

U.S. homeless count rises, pushed by West Coast crisis

By Christopher Weber and Geoff Mulvihill, AP

The nation's homeless population increased this year for the first time since 2010, driven by a surge in the number of people living on the streets in West Coast cities.

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development released its annual Point in Time count Wednesday, a report that showed nearly 554,000 homeless people across the country during local tallies conducted in January. That figure is up nearly 1 percent from 2016.

Of that total, 193,000 people had no access to nightly shelter and instead were staying in vehicles, tents, the streets and other places considered uninhabitable. The unsheltered figure is up by more than 9 percent compared to two years ago.

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