

Warren Buffett's Berkshire Hathaway-Clayton Homes Moat 'Gift' to Manufactured Housing. Un or Underreported Facts in MHVille on Affordable Housing Crisis. FEA and Sunday Weekly Headlines Recap

According to a transcript of Kevin Clayton - CEO of Berkshire Hathaway owned Clayton Homes – video interview found at this [link here](#) is the following. “We are a very large affordable housing producer. We currently have 36 manufacturing plants and each of those terrific general managers runs their operation. They’re scattered across the whole US from coast to coast. Between all of those plants, we’ll build almost 200 houses each and every day. We have 450 retail stores that we own and in addition to that, we have about 1,200 wonderful independent retailers that buy product as well from us.” That was in late 2011. What are the number of Clayton Homes owned and independent street retail centers on this date? [According to the Clayton Homes website](#) on this date, there are 764 total independent retailers that sell Clayton Homes produced products. Based on information from Clayton's website at the time a report from [February 2025 linked here](#) stated that Clayton claimed "over 360" street retail 'stores.' However, on this date, the Clayton website claims the following under "Clayton Retail Careers."

"Clayton Retail Careers" that: "with over 2,900 team members and over 400 Clayton Homes Retail locations nationwide, our strength is our people. As of the nation's leading home builders, we've been dedicated to helping Americans achieve home ownership since 1956."

1) Be that as it may, using their current claims and comparing it to their prior ones in 2011, it would appear that Clayton has witnessed a decline in total corporate owned and independent retailers. Yet, the population of the U.S. is larger. The need for more affordable housing is greater. Clayton, and others involved with the Manufactured Housing Institute (MHI) claim that the following.

Elevating Housing Innovation; Expanding Attainable Homeownership

The Manufactured Housing Institute is the only national trade organization representing all segments of the factory-built housing industry. We are your trusted partner, advocate and industry leader.

Grow your business

Get the tools, platform and information you need

Manufactured Housing Enables the American Dream

Manufactured housing is a solution to today's affordable housing challenge. With increased production efficiency resulting in lower costs, offsite-built housing creates accessible home options for Americans.

2) There are any number of things found on the Clayton Homes or MHI websites that sound positive and appealing. Among the questions that should be asked is how do those claims stack up to factual realities and specific evidence? What does the [MHVille Facts-Evidence-Analysis](#) (FEA) process and third-party artificial intelligence acting as independent fact checkers reveal?

- Doing simple math, it would appear that "about 1,200 wonderful independent retailers" vs. "764 total independent retailers" would suggest that some 436 fewer retailers now than there were some 14 years ago.
- Clayton's claim of 450 retail stores in 2011 vs. "over 400" today suggests that there are dozens of fewer retail centers now than then.

How can Clayton, the largest builder and retailer in HUD Code manufactured housing today with roughly 50 percent market share, or MHI claim to be "Opening doors to a better life" when they have apparently closed the doors on dozens of their own company owned stores and witnesses the loss of over 400 independent retailers?

Who besides *MHProNews*, *MHLivingNews* and reports via platforms associated with us are covering those details of the story of the affordable housing crisis? After all, if the public doesn't have a retail center to go to for shopping for a potential new manufactured home (by Clayton, or any other producer of HUD Code manufactured housing) then isn't it apparent that the numbers of such modern manufactured homes will be limited?

That question was put to [left](#)-leaning Google search on 10.5.2025 in this form.

How many mainstream news reports, public-facing Manufactured Housing Institute posts, or corporate press releases can you find that reported that Berkshire Hathaway owned Clayton Homes has fewer street retail centers or stores today than they reported in 2011?

3) Here was the result, including their [AI preview \(sometimes referred to as Gemini](#) 'not logged in,' as their AI is part of the 'Gemini family' of AI).

google.com/search?q=How+many+mainstream+news+reports%2C+public+gating+Manufactured+Housing+Institute+posts,+corporate+press+releases+can+you+find+that+reported+that+Berkshire+Hathaw...

Google

How many mainstream news reports, public-facing Manufactured Housing Institute posts, or corporate press releases can you find that reported that Berkshire Hathaway owned Clayton Homes has fewer street retail centers or stores today than they reported in 2011?

AI Overview

Searches did not find any reports from mainstream news, the Manufactured Housing Institute (MHI), or Berkshire Hathaway that publicly confirm or mention that Clayton Homes has fewer company-owned retail centers today compared to what was reported in 2011. Most reports on this topic come from specialized industry publications or investigative reports.

Key findings regarding the number of Clayton retail centers:

2024 - 2025 reports:

Manufactured Housing news outlet MHPProNews reported in February 2025 that Clayton Homes has "around 360 company owned retail sales centers". In June 2025, a Clayton press release via MHI mentioned that one of their specific retail centers won an award.

2011 report (via 2015/2016 articles):

In a letter to shareholders for the year 2011, Warren Buffett noted that "about 46% of Clayton's homes are sold through the 331 stores we ourselves own and operate". This was widely reported later by mainstream outlets investigating Clayton's practices.

2023 report:

YouTube video clips covering the 2023 Berkshire Hathaway shareholder meeting mention that "most of their houses are sold through their own retail units, of which they have about 297".

Based on these findings, it appears Clayton Homes has fewer company-owned stores than the 331 reported for 2011. However, no mainstream media, MHI, or Berkshire Hathaway source found during the search specifically reported on this decline in store count. Any mention of it appears to have come from industry commentators or investigative journalists looking at past numbers in contrast to current ones.

Dive deeper in AI Mode

AI responses may include mistakes. [Learn more](#)

manufacturedhomepress.com

<https://www.manufacturedhomepress.com/are-you-among-5-groups-millions-harmed-by-market/>

Are You Among 5 Groups Millions Harmed by Market ...

Feb 18, 2023 -- To further illustrate the point that fewer than 4000 street retailers exist in the U.S. is the point that Clayton Homes only has around 360 ...

Patch

<https://patch.com/florida/tallahassee/manufactured-housing-association-mharr-provides>

Manufactured Housing Association (MHARR) Provides ...

Sep 4, 2023 -- Just released statistics show that Manufactured Housing Institute produced 8,299 new homes in July 2023, a 5.1% increase over the 7,895 new HUD Code ...

manufacturedhomepress.com

<https://www.manufacturedhomepress.com/facts-facts-facts-hit-them-with-facts-july-2025-mh/>

Facts-Facts-Facts! Hit Them With Facts! July 2025 MH ...

Sep 4, 2023 -- War then and now Warren Buffett led Berkshire Hathaway (BRK) operating in a fashion that would cause manufactured housing to recover? Clearly...

FHFA (gov)

https://www.fhfa.gov/sites/default/files/DTS_1414.pdf

DTS Listening Session on MH - July 14

Jul 14, 2023 -- That insider said that Tim Williams, CEO, 22 of Berkshire owned Clayton Homes sister brand 21st 23 Mortgage Company, had said this. With MHI ...

Patch

<https://patch.com/florida/tallahassee/behind-the-curtains-of-the-u-s-affordable-housing-crisis>

Behind the Curtains of the U.S. Affordable Housing Crisis

Jun 10, 2023 -- MHIARR Releases New Data and Manufactured Housing Institute Silent on ex-MHI CEO Richard Jermolovs Misled Goal for 500,000 New Homes a Year.

SEC.gov

<https://www.sec.gov/indices Edgar data: dts01>

Berkshire Hathaway Inc. 2003 Annual Report

Berkshire's finance and financial products businesses primarily engage in proprietary investing strategies (BHI Finance), commercial and consumer lending (...)

manufacturedhomepress.com

<https://www.manufacturedhomepress.com/strommen-felony-conspiracy-case-monopolization-of-3/>

Strommen "Felony" Conspiracy Case "Monopolization" of ...

Additional information at the end of this report about how Berkshire Hathaway, Clayton Homes, MHI and others have responded to these charges will be added too.

Govinfo (gov)

<https://www.govinfo.gov/plig/pdf/GPO-FDC-986/>

FINANCIAL CRISIS

Millions of Americans have lost their jobs and their homes, and the economy is still struggling to rebound ... Much of what is footnoted in this report can be ... 602 pages

Navigo24

https://www.navigo24.com/documents/fannie_mae.pdf

Fannie Mae's Updated Duty to Serve Plan

Millions of Americans have lost their jobs and their homes, and the economy is still struggling to rebound ... Much of what is footnoted in this report can be ... 602 pages

Stanford University

https://hrmcc.stanford.edu/fcic-reports/fcic_final_report_full.pdf

fcic_final_report_full.pdf

Millions of Americans have lost their jobs and their homes, and the economy is still struggling to rebound ... Much of what is footnoted in this report can be ... 602 pages

"How many mainstream news reports, public-facing Manufactured Housing Institute posts, or corporate press releases can you find that reported that Berkshire Hathaway owned Clayton Homes has fewer street retail centers or stores today than they reported in 2011?"

6 of the 10 results to this search are found on MHPProNews, MHLivingNews articles on the Patch, or comments made by MHPProNews via the FHFA listening session. A closer look may reveal that outside of those sources that Google's AI preview is correct, because no mainstream source has covered this relevant topic.

4) Here below is the text from that Google AI preview.

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Key findings regarding the number of Clayton retail centers:

- **2024–2025 reports:** Manufactured housing news outlet *MHProNews* reported in February 2025 that Clayton Homes has "around 360 company owned retail sales centers". In June 2025, a Clayton press release via MHI mentioned that one of their specific retail centers won an award.
- **2011 report (via 2015/2016 articles):** In a letter to shareholders for the year 2011, Warren Buffett noted that "about 46% of Clayton's homes are sold through the 331 stores we ourselves own and operate". This was widely reported later by mainstream outlets investigating Clayton's practices.
- **2023 report:** YouTube video clips covering the 2023 Berkshire Hathaway shareholder meeting mention that "most of their houses are sold through their own retail units, of which they have about 297".

Based on these findings, it appears Clayton Homes has fewer company-owned stores than the 331 reported for 2011. However, no mainstream media, MHI, or Berkshire Hathaway source found during the search specifically reported on this decline in store count. Any mention of it appears to have come from industry commentators or investigative journalists looking at past numbers in contrast to current ones.

5) Restated, there is a lack of clarity on how many manufactured homes retail centers Clayton Homes has, or how many independent retail centers there may be, per the Google AI preview above.

It has reportedly not even been addressed by mainstream media, said Google's AI.

6) Apparently, no media outlet not connected to *MHProNews/MHLivingNews* has even raised the subject of the dwindling number of retail centers since 2011, after the so-called bottom that manufactured housing hit in 2009 and 2010. It ought to be common sense that if manufactured housing is the most proven form of permeant affordable housing in the late 20th and 21st centuries, that having access to place where the public can buy such a home is significant.

There are clearly numerous factors that contribute to the U.S. affordable housing crisis. The lack of 'street retailers' is just one of them. But it begs the question. If the number of Clayton and independents has dropped sharply since 2011, which Kevin Clayton's and Clayton Homes' own statements reflect (see above), in what sense can MHI and Clayton authentically claim to be working to expand the market?

7) This is where the Warren Buffett moat methods ought to come into focus, as explained by [Kevin Clayton to pro-Berkshire Hathaway interviewer Robert Miles](#). For the full context, see that report [linked here](#).

Robert Miles:

It seems to me that it's not an industry where you have to worry about outsourcing where some other country might be able to manufacture homes cheaper and then ship them.

Kevin Clayton:

That's very accurate. We're very fortunate. Of course, Warren looks for companies that have that enduring competitive advantage. That's part of our moat, and we intend to deepen and widen that part of our moat. We've shipped units overseas before, we continue to look at opportunities overseas, but it would be very difficult for someone to compete. People don't realize in America with the availability of lumber and raw materials is terrific here compared to most places overseas.

Robert Miles:

Just as foreign competition is not likely to manufacture offshore and import, is Clayton homes not very likely to manufacture here and export for the same reason?

Kevin Clayton:

We have shipped some units, but more likely it would be us taking our expertise and lending it overseas and building over there. That's a possibility, but such opportunity here domestically, I think that's a ways off.

Robert Miles:

Warren likes to say that there's two types of competition that he doesn't ...

Kevin Clayton:

Well, Warren likes to say that there's two kinds of competition that he doesn't like, foreign and domestic.

Robert Miles:

Right, and it seems like you've eliminated the foreign. What about your domestic competitors? How are they holding up?

Kevin Clayton:

We have some good competitors. I mean, everybody's trying to carve out their niche, and Warren is very competitive. It's just amazing, his personality, to be such a genius. He's also the greatest leader I have ever worked for, the greatest people skills, but again, he paints such an image in each of our manager's minds about this moat, this competitive moat, and our job is very simple and we share this. It's so fun sharing some of the things that he passes along throughout our organization, and we challenge every one of our team members, every department. Who is your customer? Deepen and widen your moat to keep out the competition, whether it's the next department over. How can you serve them better?

But some of our competitors do a good job, but our plans are to make that difficult for them.

But ultimately, it's providing very affordable and the highest quality of affordable housing. If we do that and we get better every day, we should have a very bright future.

Robert Miles:

And you're currently the leader in sales and in earnings in the industry?

Kevin Clayton:

That's correct.

Robert Miles:

What percentage of the manufactured home market does Clayton own?

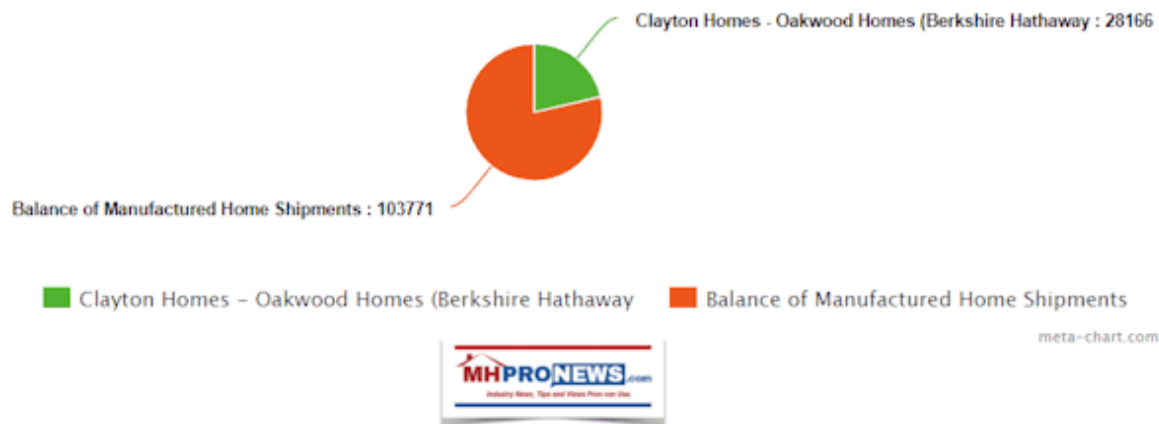
Kevin Clayton:

Of units shipped, we're closing in on 25% of ... shipped meaning built. We are the largest retailer of factory-built housing also through the 450 company owned stores. But the mom-and-pop operator out there, and there's plenty of those, they will always be the dominant selling organization, and we rely on, again, almost 2,000 of those independent retailers to sell our product. They're very, very competitive and do a great job for us.

8) When Kevin said that their future looked bright, consider the following.

[caption id="attachment_80081" align="aligncenter" width="589"]

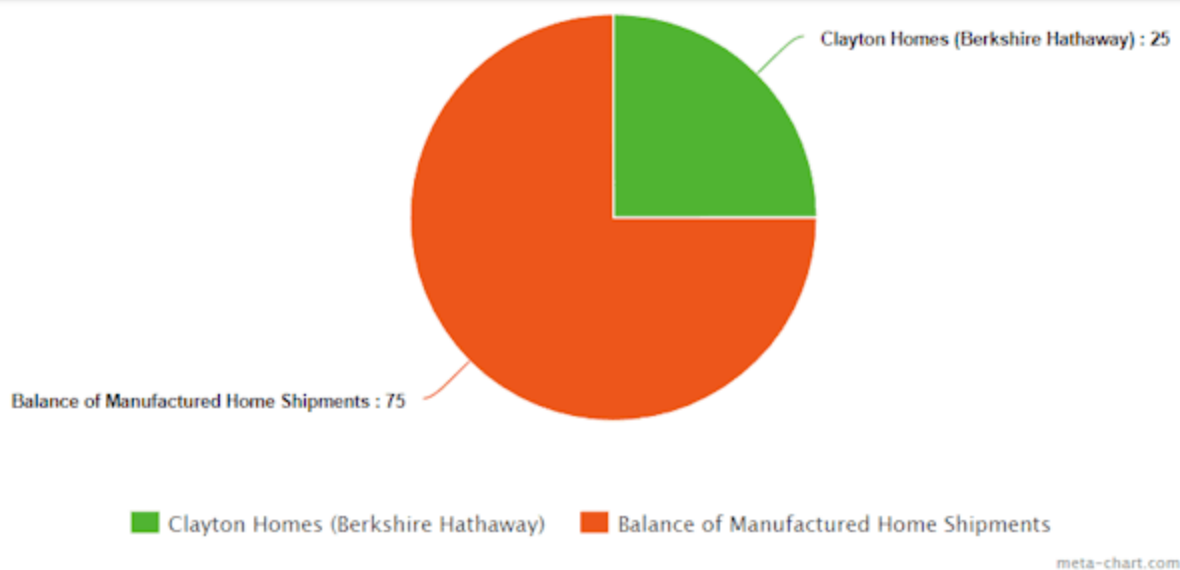
Clayton Homes - Oakwood Homes (Berkshire Hathaway) Market Share End of 2003
Total Shipments: 130,937. Sources: HUD, Manufactured Home Merchandiser Magazine.



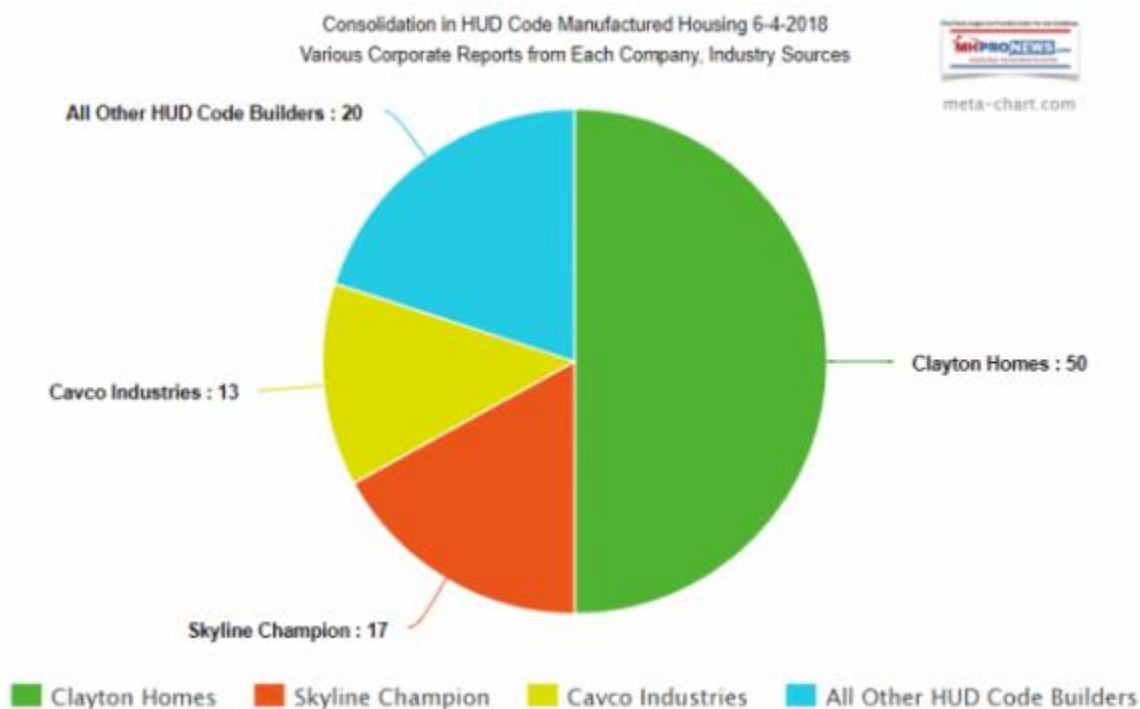
Why

keep the industry at low ebb? Follow the money and the acquisitions. [/caption]

Clayton Homes (Berkshire Hathaway) 25% Market Share in 2011
 Total 2011 Shipments: 51,618. Sources: Manufactured Housing Association for Regulatory Reform (MHARR).



[caption id="attachment_132456" align="aligncenter" width="575"]



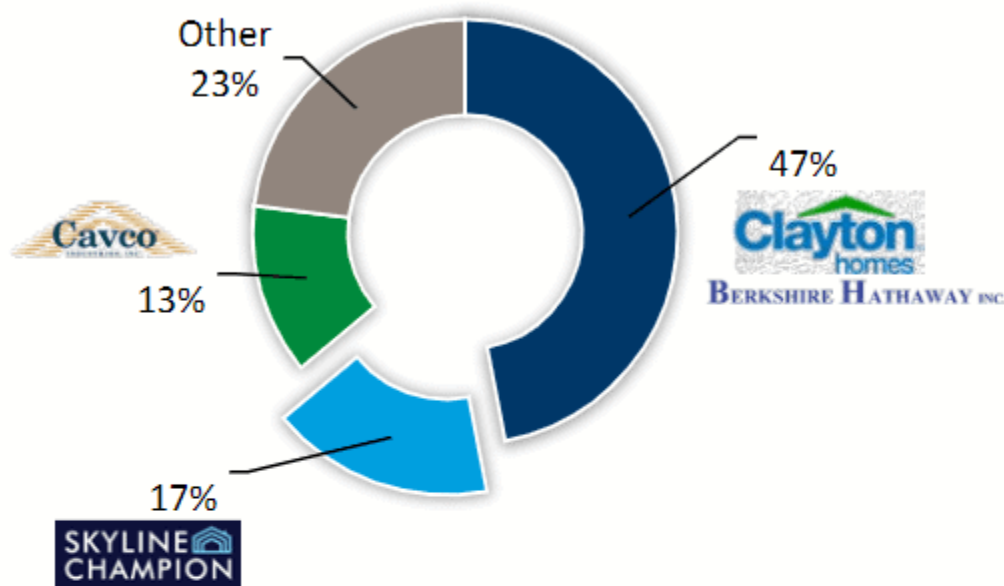
The evidence and the facts provided herein, when carefully examined, routinely point in a direction of several apparent legal issues that routinely go back to certain MHI dominating members and some select and apparent allies. This is similar, in hindsight, to the different but still insightful pattern that was discovered when investigators examined why the Madoff

scandal was not exposed sooner. Madoff's scam and that of those apparently monopolizing manufactured housing are different. That said, among the similarities is this. In both instances, some of those not directly involved in the primary offending company were benefiting. Those secondary benefits shed light on MHI and what has been occurring since the dawn of the Berkshire era. [/caption]

9) [Samuel Strommen's antitrust and consumer interests research for Knudson Law](#) noted that Clayton, Skyline Champion (SKY, now called Champion Homes), and Cavco Industries appeared to be colluding using MHI as part of their mutual cover.

[caption id="attachment_157068" align="aligncenter" width="570"]

U.S. manufactured housing market share⁽¹⁾



(1) Share of manufactured housing market segment based on 2018 units produced.

November 2019

SKYLINE
CHAMPION

Clayton Homes (BRK), Skyline-Champion (SKY), and Cavco Industries (CVCO) are members of the Manufactured Housing Institute (MHI). Each firm reportedly has the same access to government data and research by firms such as Statistical Surveys. There is no gray area with facts, or there shouldn't be. Which begs the question. Why is that there are several mutually contradictory information claims about something that should be as clear as market share? Why, in this case, would SKY provide in accurate info on 'rival' Clayton Homes? One must keep in mind that publicly traded firms are required to provide accurate info.

10:47 AM
6/24/2020



This is

a hard statement to defend. Per our sources, Skyline Champion bought that data and should have known that what they published above was wrong. That suggests that for some

reason, Skyline-Champion and Clayton have worked to understate Clayton's market share to the industry, potential investors, and presumably public officials. [/caption]

10) Since that date, Clayton's share has reportedly stayed around 50 percent, but the share of Champion Homes (SKY) and Cavco Industries (CVCO) has grown, often through consolidation.

[caption id="attachment_175773" align="aligncenter" width="600"]

PROUD MEMBER OF

MHI
MONOPOLISTIC HOUSING INSTITUTE

THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION
SERVING CONSOLIDATORS OF THE
MANUFACTURED HOUSING INDUSTRY

SUN
SUN COMMUNITIES, INC.

els
Equity LifeStyle Properties

IMPACT
COMMUNITIES

SKYLINE CHAMPION

Clayton homes

cavco

HAVENPARK
COMMUNITIES

rhp PROPERTIES
American Home

Flagship
COMMUNITIES

"The Manufactured Housing Institute [MHI] acts not only as the public mouthpiece of the Big 3 manufacturers (in the name of the industry) but also appears to act directly on its behalf in its various lobbying endeavors."⁹⁵

Strommen said he "submits that the MHI's conduct in obfuscation judicious decision-making by the [FHFA and HUD] constitutes a conspiracy to restrain trade under Section 1 of the Sherman Act, and by virtue of the misrepresentative nature of the conduct, should not be afforded Noerr protection."

Samuel Strommen

**– Sam Strommen,
The Monopolization of the American
Manufactured Home Industry and the
Formation of REITs: a Rube Goldberg
Machine of Human Suffering.**

SOUTH DAKOTA
COYOTES

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH DAKOTA
SCHOOL OF LAW

<https://www.manufacturedhomeprnews.com/masthead/true-tale-of-four-attorneys-research-into-manufactured-housing-what-they-reveal-about-why-manufactured-homes-are-underperforming-during-an-affordable-housing-crisis-facts-and-analysis/>[caption]

11) What do other third-party AI systems say about these data points, facts, and claims?
Let's look in the postscript for this report. Don't miss it.

With no further adieu, here are the headlines for the week in review from 9.28.2025 to this report today, 10.5.2025.