

# TEXAS: MIRACLE OR MYTH?

For middle class Texans, the so-called “Texas Miracle” has been more myth than reality

**What does it mean to be a middle class wage-earner and consumer in Texas?**

For too many families it means a constant struggle to make ends meet. Texans want safe, stable jobs with decent wages and reasonable benefits that allow them to raise a family, own a home, and save for a comfortable retirement.

**So, how does Texas stack up to the rest of the nation on quality of life indicators? Not very well.**

Texas has the highest rate of workers making at or below the minimum wage, the highest rate of families without health insurance, the most workplace fatalities, the lowest workers’ compensation coverage, the highest home insurance rates, and the lowest average personal credit scores.

This stark reality is compounded by a lax regulatory climate that typically favors industry over individuals and a broken civil justice system that is too often closed to consumers, patients, and workers who face needless injury and financial devastation.

**Unfortunately, for middle class Texans, the so-called “Texas Miracle” has been more myth than reality.**

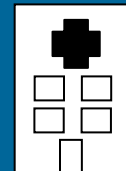
## HOW TEXAS STACKS UP



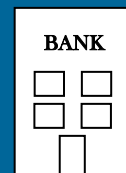
44<sup>th</sup> Rate of Home Ownership<sup>1</sup>  
50<sup>th</sup> Affordability of Home Insurance<sup>2</sup>  
13<sup>th</sup> Percent of Subprime Mortgages<sup>3</sup>



1<sup>st</sup> Number of Workplace Fatalities<sup>4</sup>  
1<sup>st</sup> Percent Minimum Wage Workers<sup>5</sup>  
50<sup>th</sup> Workers’ Comp Coverage<sup>6</sup>



1<sup>st</sup> Percent Uninsured<sup>7</sup>  
48<sup>th</sup> Percent with Employer-Based Health Coverage<sup>8</sup>



50<sup>th</sup> Average Credit Score<sup>9</sup>  
48<sup>th</sup> Median Household Net Worth<sup>10</sup>  
43<sup>rd</sup> Nest Egg Index<sup>11</sup>

**Sources:**

- 1 [http://scorecard.cfed.org/housing.php?page=homeownership\\_rate](http://scorecard.cfed.org/housing.php?page=homeownership_rate)
- 2 <http://www.dallasnews.com/news/state/headlines/20101116-Texans-paying-highest-home-insurance-rates-4700.ece>
- 3 <http://www-958.ibm.com/software/data/cognos/manyeyes/visualizations/89ade5ae1acac007011ad6a6255b0313/comments/3d7f0cf6ad9f11ddb3a3000255111976>
- 4 <http://www.texaswatch.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2011/08/BLS-State-Workplace-Deaths.pdf>
- 5 <http://www.bls.gov/cps/minwage2010tbls.htm#3>
- 6 [http://scorecard.cfed.org/business.php?page=workers\\_comp\\_coverage](http://scorecard.cfed.org/business.php?page=workers_comp_coverage)
- 7 <http://www.statehealthfacts.org/comparetable.jsp?ind=125&cat=3>
- 8 <http://www.statehealthfacts.org/comparetable.jsp?ind=149&cat=3>
- 9 <http://www.creditreport.com/creditscores/creditratings/average-credit-scores.aspx>
- 10 [http://scorecard.cfed.org/financial.php?page=net\\_worth](http://scorecard.cfed.org/financial.php?page=net_worth)
- 11 <http://hr.blr.com/HR-news/Benefits-Leave/Retirement-Savings-401k/50-States-Ranked-by-Workers-Nest-Eggs/>

\*\* Links accessed August 9, 2011

*Founded in 1998, Texas Watch is widely recognized as the pre-eminent state-based citizen advocacy organization dedicated to protecting the legal rights of consumers, families, and small business owners. The Dallas Morning News has called Texas Watch the state's "leading consumer organization." Texas Watch has built a grassroots network of 15,000 supporters across the state.*

*Executive Director Alex Winslow appeared in the acclaimed HBO documentary "Hot Coffee" as an expert on the impact of so-called tort "reform." He has been quoted in every major and medium-sized newspaper in Texas, as well as national publications like The New York Times, San Francisco Chronicle, Consumer Reports, and The Wall Street Journal. Additionally, Texas Watch research has been cited in influential news outlets including BusinessWeek, Texas Monthly, and USA Today. Alex has also made numerous television appearances as an expert on insurance and civil justice matters and is a frequent guest on talk radio.*

***For more information on consumer law or civil justice issues in Texas, contact Texas Watch at 512.381.1111 or [media@texaswatch.org](mailto:media@texaswatch.org).***

