

## Many Cannot Afford Housin

In its annual housing affordability report, the National Low Income Housing Coalition recently found there is not a single county in the United States where a full-time worker making minimum wage could rent a 1-bedroom apartment and spend no more than the standard 30 percent of his/her income on rent and utilities. The national study also found that a family must earn \$15.78 an hour in order to afford a two-bedroom apartment while spending no more than 30 percent of family income. Last year that figure was \$15.37.

In Pennsylvania, housing is a bit less expensive but still presents a huge challenge for many families. To afford an average 2-bedroom apartment and spend no more than 30 percent of income on rent and utilities, a family would need annual income of \$29,818. With one parent working 40 hours a week, that would require an hourly wage of \$14.34 an hour. With two parents working full time, it would require each to earn at least \$7.17 an hour.

Adding to this squeeze, the Coalition found that the costs of heating fuel and utilities increased by 13% in the past year.

According to the report, many low-income households deal with the lack of affordable housing by "doubling up" in a single unit.