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The Contribution of Manufactured Housing to Affordable Housing in the United States: Assessing Variation Among Manufactured Housing Tenures and Community Types

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MH tenures and clustered community arrangements, we detail the demographic and geographic characteristics of MH households by housing tenure, analyze how housing costs differ across MH tenures, and demonstrate that MH is highly segregated from the conventional housing stock in a way that impacts housing affordability. These findings offer policy prescriptions for MH policy specifically and may contribute to broader affordable housing policy in the United States.

KEYWORDS: manufactured housing tenure affordability informality

Disclosure Statement

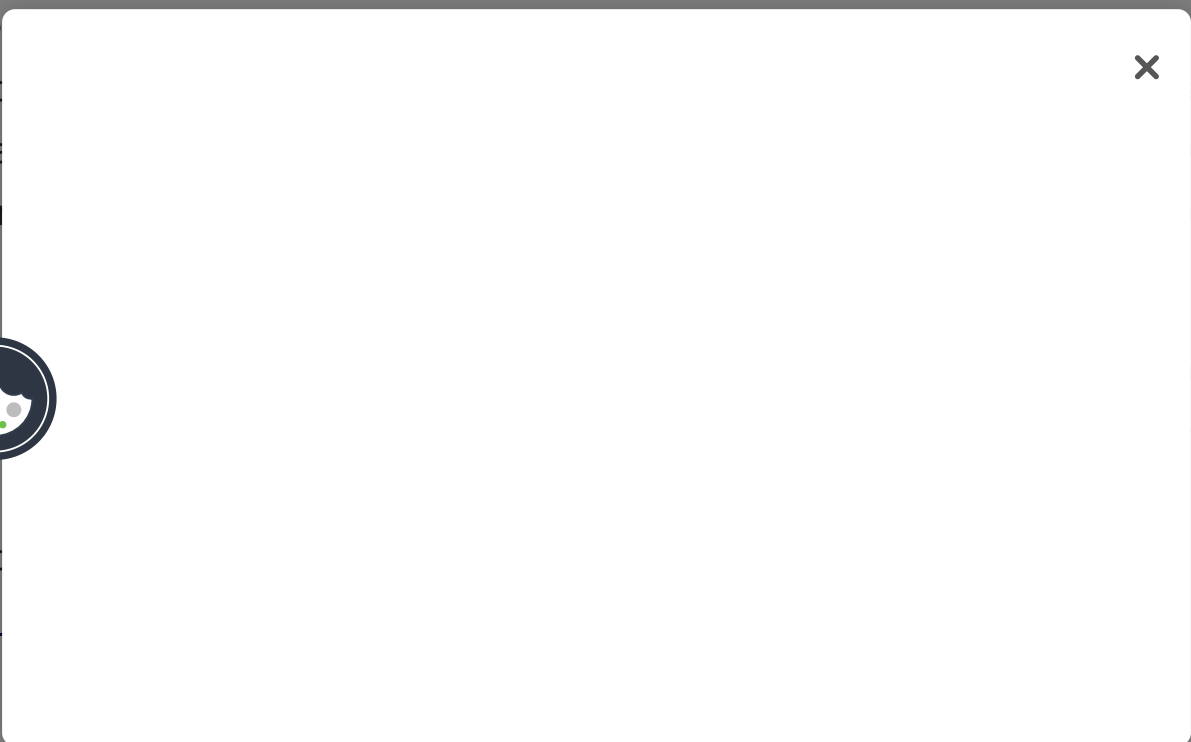
No potential conflict of interest was reported by the authors.

Notes

1. Manufactured homes are defined as homes built after 1976 when the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) instituted the HUD Manufactured Home Construction and Safety Standards code to improve the safety, quality, and durability of manufactured housing. Mobile homes are homes built prior to 1976.

2. In the central office areas include as (MSAs; i.e., urban Nonmetropolitan outside an MSA.

3. HUD income monthly standard HUD 081417.



4. In this article we follow architectural historians and scholars of the mobile home in using the categorical term mobile home park (MHP) to refer to the range of MH land-lease communities (trailer parks, MHPs, MH communities, etc.), which may vary significantly from each other in terms of age, type of homes, and property maintenance (Beamish et al., [2001](#); Dawkins & Koebel, [2009](#); Kusenbach, [2009](#), [2017](#); Solomon & MacTavish, [2017](#); Wallis, [1991](#)).

5. We rely on the 2013 wave instead of the more recent 2015 wave because a number of variables of interest, such as proximity to other mobile homes, are not available in the 2015 public-use file.

6. To do so, we divide monthly housing costs by one twelfth of the reported annual household income.

7. FMRs are calculated by HUD for metropolitan areas and nonmetropolitan counties and are used to determine federal assistance for subsidized rental housing. We use them here as a means of measuring the affordability of tenure types relative to alternative affordable housing options.

8. As noted above, existing research has found MH to be an important source of housing for retirees, who comprise 32% of MH household heads compared with 24% of household heads in conventional housing (CFPB, [2014](#)). Our findings disaggregate MH households in ISs and MHPs from this larger MH population. Contrary to some popular perceptions of MHP residents as elderly, we find that MHP heads of household are younger than their counterparts in conventional housing, and IS heads of household are

similar in age to their counterparts in conventional housing. MHP heads of household are more likely to be non-Hispanic white than their counterparts in conventional housing. MHPs is more likely to be non-Hispanic white (60%) than a conventional housing (45%).

9. In keeping with previous research, we find that MHP heads of household are more likely to be Mexican American, Mexican, or Hispanic than their counterparts in conventional housing. Mexican American, Mexican, or Hispanic heads of household are more likely to be in MHPs (35%) than in conventional housing (25%).



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