69,176	12.1
Kentucky	1,927,164	975,743	100.0	849,910	87.1	125,833	12.9
Louisiana	1,964,981	637,094	100.0	546,696	85.8	90,398	14.2
Maine	721,830	421,081	100.0	295,865	70.3	125,216	29.7
Maryland	2,378,814	232,321	100.0	172,266	74.1	60,055	25.9
Massachusetts	2,808,254	119,122	100.0	88,167	74.0	30,955	26.0
Michigan	4,532,233	1,049,274	100.0	757,479	72.2	291,795	27.8
Minnesota	2,347,201	845,045	100.0	677,526	80.2	167,519	19.8
Mississippi	1,274,719	794,387	100.0	688,982	86.7	105,405	13.3
Missouri	2,712,729	963,304	100.0	796,944	82.7	166,360	17.3
Montana	482,825	362,359	100.0	295,530	81.6	66,829	18.4
Nebraska	796,793	381,019	100.0	335,271	88.0	45,748	12.0
Nevada	1,173,814	139,147	100.0	111,655	80.2	27,492	19.8
New Hampshire	614,754	273,011	100.0	204,092	74.8	68,919	25.2
New Jersey	3,553,562	45,728	100.0	41,706	91.2	4,022	8.8
New Mexico	901,388	391,270	100.0	318,602	81.4	72,668	18.6
New York	8,108,103	1,038,549	100.0	810,296	78.0	228,253	22.0
North Carolina	4,327,528	1,463,334	100.0	1,169,586	79.9	293,748	20.1
North Dakota	317,498	189,502	100.0	159,915	84.4	29,587	15.6
Ohio	5,127,508	1,122,239	100.0	996,151	88.8	126,088	11.2
Oklahoma	1,664,378	771,000	100.0	649,973	84.3	121,027	15.7
Oregon	1,675,562	551,029	100.0	471,698	85.6	79,331	14.4
Pennsylvania	5,567,315	1,127,820	100.0	939,370	83.3	188,450	16.7
Rhode Island	463,388	14,141	100.0	10,196	72.1	3,945	27.9
South Carolina	2,137,683	629,802	100.0	514,693	81.7	115,109	18.3
South Dakota	363,438	234,080	100.0	201,088	85.9	32,992	14.1
Tennessee	2,812,133	919,744	100.0	780,733	84.9	139,011	15.1
Texas	9,977,436	1,915,938	100.0	1,580,669	82.5	335,269	17.5
Utah	979,709	210,113	100.0	158,124	75.3	51,989	24.7
Vermont	322,539	244,205	100.0	184,083	75.4	60,122	24.6
Virginia	3,364,939	726,473	100.0	608,421	83.7	118,052	16.3
Washington	2,885,677	526,026	100.0	430,281	81.8	95,745	18.2
West Virginia	881,917	473,326	100.0	396,830	83.8	76,496	16.2
Wisconsin	2,624,358	981,386	100.0	753,264	76.8	228,122	23.2
Wyoming	261,868	199,274	100.0	168,637	84.6	30,637	15.4
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>131,704,730</b>	<b>30,482,556</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>25,015,071</b>	<b>82.1</b>	<b>5,467,485</b>	<b>17.9</b>

HAC tabulations of 2010 Census of Population and Housing, SF-1

## RURAL &amp; SMALL TOWN HOUSING UNIT CHANGE BY STATE, 2000-2010

State	2000 Total Housing Units	2010 Total Housing Units	2000-2010 Housing Unit Change	Percent Change
Alabama	729,275	784,969	55,694	7.6
Alaska	139,671	167,821	28,150	20.2
Arizona	449,383	608,535	159,152	35.4
Arkansas	635,398	677,091	41,693	6.6
California	1,123,788	1,280,085	156,297	13.9
Colorado	392,749	485,383	92,634	23.6
Connecticut	79,612	87,447	7,835	9.8
Delaware	93,985	124,520	30,535	32.5
District of Columbia	0	0	0	0.0
Florida	624,965	797,652	172,687	27.6
Georgia	905,553	1,064,415	158,862	17.5
Hawaii	148,079	187,283	39,204	26.5
Idaho	252,195	299,750	47,555	18.9
Illinois	865,073	893,908	28,835	3.3
Indiana	733,731	773,236	39,505	5.4
Iowa	689,156	710,665	21,509	3.1
Kansas	553,858	571,910	18,052	3.3
Kentucky	914,674	975,743	61,069	6.7
Louisiana	607,633	637,094	29,461	4.8
Maine	381,067	421,081	40,014	10.5
Maryland	205,849	232,321	26,472	12.9
Massachusetts	112,364	119,122	6,758	6.0
Michigan	981,487	1,049,274	67,787	6.9
Minnesota	767,049	845,045	77,996	10.2
Mississippi	750,555	794,387	43,832	5.8
Missouri	878,072	963,304	85,232	9.7
Montana	306,550	362,359	55,809	18.2
Nebraska	367,965	381,019	13,054	3.5
Nevada	115,274	139,147	23,873	20.7
New Hampshire	240,632	273,011	32,379	13.5
New Jersey	42,732	45,728	2,996	7.0
New Mexico	365,326	391,270	25,944	7.1
New York	976,458	1,038,549	62,091	6.4
North Carolina	1,264,789	1,463,334	198,545	15.7
North Dakota	185,240	189,502	4,262	2.3
Ohio	1,056,049	1,122,239	66,190	6.3
Oklahoma	728,261	771,000	42,739	5.9
Oregon	484,187	551,029	66,842	13.8
Pennsylvania	1,061,536	1,127,820	66,284	6.2
Rhode Island	12,898	14,141	1,243	9.6
South Carolina	554,744	629,802	75,058	13.5
South Dakota	221,619	234,080	12,461	5.6
Tennessee	818,257	919,744	101,487	12.4
Texas	1,729,428	1,915,938	186,510	10.8
Utah	155,320	210,113	54,793	35.3
Vermont	224,496	244,205	19,709	8.8
Virginia	661,661	726,473	64,812	9.8
Washington	443,698	526,026	82,328	18.6
West Virginia	459,165	473,326	14,161	3.1
Wisconsin	859,267	981,386	122,119	14.2
Wyoming	168,009	199,274	31,265	18.6
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>27,518,782</b>	<b>30,482,556</b>	<b>2,963,774</b>	<b>10.8</b>

Source: HAC Tabulations of 2000 and 2010 Census of Population and Housing, SF-1

# The Housing Assistance Council

The Housing Assistance Council (HAC) is a national nonprofit organization that supports affordable housing efforts in rural areas of the United States. HAC provides technical housing services, seed money loans from a revolving fund, housing program and policy assistance, and research and information services. HAC is an equal opportunity lender.

## HAC Rural Research Brief

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