

## U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY

## Press Center



## Obama Administration Releases March Housing Scorecard

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### *Housing Market Continues To Show Signs of Improvement*

**WASHINGTON** - The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and the U.S. Department of the Treasury today released the March edition of the Obama Administration's Housing Scorecard – a comprehensive report on the nation's housing market. The latest data show progress among key indicators. In February, foreclosure starts continued their downward trend and, in January, house prices remained stable. While there are positive trends in the housing market, Administration officials caution that the economy is still healing from the Great Recession. The full Housing Scorecard is available online at [www.hud.gov/scorecard](http://www.hud.gov/scorecard).

"While there is good news in the March Scorecard, it's clear the housing market is still in the recovery phase of the cycle," said HUD Deputy Assistant Secretary for Economic Affairs Kurt Usowski. "The good news is that homeowners' equity is now over \$10 trillion, foreclosure starts are at their lowest levels since 2005, and house prices remain stable, but the recovery is stronger in some markets than in others. Overall, with home sales slowing, too many homeowners still underwater, and mortgage delinquency rates remaining high compared to historic norms, we must sustain our efforts to encourage continuing recovery in the housing market and help responsible homeowners."

"The Administration's Making Home Affordable program continues to provide assistance to struggling homeowners, with more than 1.3 million homeowners receiving permanent modifications through HAMP," said Tim Bowler, Treasury Acting Assistant Secretary for Financial Stability. "In addition, the standards set through the program have helped change the industry and helped millions more avoid foreclosure."

The March Housing Scorecard features key data on the health of the housing market and the impact of the Administration's foreclosure prevention programs, including:

- **House prices remain stable.** As of January 2014, the Federal Housing Finance Agency (FHFA) purchase-only house price index rose 7.4 percent from last year and ticked up 0.5 percent (seasonally adjusted) from December. The FHFA seasonally adjusted purchase-only index for the U.S. shows that home values are on par with prices in mid-2005. The S&P/Case-Shiller 20-City Home Price Index for January posted returns of 13.2 percent over the past 12 months but was down 0.1 percent (not seasonally adjusted) from December. Prices, however, are typically weaker at this time of the year. The Case-Shiller index shows that home values are back to their mid-2004 levels. (The Case-Shiller and FHFA price indices are released with a 2-month lag.)
- **Foreclosure starts are at their lowest level since the end of 2005.** Newly initiated foreclosures, at 51,842 U.S. properties, were down 9 percent from January and 27 percent from one year ago--reaching their lowest level since December 2005. A total of 30,307 U.S. properties were repossessed by lenders (Real Estate Owned, or REO) in February, virtually the same as January and down 33 percent from a year ago. (Source: Realty Trac).
- **The Administration's foreclosure mitigation programs continue to provide relief for millions of homeowners as the recovery from the housing crisis continues.** Nearly 2 million homeowner assistance actions have taken place through the Making Home Affordable Program, including more than 1.3 million permanent modifications through the Home Affordable Modification Program (HAMP), while the Federal Housing Administration (FHA) has offered more than 2.2 million loss mitigation and early delinquency interventions through February. The Administration's programs continue to encourage improved standards and processes in the industry, with HOPE Now lenders offering families and individuals more than 4 million proprietary modifications through January (data are reported with a 2-month lag). In all, more than 8.2 million mortgage modification and other forms of mortgage assistance arrangements were completed between April 2009 and the end of February 2014.

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