

Thousands of homeowners seek help in Sacramento, California

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Thousands of homeowners struggling with foreclosures and financial distress attended a “mortgage modification” event sponsored by the Neighborhood Assistance Corporation of America (NACA) in Sacramento, California on the weekend. The gathering followed a similar “Save the Dream” event in Los Angeles that NACA officials estimated was attended by 40,000 people.

A crowd of approximately 10,000 had already gathered in line outside the Cal Expo Center when the event first started on Friday morning—some having waited two days outside for their place in line. Inside the event, the walls were lined with blankets, pillows, sleeping bags, and portable chairs.

“This [the Sacramento event] is probably going to have about as many as we had in Los Angeles,” stated NACA CEO Bruce Marks on Friday. Homeowners came from not only the Sacramento area, but from all areas of California and neighboring states, including Oregon, Nevada, Arizona, and Washington.

Francisco Tunjano, the communications coordinator at the Sacramento event, told the WSWs that a surprising number of individuals had come to the event, perhaps 60 to 70 percent of those in line, from Los Angeles and Southern California.

Organizers of the LA event had been overwhelmed by the turnout and many homeowners in the LA area did not hear of the event until it had ended, deciding to make the eight-hour trek to Sacramento.

Once inside, workers waited for hours through the several stages of the event—the waiting area, discussion

with financial counselors, passing information to lenders, and so on—many down to their last hope of keeping their homes.

Correspondents for the WSWs spoke to a number of workers as they waited in line. Little confidence was expressed in either the Democrats or Republicans and many were eager to read literature from the Socialist Equality Party.

John, a state worker, was attending to get an adjustment on his payments. He noted that state workers had lost wages due to furloughs, saying, “Our household lost \$1,400.”

Elaine, a public school teacher, was recently laid off. Her husband, a public school teacher in Haywood, said many of his friends had also lost their jobs too—even as class sizes are being increased from 20 students to 26.

The couple has been trying to refinance their loans for the past three years since their rate was increased. They heard about the event from a friend and had even attempted to attend the event when it was held in LA.

Victor came to the NACA event to prevent his house from being sold at a foreclosure sale. His wife is disabled and he has recently seen a reduction in work hours resulting in his income being cut by almost a third.

Victor said he attempted to get a loan modification through Pro City Mortgage, but said, “All of a sudden they closed their offices and didn’t return calls...apparently [they] have an ‘F’ rating on the BBB [Better Business Bureau].” He added, “A big part of

the problem is that I was with somebody I thought was reputable.”

The website for the Better Business Bureau notes that the reasons for the ‘F’ rating included Pro City Mortgage Corporation’s failure to comply with an arbitration decision or mediated settlement and 139 complaints filed against the business. The company’s website notes that the business has subsequently closed down.

Sacramento has the 14th highest foreclosure-filings-per-household rate among the more than 200 largest metropolitan areas RealtyTrac reports on across the country. About 1 in every 31 homes in Sacramento received a foreclosure notice of some kind—a total of 27,000 filings—during the first six months of the year. California trails only Florida for the number of metropolitan areas with the highest foreclosure rates.



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