

**MHProNews notes: Text is as in the original article by Cincinnati.com (Cincinnati Enquirer).**

- 1) Yellow highlighting is added by MHProNews**
- 2) The hotlinks in the below are added by MHProNews.com, they are not in the original report by Cincinnati.com. Per their website: “This site is part of the USA TODAY Network and is owned and operated by Gannett Co., Inc.” Per 3<sup>rd</sup> party sources, USA Today is left-leaning.**
- 3) This is a download from a report on a related topic, linked below.**  
<https://www.manufacturedhomepronews.com/legacy-communities-ripped-by-judy-annin-manufactured-homeowners-for-change-people-living-in-manufactured-home-parks-will-soon-join-next-wave-of-homeless-senator-sherrod-brown-invoked>

## **Lawmakers are lining up for Nathan Smith’s support (cincinnati.com)**

<https://www.cincinnati.com/story/news/local/northern-ky/2014/01/31/lawmakers-are-lining-up-for-nathan-smiths-support/5072003/>

**NKY**

**Lawmakers are lining up for Nathan Smith’s support**

**By Jim Hannah;**

**AD**

**0:10**

ERLANGER – After Nathan Smith was born, his parents brought him to a single-wide mobile home perched on the side of a mountain in southeastern Kentucky.

Today, the 42-year-old **Fort Mitchell resident sells, finances and insures manufactured homes in addition to managing manufactured home communities.**

Smith has since leveraged his success in business to become [one of the most effective and influential Democratic fundraisers in Kentucky.](#)

“For the last 10 or 12 years, Nathan has probably been the most energetic and committed political and financial backer of Democrats from Northern Kentucky,” Kentucky Attorney General Jack Conway said. “He is an indefatigable supporter of Democrats.”

Conway, also a Democrat, recalls campaigning in southeastern Kentucky when he heard he needed to meet Smith’s parents in Bimble, a small community outside of Barbourville.

“The next thing I knew, the car was pulling up a little road alongside a junkyard on the side of a hill,” Conway said. “I asked for Nathan’s father and a guy spit out his tobacco and said, ‘You found him.’”

Smith has never forgotten the values he learned during his humble upbringing, Conway said.

“Nathan has a big heart,” Conway said. “If he is supporting you, he doesn’t just write you a check. He wants to get his friends behind you. He is one of the best in state at gathering support for you.”

**Kentucky Auditor Adam Edelen said any Democrat exploring a run on a statewide level knows they need Smith’s support.**

“The great thing about Nathan is he is respectful by telling you precisely what he thinks but he never tells you what to think,” Edelen said. “That is a very special kind of characteristic that a lot of people in politics do not have. I think that is at the foundation of why he is so successful.”

Smith can be self-deprecating at times – “I’m just gnawing on cornbread” is a favorite phrase – but criminal defense lawyer and neighbor Burr Travis said people shouldn’t be fooled.

“He is implying he is just a country boy having a hard time keeping up, but it is just the opposite,” he said.

Travis said Smith is admired for keeping his word.

“Nathan is the busiest guy and gets everything done, and he gets it done on time,” Travis said. “He means what he says and he does what he is supposed to do – every time.”

**Businesswoman and philanthropist [Alice Sparks got to know Smith](#) when he left his hometown to attend Northern Kentucky University, where [Smith changed majors five times before settling on political science and speech communications.](#)**

The pair became friends when [Sparks](#) served as chairwoman of the Board of Regents and Smith was the student representative. Smith now serves as secretary of the board, an appointment by the governor.

After college, Smith and a business partner asked Sparks to invest in developing a manufactured homes community. She did and the company they formed, [SSK Communities](#), has grown into a business that manages 23 locations in Ohio, Kentucky and Indiana.

Sparks said Smith is a hard worker and natural salesman. [He is the public face of the company](#) and his commercials, while not generally aired in the Cincinnati market, are known throughout Southern Kentucky.

They feature a bombastic Smith espousing the benefits of manufactured homes. In various versions of the commercials, Smith jumps around yelling catchy phrases.

[Howard Walker, vice chairman of Equity Lifestyle Properties](#), the nation’s largest [real estate investment trust](#) for [manufactured home communities](#), says Smith’s company has built a “considerable portfolio” of properties. The pair met at an industry roundtable and became best friends, despite an age difference of three decades.

“I found Nathan very unusual in the sense he came into the manufactured home industry and park ownership by design,” Walker said. “He didn’t back into it. He thought about things critically.”

Smith has used friendships he has made in the industry to become chairman of the [Manufactured Housing Institute](#), a [national trade organization representing all segments](#) of the factory-built housing industry.

In Smith’s office in Erlanger, an enlarged photo of him as a child, dressed as Daniel Boone, standing in front of two manufactured homes, leans against the wall.

“It’s just funny I’m in that business now,” said Smith, pointing to the single-wides in the background.

Smith, now married and raising four children, said he hopes to build on the success of his own father, who went from living in a manufactured home to owning a coal mine and now a salvage yard.

“My father is a really great guy. A hard worker, but he was probably hoping for a doctor or lawyer,” Smith said, laughing, before being interrupted by a ring on his mobile phone.

It’s a [phone that contains the personal numbers of politicians from Ohio Sen. Sherrod Brown to Conway and Edelen.](#)

Smith calls his involvement in politics a hobby.

“It is like the ultimate adult game,” said Smith, whose favorite show is “House of Cards.” ##



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 Cincinnati Enquirer

 MHPRONEWS.com  
Industry News, Tips and Views From the Site

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There is a case to be made that a web of relationships that includes Nathan Smith, his business and political interests, and the Manufactured Housing Institute (MHI) exists. When that web of relationships and the patterns of behavior are carefully explored, a deeper understanding of what is occurring in the [manufactured housing industry](#) in general, the land-lease manufactured home community segment of the industry more specifically, and its relationship to the apparently growing affordable housing crisis comes into focus. This requires [reading, objectivity, and clarity of thought](#).

<https://www.manufacturedhomepronews.com/masthead/rest-of-story-residents-media-complain-rhp-properties-on-evictions-discrimination-stiff-hikes-havenpark-communities-named-where-is-manufactured-housing-institutes-code/>

<https://www.manufacturedhomepronews.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/3.25.2021LATonyKovach-ListeningSessionStatementPimpleOnElephantsAssMHProNews.pdf>

Note: the above linked document was featured on the [FHFA website for over two years](#). That web page was recently removed, and sources at the FHFA have told MHProNews that the site is undergoing update. The most recent inquiry on why that specific page has either been removed or buried has not yet been responded to as of this date (7.4.2024).

<https://www.manufacturedhomelivingnews.com/democratic-congressional-staffer-alleged-manufactured-housing-institute-mhi-anti-consumer-manufactured-housing-institute-leaders-decline-comment-sam-strommen-antitrust-case-allegations-anal/>

<https://www.manufacturedhomelivingnews.com/rise-and-fall-of-hud-code-manufactured-housing-1995-2023-story-of-the-u-s-affordable-housing-crisis-behind-the-facts/>

<https://www.manufacturedhomelivingnews.com/is-manufactured-home-production-keeping-pace-with-u-s-population-what-california-adu-preemption-and-higher-production-signals-manufactured-housing-potential-to-solve-affordable-housing-crisis/>

<https://www.manufacturedhomelivingnews.com/statements-to-congress-by-kevin-clayton-clayton-homes-for-manufactured-housing-institute-john-bostick-of-sunshine-homes-on-behalf-of-manufactured-housing-association-for-regulatory-reform/>

<https://www.manufacturedhomelivingnews.com/edward-hussey-to-be-clear-madam-chairwoman-there-is-nothing-wrong-with-the-2000-law-the-manufactured-housing-improvement-act-doesnt-need-to-be-amended-the-issue-is-implementation/>

<https://www.manufacturedhomelivingnews.com/rigged-system-feudal-fascist-marxist-megacapitalist-socialist-corporate-shell-games-understand-why-working-middle-classes-struggle-american-dream-affordable-homeownership-fades-facts-analysis/>

<https://www.manufacturedhomelivingnews.com/democratic-black-hispanic-asian-pacific-caucus-leaders-pr-effort-to-get-biden-harris-to-keep-promises-to-minorities-on-affh-housing-rule-how-affordable-manufactured-homes-fit-art-of-possible/>

<https://www.manufacturedhomepronews.com/democratic-congressman-seth-moulton-ma-d-said-democrats-are-party-of-ultra-rich-and-the-ultra-poor-rigged-system-revelations-facts-and-analysis-plus-sunday-weekly-mhville-headlines-rec/>

Articles and letters on other websites by L.A. “Tony” Kovach.

<https://www.theledger.com/story/opinion/columns/2024/02/25/what-do-zoning-boards-have-against-manufactured-homes-guest-column/72689048007/>

The above was featured by MSN and Yahoo news aggregators, so it went ‘national.’

<https://www.planetizen.com/news/2024/02/127652-opinion-make-way-manufactured-housing>

<https://www.theledger.com/story/opinion/letters/2019/04/20/letter-affordable-mobile-homes-are-desperately-needed/5387624007/>

Note, headlines in op-eds are routinely provided by the publisher, rather than by the person who submitted the letter. The Ledger is owned by Gannett, the same firm that currently owns Cincinnati.com.

<https://www.deseret.com/opinion/2024/04/29/manufactured-housing-in-the-answer/>

<https://www.83degreesmedia.com/features/mhnews072115.aspx>

<https://www.deseret.com/2015/1/18/20556493/trailers-as-affordable-housing-solution-or-bane-to-the-poor/>

<https://baptistnews.com/article/the-connection-between-the-wealth-gap-monopolies-affordable-housing-and-biblical-truths/>

<https://baptistnews.com/article/why-is-there-still-no-room-for-so-many-homeless-in-america-this-christmas/>

This document may be updated. Readers are encouraged to consider these as a [news analysis](#) by a widely [acknowledged multi-decade professional](#) in [manufactured housing](#). [MHProNews.com](#) is the largest, and per third-party sources, the most-read trade publication serving manufactured housing industry professionals. MHProNews.com and MHLivingNews.com are co-founded by L. A. “Tony” Kovach.

MHLivingNews has begun a collection of third-party research into manufactured housing. Beyond those linked below, there are years of third-party and an array of media, governmental, nonprofits, corporate, and other research resources found on MHLivingNews and/or MHProNews. Facts and evidence are at the core of our work and analysis is based upon evidence, not mere opinion.

<https://www.manufacturedhomelivingnews.com/october-2023-ultimate-manufactured-housing-and-mobile-home-manufactured-home-research-trends-statistics-expert-views-fact-checks-and-insights/>

[Pissed Consumer](#), [Tampa Free Press](#), [National Association of Realtors](#), Consumer Financial Protection Bureau ([CFPB manufactured housing white paper](#)), are among other platforms that have featured or cited Kovach and his research/work in inherently affordable manufactured housing.