

## State of the Homeless 2003

### Bloomberg Pursues Plan to Eject Homeless Men and Women from Shelters to the Streets

In spite of the widely-praised January legal settlement for homeless families, Mayor Bloomberg is pursuing his plan to eject homeless single adults from shelters to the streets. *The Bloomberg plan represents the greatest threat to the “right to shelter” in more than two decades.* Indeed, if Mayor Bloomberg is successful later this month in obtaining court approval for his plan, *more homeless adults will be sleeping on the streets, and New York City will witness more deaths and injuries among homeless men and women.*

**The Right to Shelter for Homeless New Yorkers.** In 1981, following two years of litigation, the City of New York entered into a consent decree in *Callahan v. Carey* and agreed to provide emergency shelter for all homeless men and women who meet the need standard for welfare or who are homeless “by reason of physical, mental or social dysfunction.” Before the *Callahan* consent decree was signed, according to a City health official, *“it was routine to see homeless patients with severe and fatal hypothermia [frostbite].”* However, *since the 1981 decree “treatment of homeless persons for hypothermia has become a relatively rare event.”* Indeed, Robert Callahan, the lead plaintiff in the lawsuit, died on the streets of Manhattan the year before the consent decree bearing his name was signed, one of the last victims of an era with no legal right to shelter.

**The Bloomberg Plan.** Mayor Bloomberg now wants to back out of the agreement in *Callahan* by *denying emergency shelter to homeless men and women* whom the City claims have failed to comply with shelter social service plans and other rules. *Homeless individuals who are sanctioned would be ejected to the streets for a minimum of 30 days.* According to the plan submitted to the court, homeless men and women would be ejected from shelter to the streets for failure to comply with (1) assessments, (2) social service plans, (3) housing search requirements, (4) facility rules, or (5) welfare requirements. The Giuliani Administration first attempted to implement this shelter-termination plan, but was blocked by a court ruling in *Callahan* three years ago. Mayor Bloomberg has appealed that ruling, and a court hearing on the appeal is scheduled for later this month.

**What Will Happen If the Bloomberg Plan Goes into Effect?** If Mayor Bloomberg is successful with his appeal, *for the first time in 22 years homeless New Yorkers will be ejected from shelters to the streets* without the ability to return to any shelter for at least 30 days. Among the consequences of the plan:

**More homeless people on the streets:** Homeless services providers, who oppose the Bloomberg plan, predict that there will be more homeless adults sleeping on New York City streets if the administration prevails in court.

**More homeless deaths and injuries:** In other cities where there is no guarantee of emergency shelter for homeless individuals, deaths and injuries from exposure, hypothermia, violence, and other causes are routine.

**Future mayors will have the authority to eject more homeless to the streets:** Although Bloomberg Administration officials claim that ejections will be “rare,” without the *Callahan* legal protection future mayors will have the ability to eject hundreds, even thousands, of homeless adults from shelters to the streets.

**Worsening medical and psychiatric disorders:** Homeless adults have high incidence of physical and mental health disorders, and loss of shelter will exacerbate these conditions.

**Settlement for Homeless Families, But Not for Individuals.** In January, Mayor Bloomberg announced a landmark settlement in which he agreed not to eject homeless families from shelters to the streets under the same regulation currently proposed for homeless adults. Unfortunately, Bloomberg continues to pursue ejection from shelter for homeless men and women, despite offers of alternative measures that would protect homeless individuals from the harm associated with loss of shelter. *With only ten days left, Mayor Bloomberg has given no indication that he will reconsider his plan.* Oral arguments on the Bloomberg appeal are scheduled for February 28th in the Appellate Division of the New York State Supreme Court.

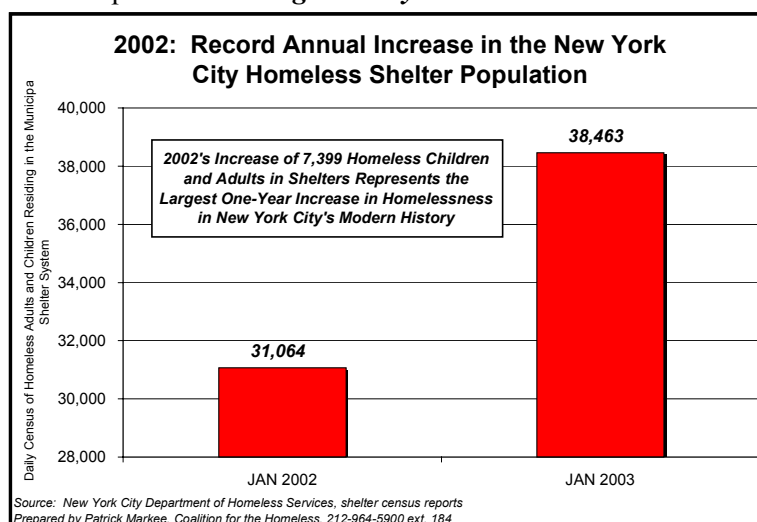
# State of the Homeless 2003

## Record One-Year Increase in New York City Homelessness

In last year's "*State of the Homeless*" report, Coalition for the Homeless noted that 2001 had seen the "largest one-year increase in homelessness since the Great Depression." Tragically, the past year has eclipsed that already striking record. In January 2003 *more than 38,400 homeless children and adults slept each night in municipal shelters, the largest recorded shelter population in New York City history.* The past year saw *nearly 7,400 more people sleeping in shelters each night than the previous year.* Amidst an increasingly acute shortage of affordable rental housing and City and State cutbacks in housing assistance, as well as the lingering economic recession, homelessness will continue to rise without a change in City and State policies.

**Record One-Year Increase in New York City Homelessness.** From January 2002 to January 2003, the number of homeless adults and children sleeping in New York City shelters *rose by 7,399 persons, a 24 percent increase*, from 31,064 to 38,463 people per night. This represents the *largest one-year increase in homelessness since the Great Depression*, and surpasses last year's one-year increase of 5,534 people. The number of homeless New Yorkers sleeping in shelters is at all-time record levels, and is expected to continue rising. Since January 1998, *more than 17,000 more New Yorkers* bed down each night in shelters, a remarkable *82 percent increase over five years.*

**Number of Homeless Children More Than Doubles in Five Years.** Homeless children and their families now comprise 79 percent of the New York City shelter population, and are the fastest growing segment of the homeless population. Over the past five years the number of homeless children sleeping each night in shelters *has more than doubled to 16,711 children* at the end of January 2003. The number of homeless families is nearly twice the peak family shelter population of the 1980s.



**Number of Homeless Single Adults at Highest Levels in More Than a Decade.** The number of homeless single adults in New York City shelters, which had fallen in the early 1990s as a result of State-City supportive-housing initiatives, has now risen to *the highest levels since 1991.* Reports from soup kitchens, outreach teams, shelters, and community groups also confirm a *significant rise in street homelessness*, particularly among mentally-ill New Yorkers.

**Continued Increase in City's Use of Private Apartments for Emergency Shelter.** Sending perverse signals to the tight housing market, the City increased the number of private apartments (called "scattered-site" units) used to shelter homeless families on a temporary basis. In January 2003 the Department of Homeless Services paid nearly \$100 per night to private landlords for 2,071 "scattered-site" apartments, *a 69 percent increase* from the previous year. One shocking statistic: *The City now utilizes one of every twenty vacant affordable apartments citywide for shelter*, thus removing from the market low-cost apartments that would otherwise be available for leasing to low-income households.

**Accelerating Loss of Affordable Apartments Citywide.** Recently released data from the United States Bureau of the Census documents the accelerating loss of low-cost apartments citywide. According to preliminary data from the 2002 Housing and Vacancy Survey, the *share of all New York City apartments with monthly rents and utilities under \$600 fell from 33 percent in 1999 to only 25 percent in 2002.*

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# State of the Homeless 2003

## Cost-Effective Ways to Reduce Homelessness: Three Immediate Initiatives for Mayor Bloomberg and Governor Pataki

Homelessness in New York City, already exceeding all-time record levels, will only continue to rise unless Mayor Bloomberg and Governor Pataki take the necessary steps to reverse years of cutbacks in housing assistance. Following are three cost-effective, immediate steps that the Mayor and Governor can take to stem the tide of rising homelessness. They include **supportive housing** for homeless individuals living with mental illness; **permanent housing** for homeless families instead of costly, \$100-per-night shelter arrangements; and increasing the commitment to **housing for homeless families and individuals** in Mayor Bloomberg's ambitious housing plan. Most important, however, Mayor Bloomberg must withdraw his threat to expel homeless individuals from shelters to the streets – preserving the lives of homeless New Yorkers is the first order of business.

### Withdraw the Appeal of the Callahan Court Ruling

Mayor Bloomberg must withdraw his appeal of the three-year-old court ruling in *Callahan* that protected the right to shelter for homeless men and women. If the Bloomberg appeal is successful, there will be more homeless people sleeping on New York City streets, and more deaths and injuries among homeless New Yorkers.

*It is in no New Yorker's interest to have more homeless people sleeping on our city's streets.*

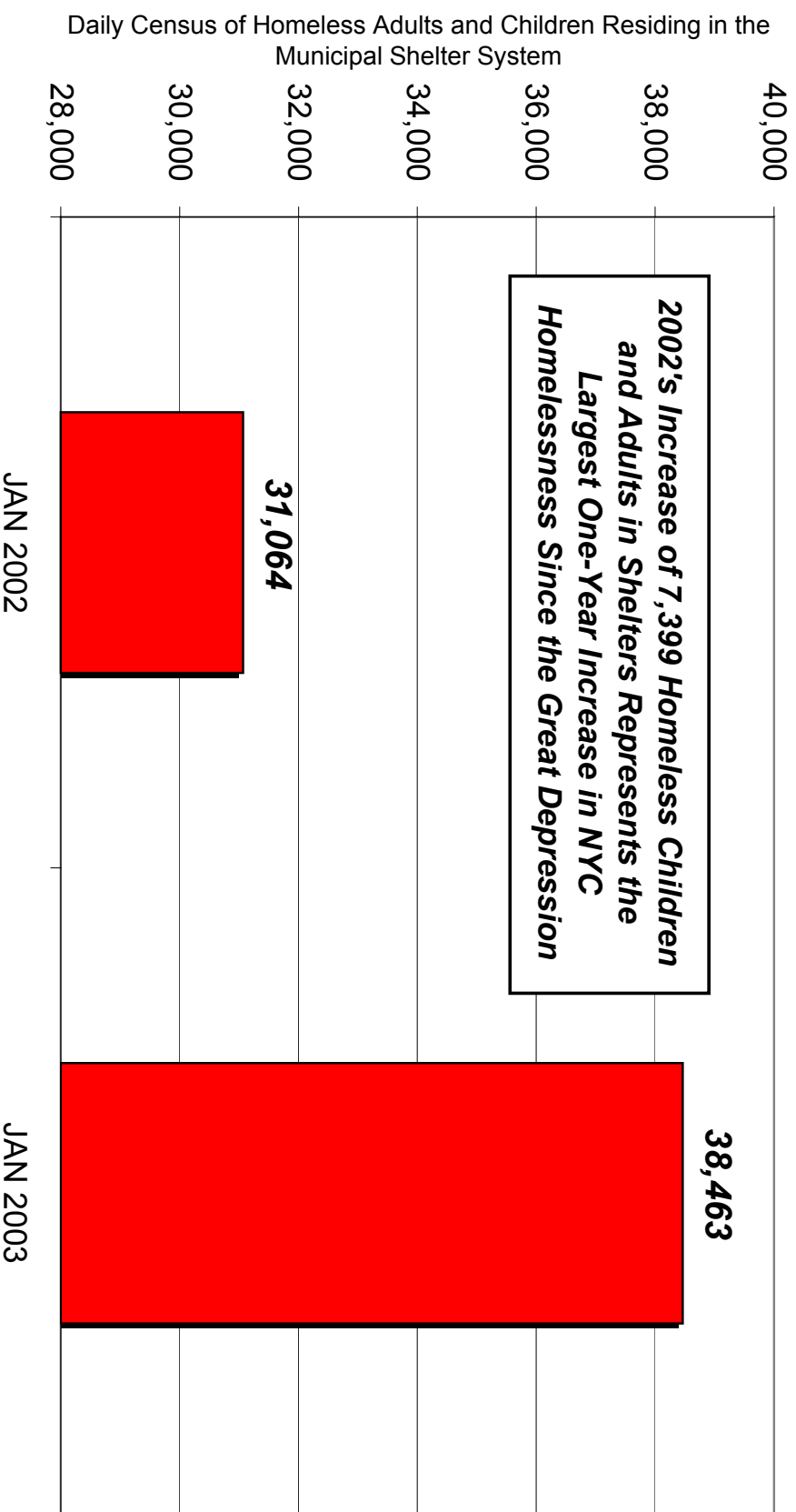
### Three Immediate State and City Initiatives to Reduce Homelessness

- 1. Renewal of the “New York/New York Agreement”:** The landmark *New York/New York Agreement* of 1990 was largely responsible for the dramatic reductions in homelessness among single adults in the early 1990s. This State-City initiative provided supportive housing for mentally-ill homeless individuals, and alongside other supportive and affordable housing programs it **reduced the adult shelter population by 37 percent** between 1988 and 1994. Governor Pataki and Mayor Bloomberg must negotiate **a new New York/New York Agreement** to develop 9,000 units of supportive housing (7,500 units for mentally-ill individuals and 1,500 units for the neediest homeless families).
- 2. Convert Family “Scattered-Site” Apartments into Permanent Housing:** Currently one of every twenty homeless families in the municipal shelter system resides in \$100-per-night “scattered-site” apartments, whose use the City increased by 69 percent over the last year. The City must get out of the business of paying landlords exorbitant fees for temporary shelter instead of reasonable rents for permanent homes. The City should **convert “scattered-site” shelter units to permanent housing** by providing housing vouchers and rent subsidies to homeless families to allow them to sign leases. This initiative would not only reduce homelessness, but also save taxpayer dollars in these tight fiscal times.
- 3. The Bloomberg Affordable Housing Plan Must Increase Its Commitment to Housing for Homeless New Yorkers:** The success of the Koch Administration's 1986 ten-year housing initiative in creating jobs, revitalizing neighborhoods, producing 150,000 affordable apartments, and reducing homelessness has been well-documented. One reason: **Under the Koch initiative, fully 10 percent of all housing units created or rehabilitated were set aside for homeless households.** While Mayor Bloomberg's ambitious housing plan, announced in December, represents a significant first step towards addressing New York City's housing shortage, **only 4 percent** of the 65,500 apartments pledged over five years will be set aside for homeless New Yorkers. Mayor Bloomberg must **match the commitment of the Koch housing plan**, and commit **10 percent of all housing units** created or preserved under his plan (at least 6,500 apartments over five years) for homeless families and individuals.

*Prepared February 19, 2003.*

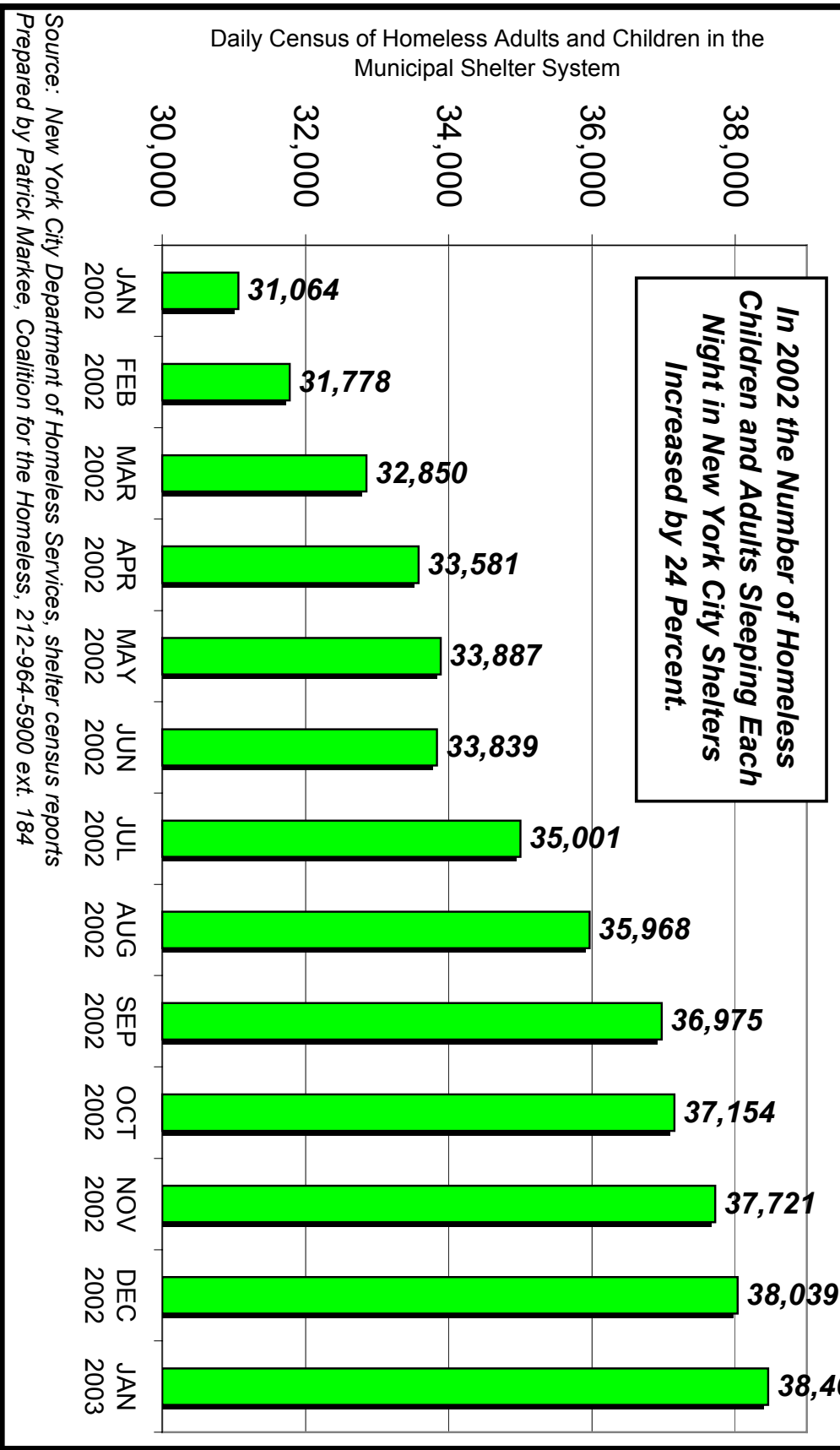
*For more information, please contact Patrick Markee, Senior Policy Analyst,  
Coalition for the Homeless, 212-964-5900 ext. 184.*

## 2002: Record Annual Increase in the New York City Homeless Shelter Population

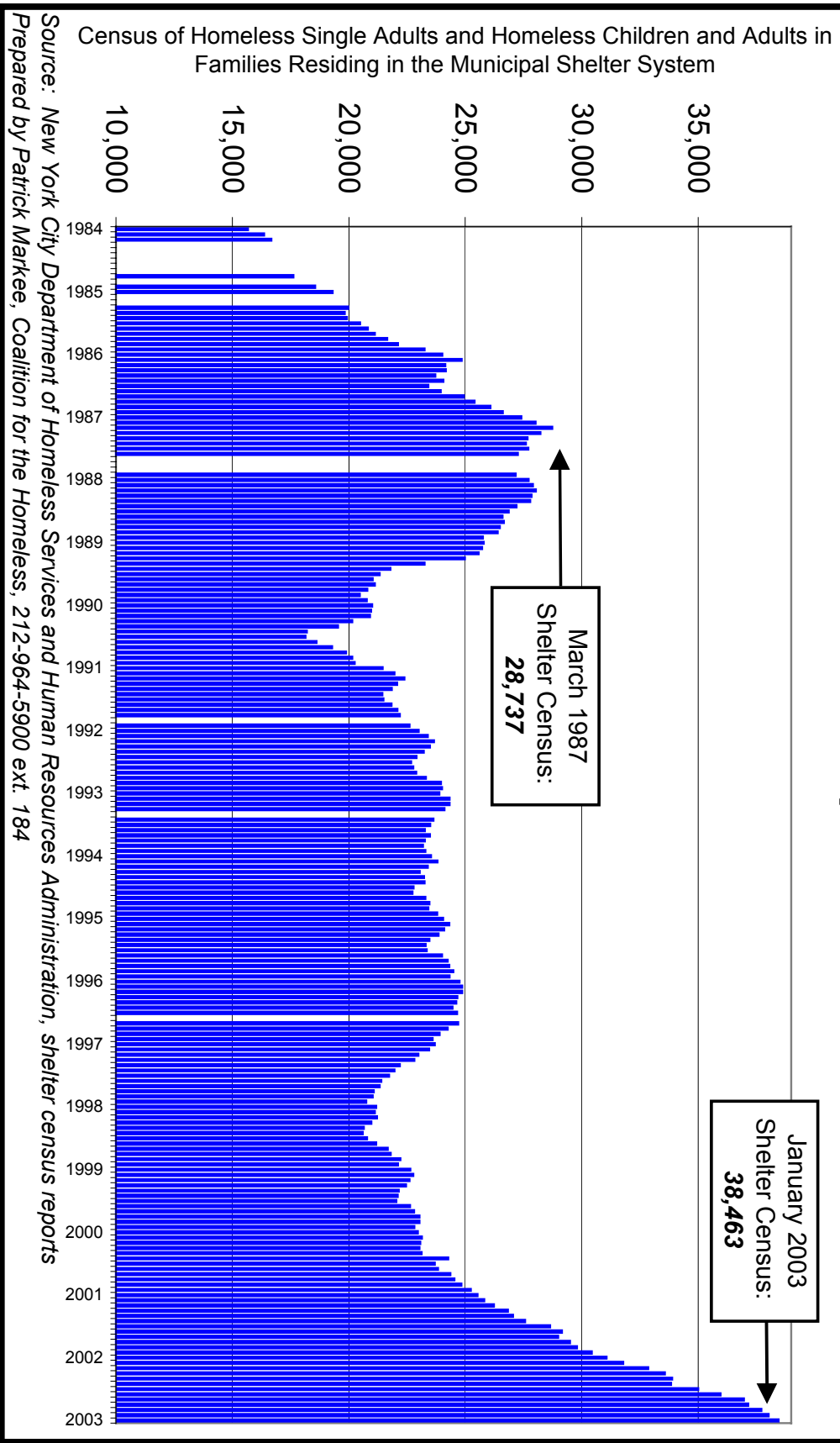


Source: New York City Department of Homeless Services, shelter census reports  
Prepared by Patrick Markee, Coalition for the Homeless, 212-964-5900 ext. 184

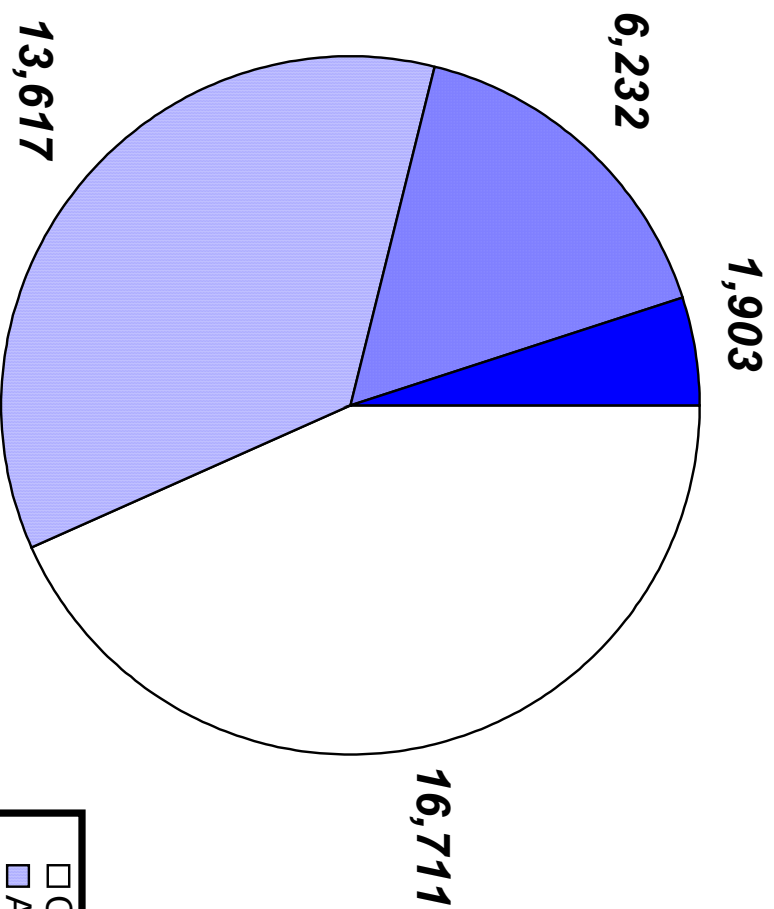
**Dramatic Increase in the Homeless Shelter Population,  
January 2002-January 2003**



## All-Time Record Homelessness and Rising: NYC Homeless Shelter Population, 1983-2003



## Children and Families Currently Comprise 79 Percent of All Homeless People in NYC Shelters



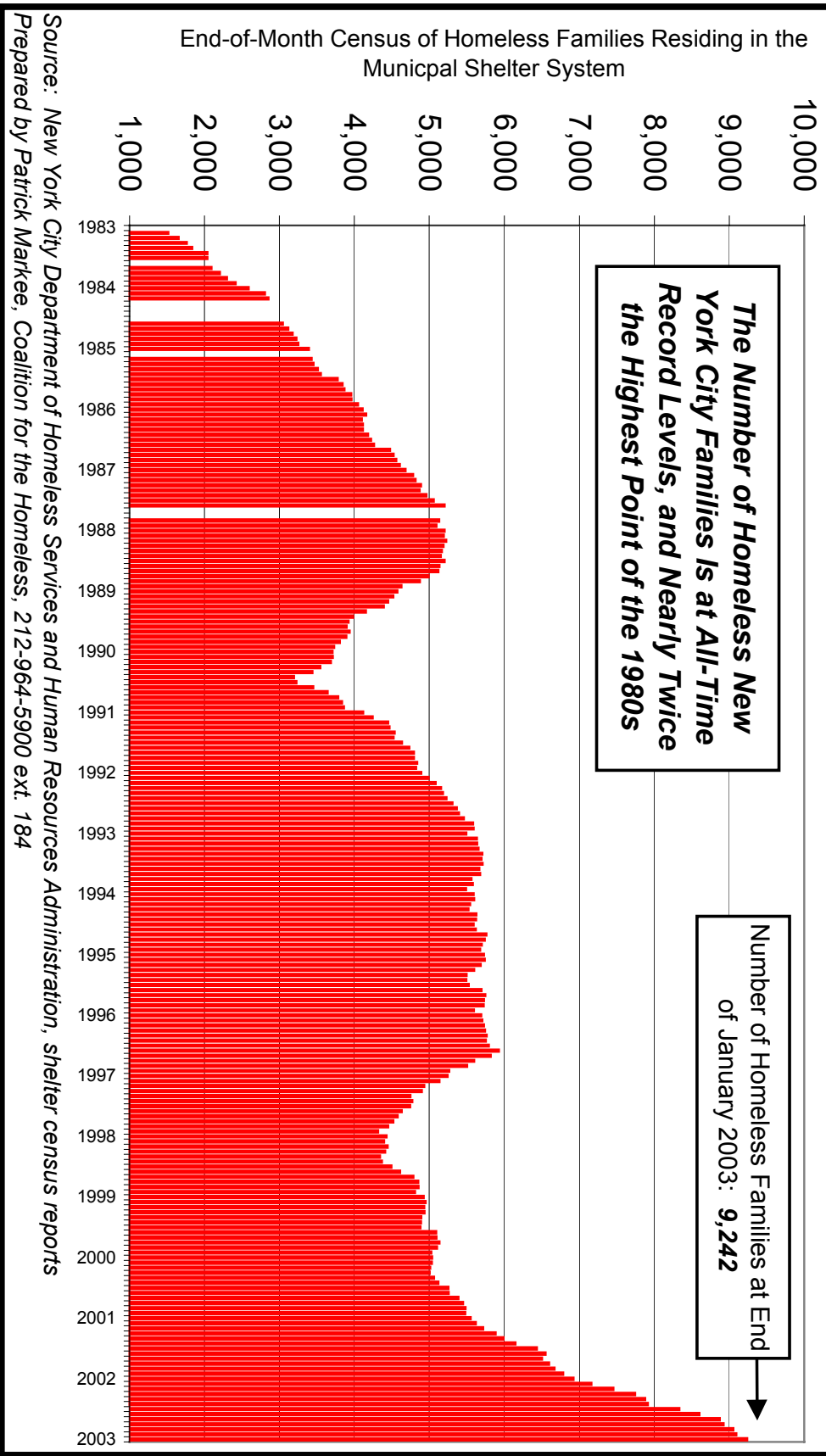
January 2003  
Census of  
Homeless  
People in NYC  
Shelters:  
**38,463**

- Children
- Adults in Families
- Single Men
- Single Women

*Note: Average daily census of homeless single adults, and end-of-month census of homeless children and adult family members, residing in the municipal shelter system.*  
Source: New York City Department of Homeless Services, shelter census reports  
Prepared by Patrick Markee, Coalition for the Homeless, 212-964-5900 ext. 184



## 2002: All-Time Record Number of Homeless Families in New York City Shelters



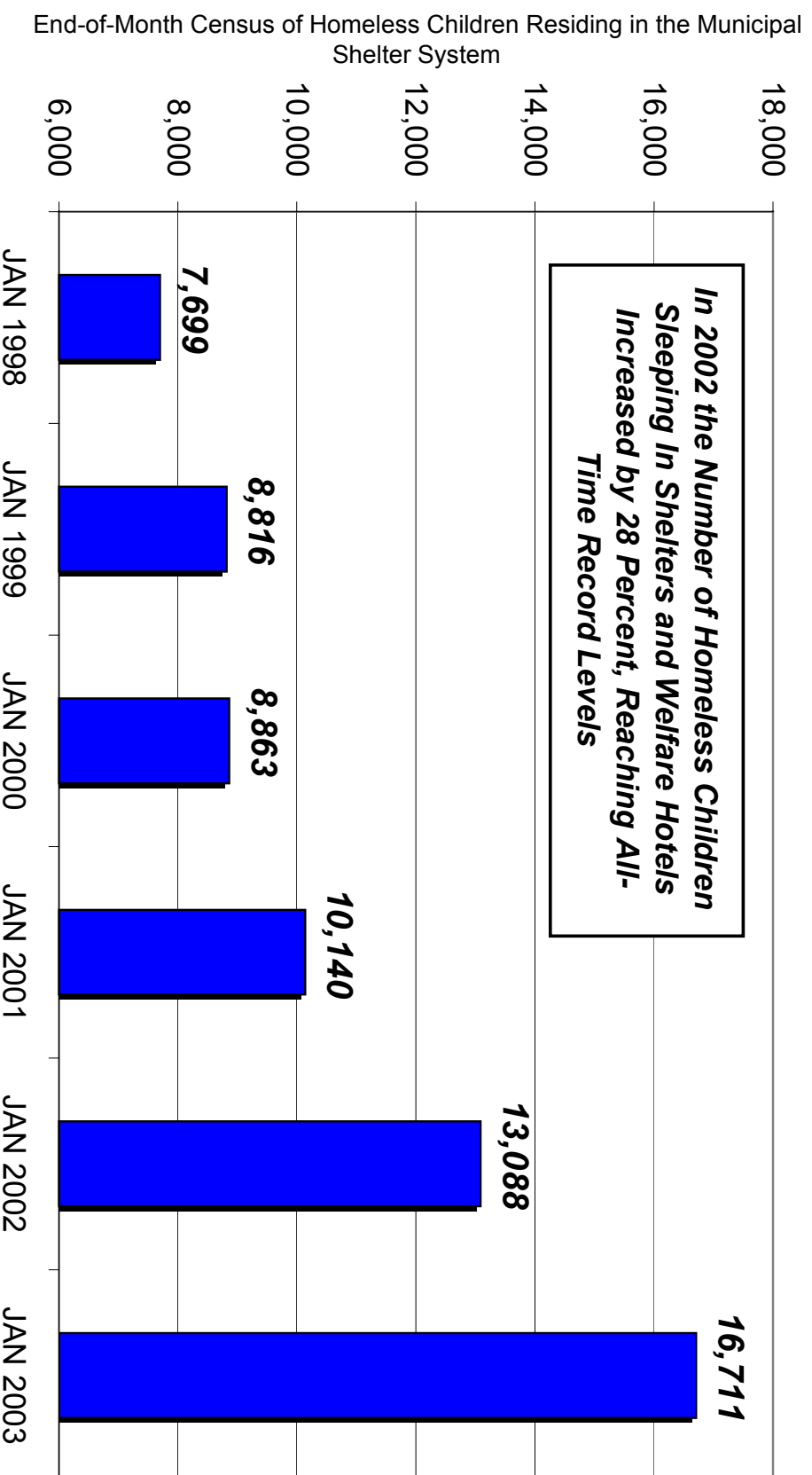
Source: New York City Department of Homeless Services and Human Resources Administration, shelter census reports  
Prepared by Patrick Markee, Coalition for the Homeless, 212-964-5900 ext. 184



# COALITION FOR THE HOMELESS

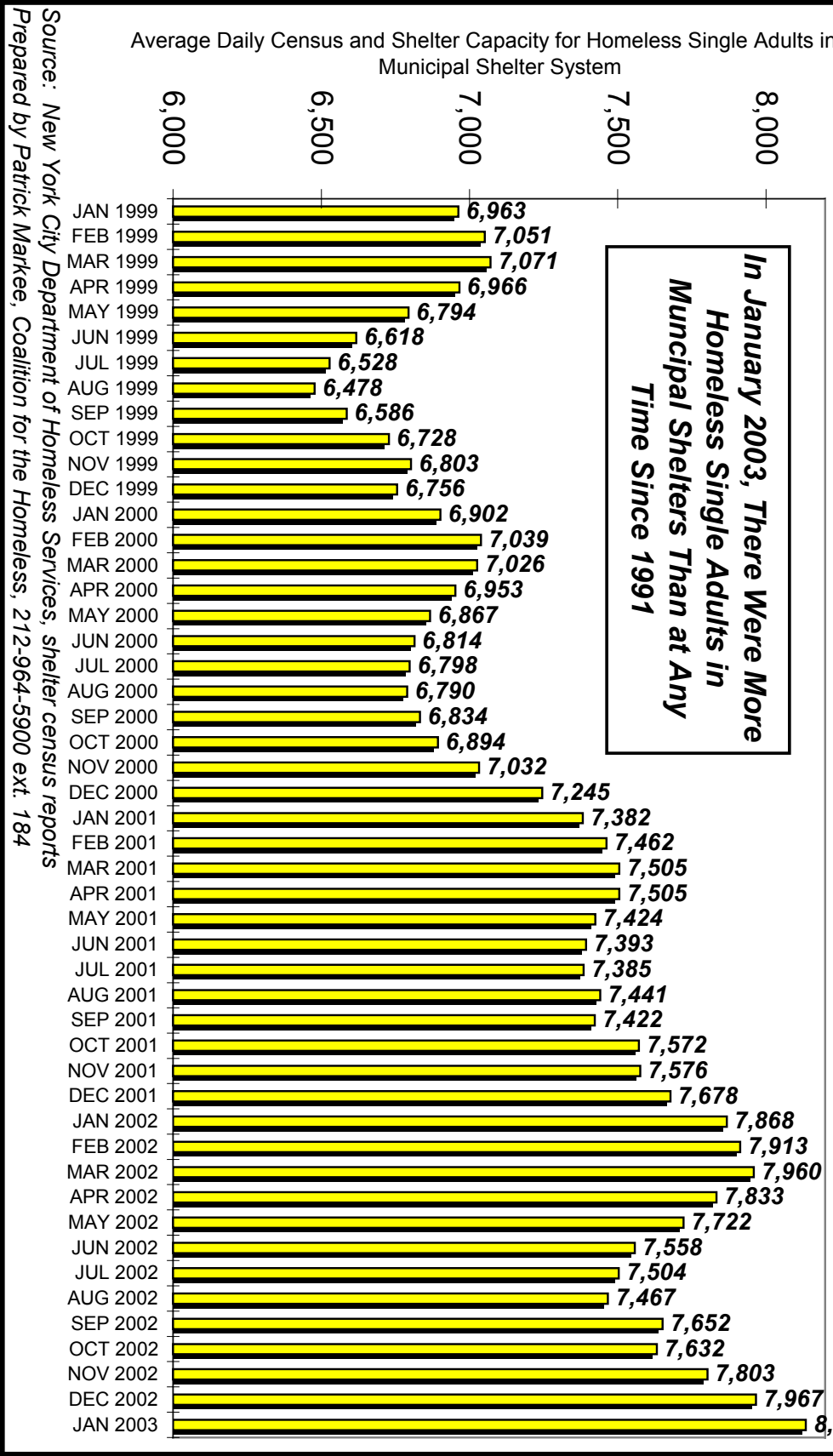
## Number of Homeless New York City Children More Than Doubles Over Five Years

*In 2002 the Number of Homeless Children Sleeping In Shelters and Welfare Hotels Increased by 28 Percent, Reaching All-Time Record Levels*



Source: New York City Department of Homeless Services, shelter census reports  
Prepared by Patrick Markee, Coalition for the Homeless, 212-964-5900 ext. 184

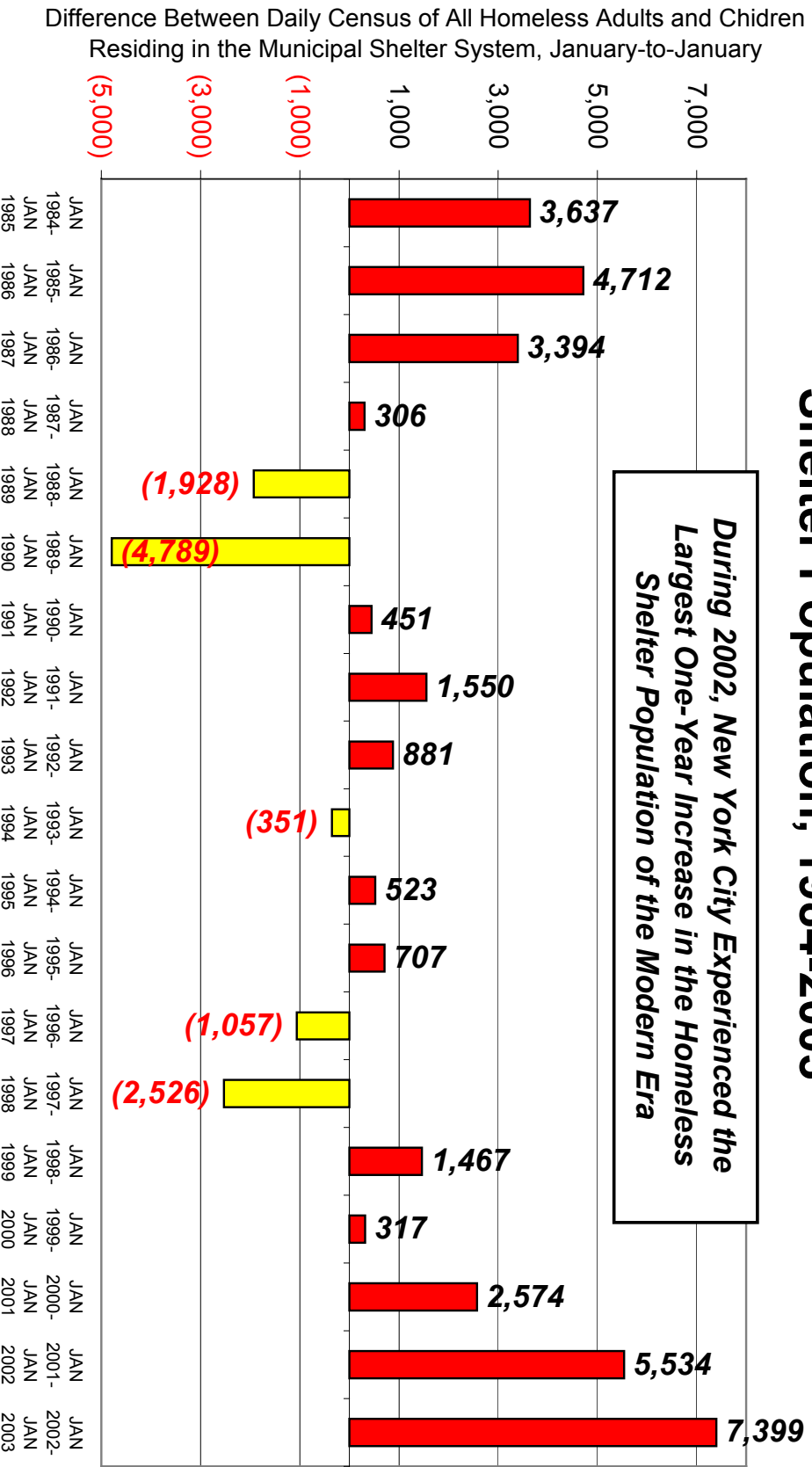
**2002: Rising Number of Homeless Single Adults in the Municipal Shelter System**



Source: New York City Department of Homeless Services, shelter census reports  
 Prepared by Patrick Markee, Coalition for the Homeless, 212-964-5900 ext. 184

# One-Year Changes in New York City Homeless Shelter Population, 1984-2003

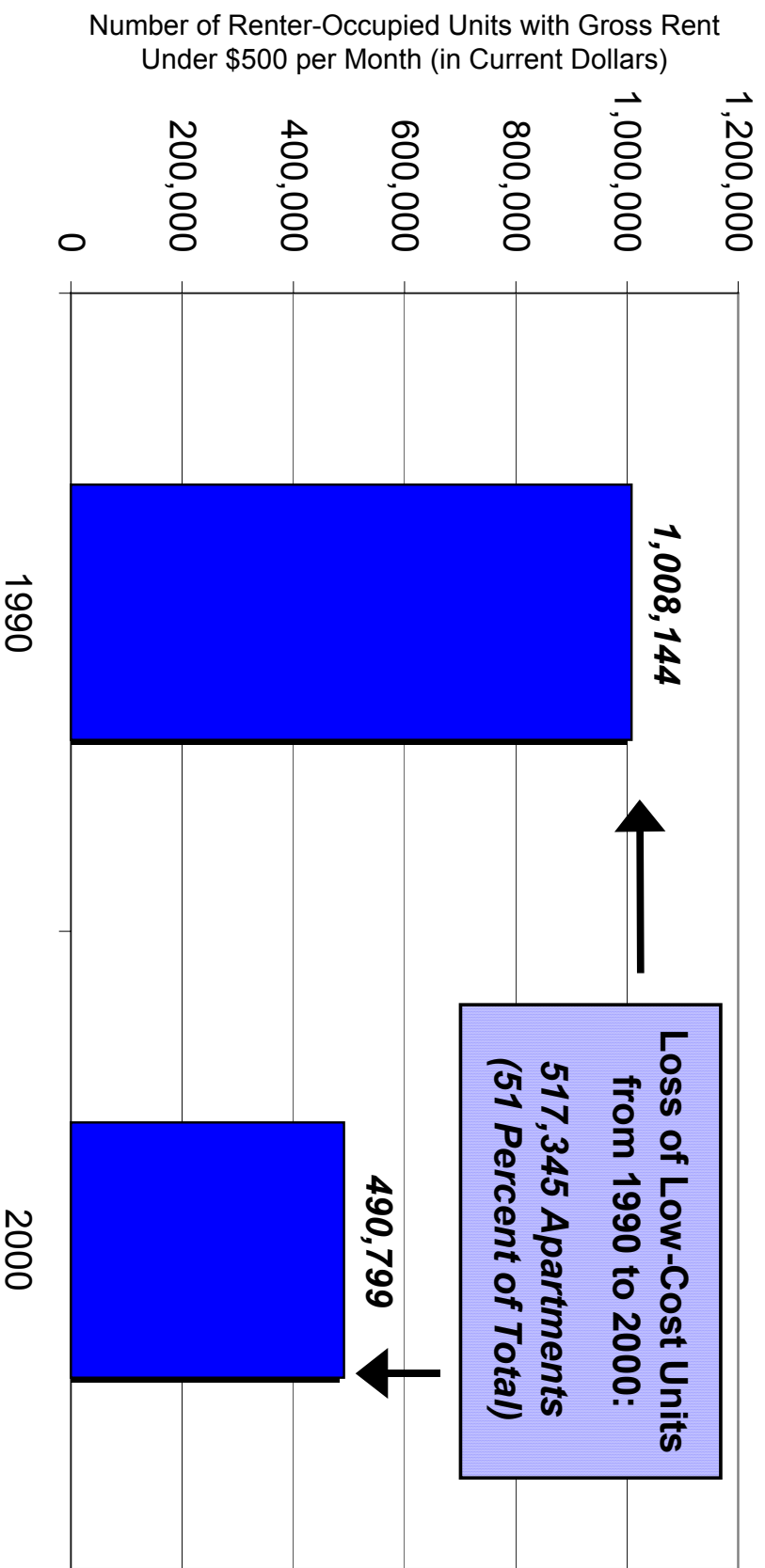
*During 2002, New York City Experienced the Largest One-Year Increase in the Homeless Shelter Population of the Modern Era*



Source: New York City Department of Homeless Services and Human Resources Administration, shelter census reports  
 Prepared by Patrick Markee, Coalition for the Homeless, 212-964-5900 ext. 184

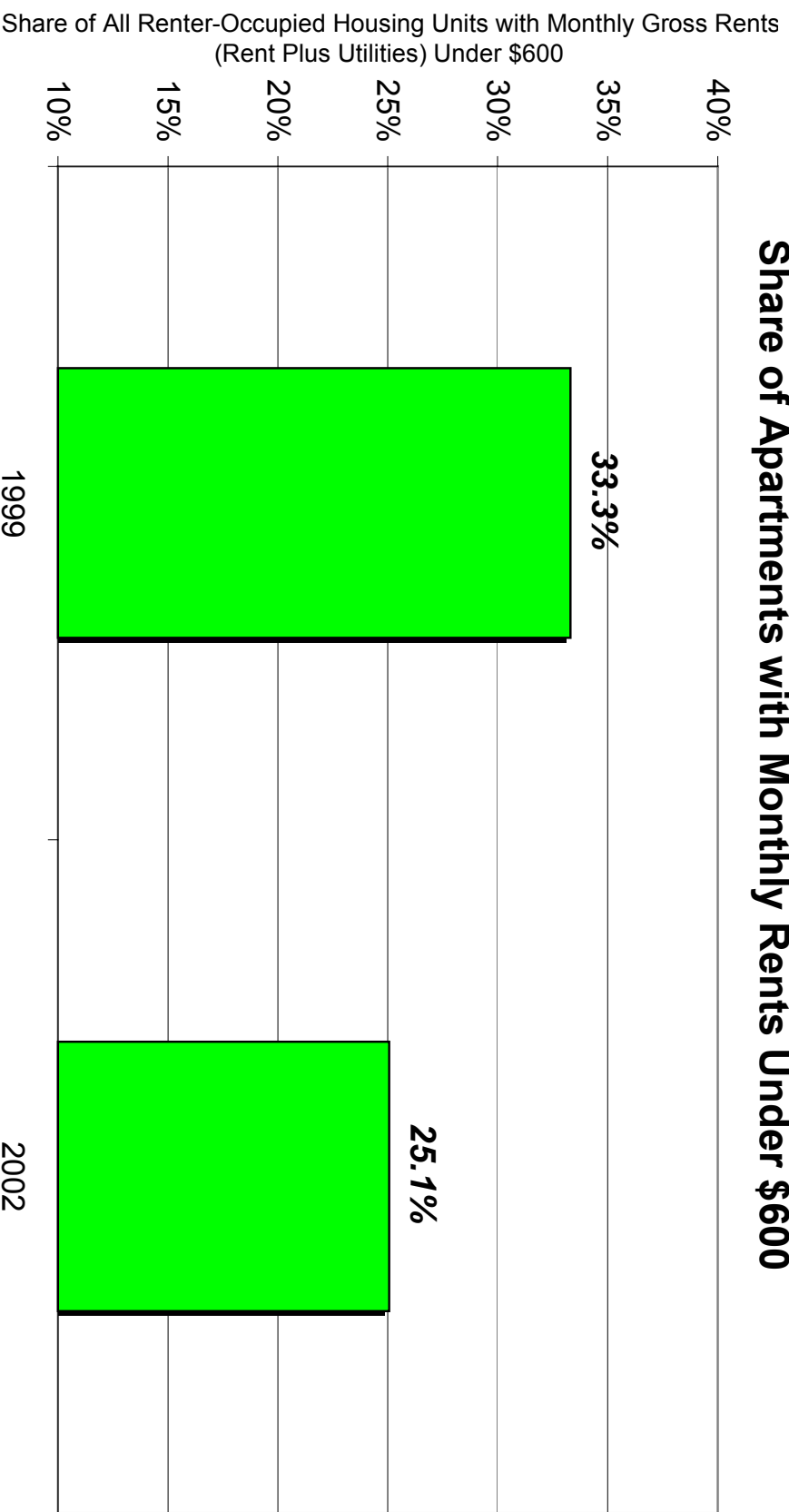
## Loss of Affordable Apartments in New York City, 1990-2000

### Number of Apartments with Monthly Gross Rents Under \$500



Source: United States Bureau of the Census, Decennial Census (1990 and 2000)  
Prepared by Patrick Markee, Coalition for the Homeless, 212-964-5900 ext. 184

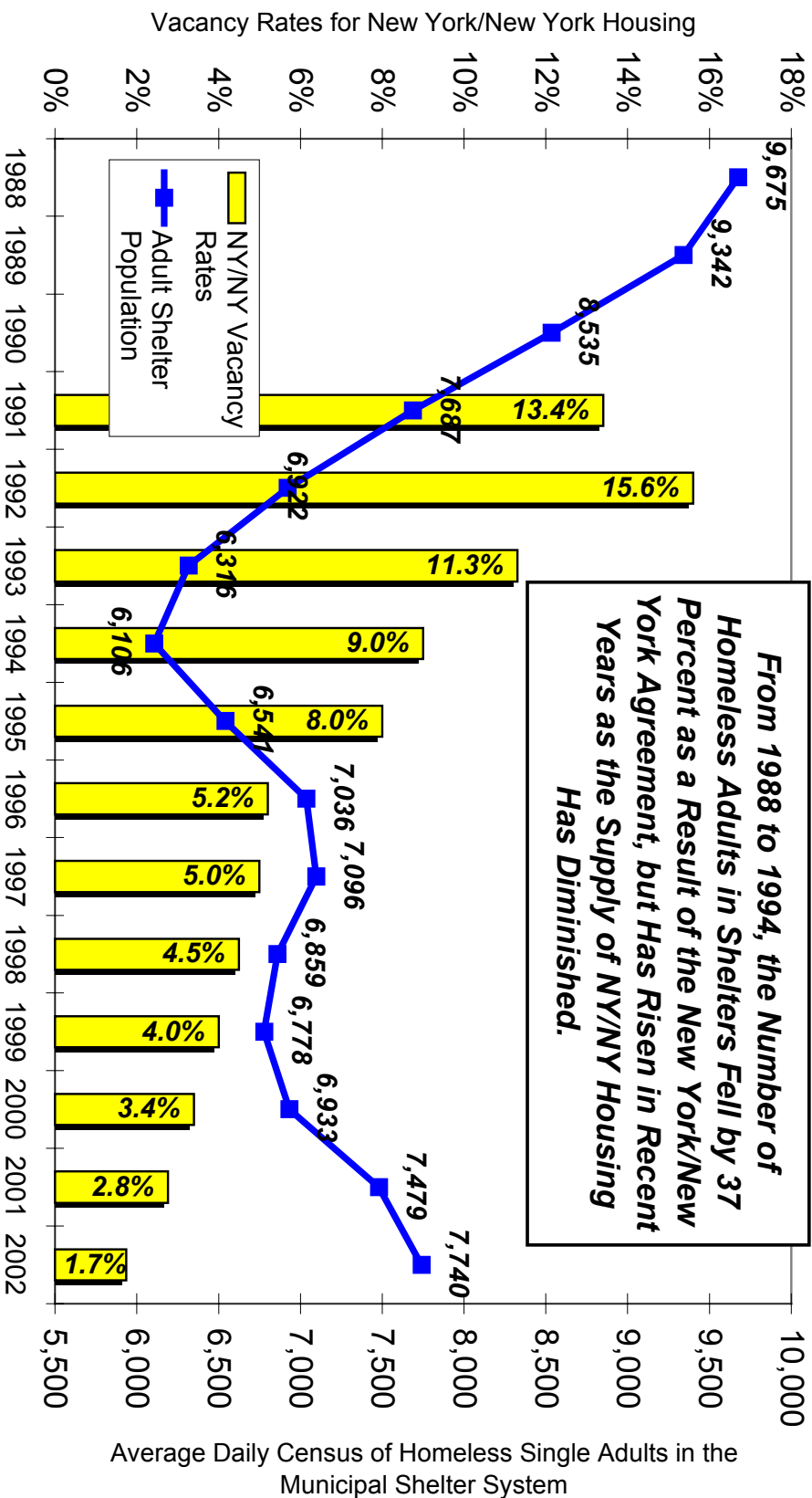
**New York City: Accelerating Loss of Affordable  
Rental Housing, 1999 to 2002  
Share of Apartments with Monthly Rents Under \$600**



Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Housing and Vacancy Survey, 1999 and 2002*  
Prepared by Patrick Markee, *Coalition for the Homeless*, 212-964-5900 ext. 184

# COALITION FOR THE HOMELESS

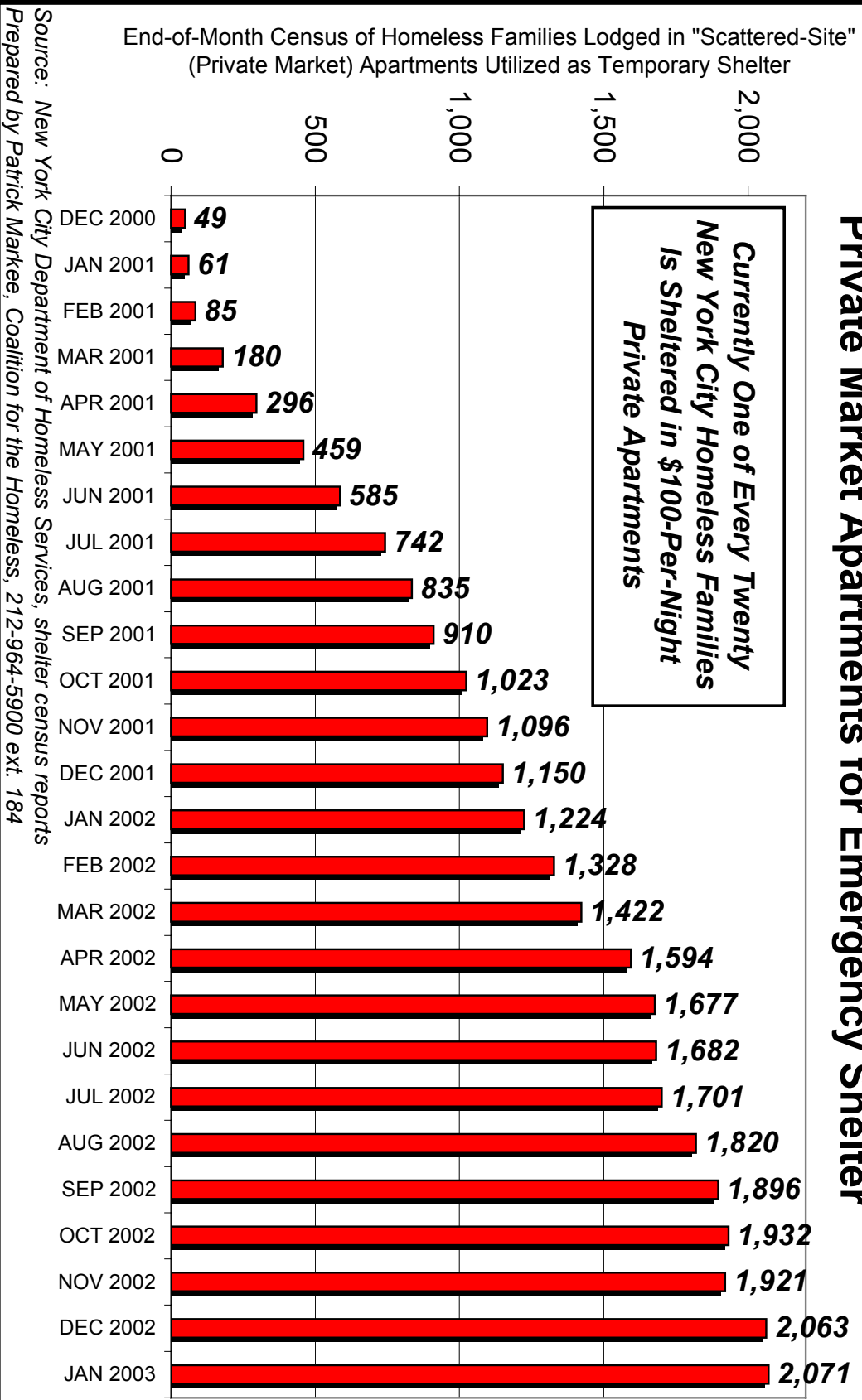
## Adult Homelessness in New York City Rising Amidst Reductions in New York/New York Supportive Housing



Source: New York City Department of Homeless Services; Residential Placement Management Services  
 Prepared by Patrick Markee, Coalition for the Homeless, 212-964-5900 ext. 184

**2002: 69 Percent Increase in Use of \$100-Per-Night Private Market Apartments for Emergency Shelter**

*Currently One of Every Twenty New York City Homeless Families Is Sheltered in \$100-Per-Night Private Apartments*



Source: New York City Department of Homeless Services, shelter census reports  
 Prepared by Patrick Markee, Coalition for the Homeless, 212-964-5900 ext. 184



# COALITION FOR THE HOMELESS

## ONE OF TWENTY VACANT-FOR-RENT AFFORDABLE APARTMENTS CITYWIDE CURRENTLY USED AS EMERGENCY SHELTER

	All of NYC	Bronx	Brooklyn	Manhattan
Total Number of Vacant-for-Rent Affordable Apartments*	44,157	13,312	16,326	5,074
Number of Apartments Used as Emergency Shelter**	2,071	1,113	875	83
<b>Share of Total</b>	<b>4.7%</b>	<b>8.4%</b>	<b>5.4%</b>	<b>1.6%</b>

\*Includes vacant-for-rent apartments with monthly asking rents below \$1,000

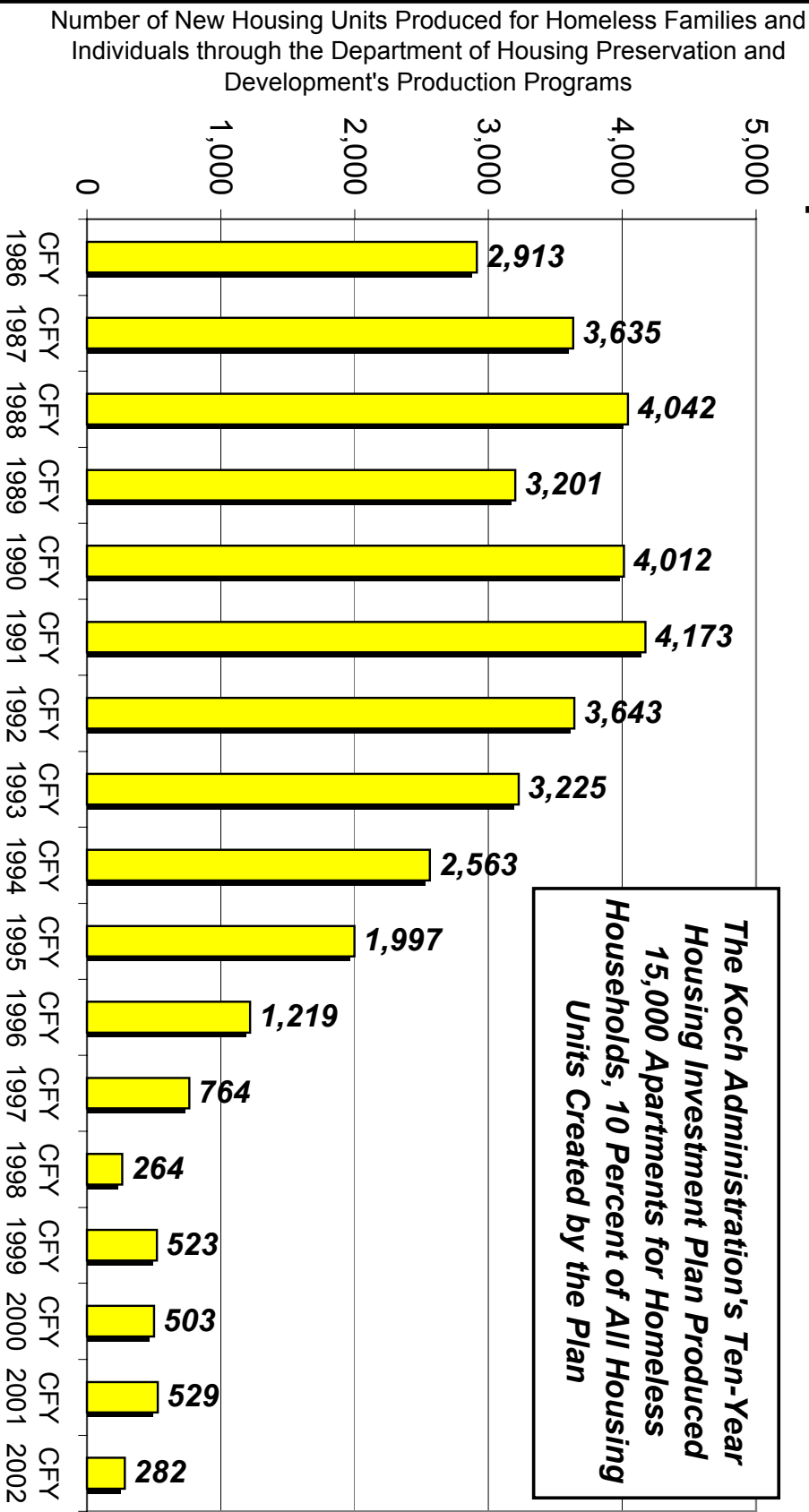
\*\*Data from end of January 2003

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2002 Housing and Vacancy Survey;

NYC Department of Homeless Services, shelter census reports

Prepared by Patrick Markee, Coalition for the Homeless, 212-964-5900 ext. 184

## Sharp Cutbacks in City Funding for New Apartments for Homeless Families and Individuals



Source: City of New York, Mayor's Management Report (CFY 1995-CFY 2002)  
 Prepared by Patrick Markee, Coalition for the Homeless, 212-964-5900 ext. 184

## THREE IMMEDIATE WAYS TO REDUCE HOMELESSNESS IN NEW YORK CITY

- 1. Renew the "New York/New York Agreement"**
  - A proven success
  - Reduced adult homelessness, in shelters and on the streets, in the early 1990s
  - Costs the same as shelter and emergency care
  - ▶ ***Mayor and Governor must negotiate a new "New York/New York Agreement"***
- 2. Convert "Scattered-Site" Shelter Units to Permanent Housing**
  - City now pays \$3,000 per month to shelter families in private apartments
  - City now uses 1 of 20 vacant-for-rent, affordable apartments as emergency shelter
  - Giving families leases to apartments will save taxpayer dollars
  - ▶ ***Provide rent subsidies or housing vouchers, convert units to permanent homes***
- 3. Expand the Number of Apartments for the Homeless in the Bloomberg Housing Plan**
  - The Koch housing plan reduced homelessness
  - Under the Koch plan, 10 percent of all apartments were set aside for the homeless
  - Bloomberg plan only sets aside 4 percent of units for the homeless
  - ▶ ***Set aside 10 percent of homes produced by the housing plan for the homeless***