

# Outreach Team Training: Communicating with Legislators on “Stabilizing the Housing Market”



Californians for  
Affordable Homes

December 2008



“Building a better life and pursuing opportunity begins with having a place to live.”

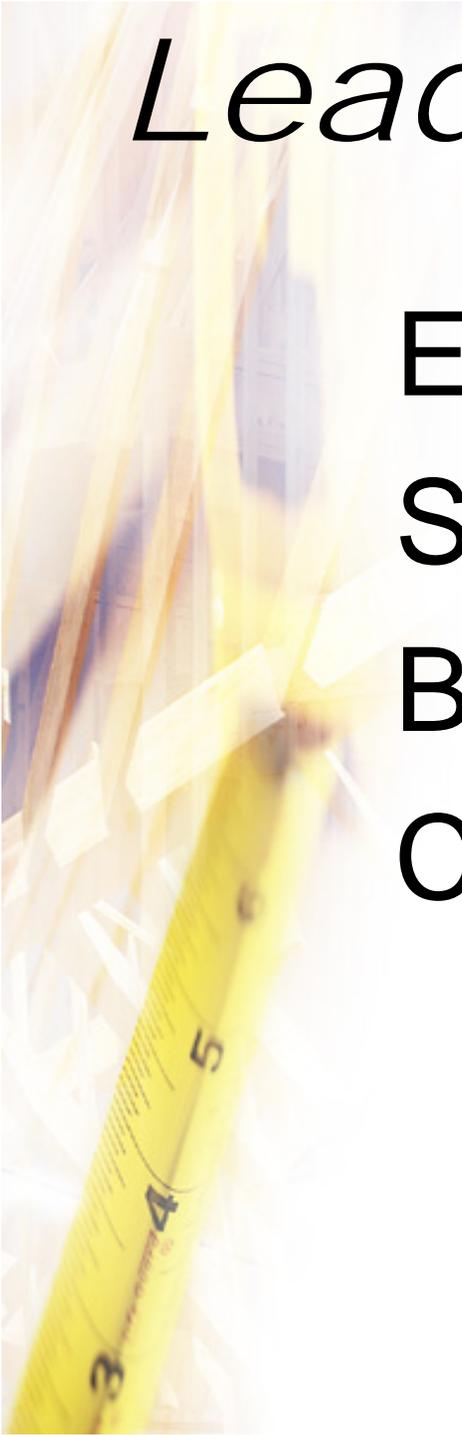
“...each community should house its own.”

Governor Schwarzenegger



*Establish context*

Housing Market



# *Lead with the values*

Economic opportunity

Stability

Balance

Children and families



# *Lead with the values*

## Economic opportunity

For families, as Governor Schwarzenegger has said, “Building a better life and pursuing opportunity begins with having a place to live.”

For California, building homes puts people to work and is good for business.



# *Lead with the values*

## Stability & Balance

The foreclosure crisis and consequent economic crisis was the result of years of the imbalance of inventory...

The housing market and the economy are insecure and at risk: we need stability.



# *Lead with the values*

## Children and families

More than a third of California's children live in low-income households. Typically, the parents are working the equivalent of 1  $\frac{1}{4}$  full time jobs -- and more than half their income goes to keeping a roof over their heads.



# *Define the issue*

State action to:

Stabilize the housing market,

Stimulate the economy,

Increase the supply of  
affordable places to live.

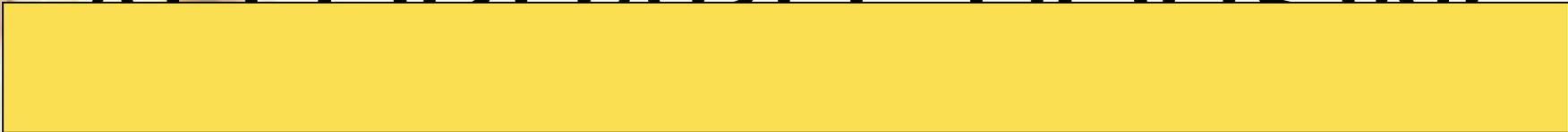


*DO NOT*

Don't use jargon: “affordable housing”  
“workforce housing”



# AFFORDABLE HOUSING







# *DO NOT*

Don't use jargon: “affordable housing”  
“workforce housing”

Don't only talk about benefits to  
individuals: emphasize the benefits to the  
community



# TIPS

**Don't** get derailed into discussions of a “permanent source” funding mechanism.

- INSTEAD say, “Let’s see what the Governor proposes” and/or “What do *you* see as best way to fund it?”

**Don't** offer Government as “THE solution.”

- INSTEAD, say that government has **A** **ROLE** to play in influencing and stimulating the market.

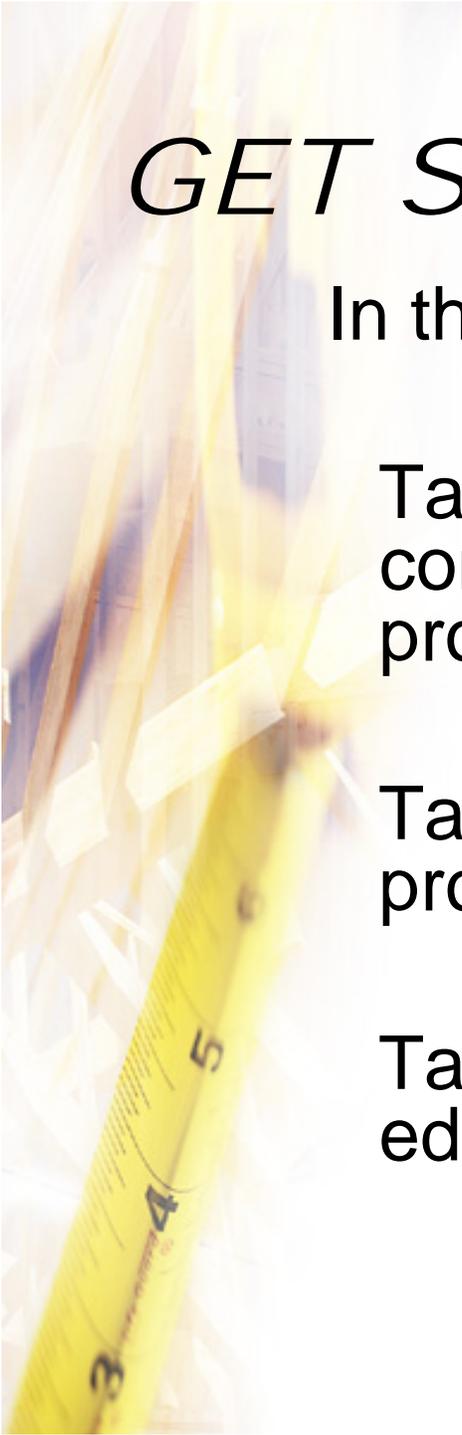


# *GET SPECIFIC*

In the Legislator's district:

Talk about the homes built that have benefited the community and local economy.

Talk about homes built with bond funds, or in development.



## *GET SPECIFIC (CONT.)*

In the Legislator's district:

Talk about local employers with expressed concerns about recruitment, retention, productivity in relation to cost of housing.

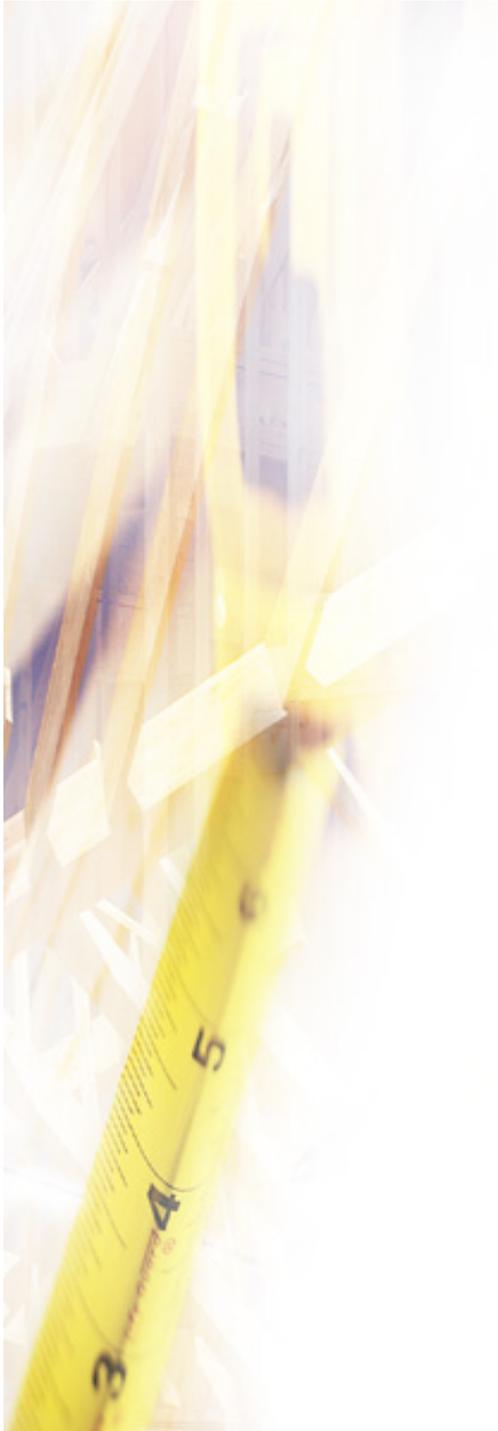
Talk about commuting patterns and traffic problems.

Talk about local impacts on health, education, public safety, et al.



## *Key messages*

- ✓ Housing market is broken
- ✓ Need to stabilize market
- ✓ Effects people at all income levels
- ✓ Give kids opportunity to succeed
- ✓ Help vulnerable populations
- ✓ Government has a role



**Stay Focused**

A yellow measuring tape is positioned diagonally on the left side of the slide. The numbers 3, 4, and 5 are visible on the tape. A large, semi-transparent white 'X' is drawn over the tape and extends towards the center of the slide. The background is a light, textured surface.

# Foreclosure crisis & Falling property values

A yellow measuring tape is positioned diagonally on the left side of the image. The numbers 3, 4, and 5 are visible on the tape. A large, semi-transparent white 'X' is overlaid on the tape and extends towards the center of the page. The background is a light, textured surface, possibly paper or fabric.

# State budget crisis



# *Key messages*

- ✓ Housing market is broken
- ✓ Need to stabilize market
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- ✓ Help vulnerable populations
- ✓ Government has a role

# *Messengers*



- Repeating what others tell you
- Talking to the right “others” – e.g., teachers, health professionals, employers, local elected officials, etc.
- Activating these messengers



## *The "Ask" and Exit*

- ✓ What does the Legislator think will work best to stabilize and expand the housing market?
- ✓ What should be in a bill to provide stable, predictable state investment to stimulate the housing market?



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