



Inland growth outlook shines

MOVE: Women see value in Inland houses and schools, bringing a better future, an analyst says.

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By MARK KAWAR / The Press-Enterprise

While California's economic future is uncertain, the Inland Empire has "probably the best prognosis of any California region," a Claremont McKenna College analyst said Thursday.

More square feet of house per dollar and better schools per dollar of house price will continue to draw Californians to Riverside and San Bernardino counties from the coastal counties, said Steven Frates, a senior fellow at the Rose Institute of State and Local Government at Claremont McKenna.

"Guess who thinks this is a good idea? Women with children think this is a good idea," he said.

Frates said that women drive home-buying decisions, and the Inland area has factors that are important to women, including low crime, good schools and a family-friendly atmosphere.

He said that for the region to continue growing, its representatives in Sacramento need to demand a proportionate share of state aid. Riverside County gets 25 percent of the welfare money per person as San Francisco County, he pointed out, and transportation infrastructure must be improved. He said the region should resist the idea of solving traffic congestion by expanding rail service.

"Out here you don't need choo-choo lines, you need roads and you need them now," he said.

Frates also said that the Inland area has to continue spending money on its schools and attracting manufacturing jobs if it wants to be successful.

Frates spoke to about 100 people Thursday at the Economic Development Corporation of Southwest California's quarterly luncheon at the Pechanga Resort and Casino.

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