

Pre-publication draft for third-party artificial intelligence (AI) facts-evidence-analysis (FEA) check for a developing report on MHProNews as is shown below.

Pew.org Research on State Preemption on Manufactured Housing Unpacked. '3.2 Million Renters Could Become Manufactured Homeowners.' Exclusive Hits-Miss Insights. MHI-MHARR angles. MHVille FEA



“ Manufactured homes are an important source of housing, and more manufactured homes are part of the solution to America's housing shortage.”

— Rachel Siegel, senior officer, The Pew Charitable Trusts.

PEW.ORG RESEARCH ON STATE PREEMPTION ON MANUFACTURED HOUSING UNPACKED.

'3.2 MILLION RENTERS COULD BECOME MANUFACTURED HOMEOWNERS.'

EXCLUSIVE HITS-MISS INSIGHTS. MHI-MHARR ANGLES. MHVILLE FEA

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MHPRONEWS.com
Industry News, Tips and More From MHPro

Rachel Siegel
PEW

In Part I of this MHProNews [MHVille facts-evidence-analysis](#) (FEA), [Pew](#)'s research into manufactured housing looks at the topic of zoning barriers and the potential that state-level preemption might have at overcoming those barriers. Among other details, Pew stated that potentially 3.2 million renters could become homeowners if manufactured homes were made accessible to them. At an approximate average cost for the [manufactured home \(without land\) of \\$109,400](#) if that 3.2 million were in fact converted into HUD Code manufactured homeowners, that would represent [some \\$350,080,000,000 in business at retail](#). Restated, that is \$350.08 billion at retail (without land), or more than 1/3 of a trillion dollars. One might think that with such a large amount of money that potentially could be generated by tapping into that market that the [Manufactured Housing Institute](#) (MHI), which claims to represent "[all segments](#)" of the factory-built home industry, would publicly spotlight the [Pew](#) research shown in Part I as part of a broader public promotion. More on that and the [Manufactured Housing Association for Regulatory Reform](#) (MHARR) in Part II. [Pew.org](#) has been doing respected research for years. They have periodically done

reports involving manufactured housing, on public trust in media, and a range of other topics that are often cited by media, policy advocates, public officials, academics and others. That noted, as of the date and time shown (2025-11-06-070120) there are no results for the [Manufactured Housing Improvement Act](#) (a.k.a. MHIA, MHIA 2000, 2000 Reform Law, 2000 Reform Act. Given they are research focused, that begs the question. Why not? Hold that inquiry in mind for Part II which will shed specific light on that topic.

According to [Influence Watch](#).

The Pew Charitable Trusts is a public charity formed in 2003 from the merger of seven foundations created by the Pew family, which made its money in the oil business. It operates the [Pew Research Center](#) as a subsidiary.

Originally founded as the family foundation of conservative- and Republican-leaning Pew family members, the organization has moved toward the political left throughout its history. The drift from donor intention accelerated after the deaths of the Pew family founders and the appointment of Rebecca W. Rimel as the organization's executive director and later president in the mid-1980s and early 1990s.¹ In a 1991 interview with *Town and Country*, Rimel declared "if we could reinfuse the idealism of the Sixties into our work, it could get the country out of this morass of feeling that our problems are insoluble. We have to assume that if we're committed, innovative, and thoughtful, there's nothing we as a country can't solve."¹ Under Rimel's leadership, Pew began extensive funding of environmentalist causes, including restrictions on oil drilling, directly questioning the source of wealth that made the Pew Charitable Trusts possible.

Per the [Pew.org about us page](#).

About

For more than 75 years, we have used data to make a difference—addressing the challenges of a changing world by illuminating issues, creating common ground, and advancing ambitious strategies that lead to tangible progress.

Learn more about our affiliate [Pew Research Center](#) and its connection to our work.

Per [Influence Watch](#).

By the early 1970s, the founders of the seven Pew trusts died, and the foundations began to drift away from the founders' vision. The drift accelerated in 1986 when Thomas W. Langfitt became the trusts' president. He fired 95 percent of the trusts' staff and hired Rebecca W. Rimel as executive director in 1986. By 1991, Roger M. Williams reported in *Foundation News* that the trusts had "eliminated almost all of their right-wing grantmaking and embraced a wide range of projects, including some that manifestly oppose the business

interests the old Pews held inviolable.” He added that many grants the Pews made in the early 1990s “would send the late J. Howard Pew and Joseph N. Pew Jr. spinning in the family crypt.”⁸

An analysis of Pew spending done by Robert Lerner and Althea K. Nagai for the [Capital Research Center](#) in 1995 found that in 1981 the Pew Trusts gave \$2.4 million to conservative organizations. By 1993 all grants to the right had been eliminated, although the trusts did give \$150,000 to conservative organizations in 1994. But by 1986 liberal groups were getting three times as much money as conservative ones, and by 1994 liberals were getting 40 times as much money from Pew as conservatives.⁹

Per the [left-leaning Wikipedia](#) on Pew.

The Pew Charitable Trusts is an independent [non-profit](#), [non-governmental organization](#) (NGO), founded in 1948.^{[1][2][3]}

Pew's stated mission is to serve the [public interest](#) by "improving [public policy](#), informing the public, and invigorating civic life".^[4] Pew operates projects and conducts research across five main areas: communities, conservation, finance and economy, governing, and health.^[5] In addition, the [Pew Research Center](#) is a nonpartisan public polling and think tank that operates as a subsidiary of The Pew Charitable Trusts.^[6]

...

Assets held by the seven trusts totaled \$6 billion as of 2020.^[13]

...

Although The Pew Charitable Trusts is non-partisan and non-ideological, Joseph Pew and his sons were politically [conservative](#). The modern day organization works to encourage responsive government and support scientific research on a wide range of issues, including global [marine conservation](#), [correction reform](#), and [biomedical research](#).

By inference, Wikipedia appears to suggest something similar to [Influence Watch](#)'s findings that Pew began as a right-leaning organization but that it shifted toward the left over time, as was shown above.

In several respects, Pew's reports on manufactured housing tend to be broadly favorable, as Part I will show. MHProNews and MHLivingNews have been periodically citing Pew on numerous occasions.



Rachel Siegel



PEW



“

Manufactured homes are an important source of housing, and more manufactured homes are part of the solution to America's housing shortage.”

— Rachel Siegel, senior officer, The Pew Charitable Trusts.

That said, for whatever reasons, there is an apparently significant flaw or big miss in Pew's report on state preemption. There are also more modest misses. The question is why? Some exclusive insights are found in Part II. The Q&A with Gemini that yielded the featured image used above is linked [here](#).

{ Mashup   

A mashup involves blending two or more elements to create a new, integrated whole.

MH

MHVille Defined

Pro MANUFACTURED HOUSING despite artificial barriers, internal consolidation-concentration industry self-limits.



FEA Model



FACTS



EVIDENCE



ANALYSIS

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This MHVille FEA is underway.



Part I. From the [Pew.org website at the link](#) as shown (sans photos and most captions) the following is provided under [fair use guidelines](#) for [media](#)

Projects: [Housing Policy](#)

States Take Crucial Steps to Expand Supply of Lower-Cost Single-Family Homes

Zoning reforms aim to reduce hurdles for manufactured housing

Authors: [Rachel Siegel](#) and [Linlin Liang](#)

September 3, 2025 Updated: September 5, 2025

Editor's note: This table in this article was updated Sept. 5, 2025, to reflect that the new Kentucky law prevents unfeasible structural requirements.

The urgency to build more homes grows as the nation confronts a widespread housing shortage, estimated at [4 million](#) to [7 million](#) homes. To combat this problem, policymakers

are embracing manufactured housing—homes built in a factory according to a federal standard—as a fast and efficient solution for communities that need new single-family homes. During the past five years, nine states have enacted zoning reforms to facilitate use of manufactured homes, which typically cost [45% less per square foot](#) than traditional, site-built homes, as a housing option in more neighborhoods.

The impact and effectiveness of these new laws will need to be evaluated over time, but early indications from interviews with manufactured home developers, manufacturers, and other experts, as well as recent [case studies](#) and examples across states, show the potential of these policies to help bring more manufactured homes to market.

Local zoning barriers often rule out manufactured housing as a viable option for prospective homeowners, despite its affordability and its quality, which is now on par with site-built housing. [Zoning laws and other factors](#)—such as [limited access](#) to affordable loans with interest rates and consumer protections similar to those of mortgages—have contributed to persistently low manufactured home shipments in the past two decades. Currently, builders deliver about [100,000 manufactured homes per year](#), approximately a quarter of the industry’s 1998 production level.

Manufactured homes: Safety and affordability

Modern manufactured houses are the only type of homes in the U.S. that must meet a single national standard: the [Manufactured Home Construction and Safety Standards](#), also known as the Housing and Urban Development (HUD) code. In effect since 1976, the HUD code sets standards for construction and design, including fire safety, wind resistance, and durability as well as energy efficiency—and [in 1994, it was upgraded to a higher level](#). The HUD federal standard, combined with the efficiencies gained from building the homes on an assembly line in a factory, results in significant savings for the homebuyer. In 2020, a new manufactured home installed on a foundation costs [35% to 73%](#) as much as a similar site-built home. A buyer saved about \$53,000 on the larger, highest-end manufactured home and more than \$100,000 on a smaller, more modest model.

In fact, in many places, especially rural areas and depopulated cities, a manufactured home is the only feasible way to build new single-family housing. [Construction costs](#) for site-built homes can sometimes exceed the home’s value, generating no profit for builders and developers and leaving them with little incentive to invest. Some rural areas also lack available workers to build new homes. In addition, if zoning laws prohibit manufactured homes, vacant lots remain empty and mortgage-qualified customers have few, if any, quality homes to buy.

Local zoning barriers to manufactured housing

Zoning policies do not reflect the quality of modern manufactured homes and often prevent communities from using them. These policies include:

- Explicit rules that limit locations of manufactured homes in certain neighborhoods.
- Design standards (e.g., roof pitch, cladding materials, foundation types) that apply only to manufactured homes and make it difficult or impossible to put manufactured homes in certain neighborhoods.
- Minimum lot size and street-setback requirements that erode the cost savings of using manufactured homes because land costs are high.

These policies limit manufactured homes as a housing option for qualified borrowers looking for a “starter” home, perpetuate affordability gaps, and bar people from attainable homeownership. Though manufactured homes are frequently allowed in rural areas, zoning restrictions in suburban and more metropolitan areas often allow these homes only in land-lease communities or “mobile home parks,” which are more likely to be located in [areas prone to natural disasters](#) or are cut off from community services such as municipal water and sewer. Yet these homes could be used as a lower-cost substitute for site-built, single-family homes in urban and suburban residential neighborhoods. Changing this type of zoning code could provide an important opportunity to [3.2 million renters](#) across the country who can’t currently afford site-built homes. A new manufactured home, if available, would fit their budget.

When manufactured homes are allowed in neighborhoods and offered as real estate like site-built homes, the buyer can qualify for a mortgage, which typically has more affordable monthly payments compared with other forms of financing, such as loans for just the home. More importantly, the value of manufactured homes owned with land [appreciates similarly](#) to that of site-built homes.

Local stakeholders and policymakers are working together to expand housing supply with manufactured homes in an increasing number of communities. For example, developers are building new neighborhoods of manufactured homes in [Hagerstown, Maryland](#), and [North Knoxville, Tennessee](#). In California, manufactured homes can now be used as [preapproved accessory dwelling units \(ADUs\)](#), which streamlines both construction of the home and securing of the permits. In Detroit, a community land trust worked with partners to install [new manufactured homes on previously vacant lots](#). In New York, the state [Housing Trust Fund Corp.](#) is in the process of installing high-end manufactured homes on formerly vacant lots in neighborhoods in the cities of [Syracuse](#) and Schenectady, and the town of Newcomb. Many builders have found that by using manufactured homes,

they can provide more single-family homes in places that need affordable options. But first, zoning regulations must allow them.

State-level zoning reforms

Many states have also tried to reduce zoning barriers to manufactured homes, putting them on an equal playing field with other single-family homes in residential zones. These reforms limit the authority of municipalities to impose unreasonable design and zoning requirements. (See Table 1).

For example, the Kentucky Legislature just passed a bill that prohibits local governments from adopting or enforcing zoning regulations that exclude or discriminate against qualified manufactured homes. This law specifies a list of compatibility standards that localities can adopt, such as the type and quality of exterior finishing materials, and that would not add too much extra cost for manufactured homes. In [Maryland](#), the state now permits a manufactured or modular home in a zone that allows single-family residential use as long as the home is new and is or will be treated as real estate, like any other site-built homes. Therefore, Maryland manufactured home buyers can access mortgages that have lower monthly payments than other loans.

Table 1

States Have Passed a Variety of Zoning Laws That Affect Manufactured Homes

	State Bill and Age of eligible year manufactured homes passed	Age of eligible manufactured homes	All single-family zones	Some residential zones	Same requirements as other single-family homes	Prevents unfeasible structural requirements
CT	H.B. 6107 , 2021	NA	NA	NA	Yes	NA
KY	H.B. 160 , 2025	5 years before install	Yes	NA	Yes	Yes
ME	L.D. 337 , 2024	Yes	Yes	NA	Yes	Yes

	State Bill and Age of eligible year passed	Age of eligible manufactured homes	All single-family zones	Some residential zones	Same requirements as other single-family homes	Prevents unfeasible structural requirements
MD	H.B. 538 , 2024	New	Yes	NA	NA	NA
MT	S.B. 252 , 2025	NA	Yes	NA	Yes	NA
NH	H.B. 1361 , 2024	NA	No	Yes	Yes	No
OR	H.B. 4064 , 2022	None	NA	Yes	Yes	No
RI	H. 7980 , 2024	NA	NA—towns and cities may allow manufactured housing in single-family zones	NA	NA	NA
TX	S.B. 785 , 2025	New	NA	Yes	No	No

Source: Pew’s analysis of recent state legislation

As more states remove regulatory barriers to factory-built housing, manufactured homes will help communities unlock a solution to their housing shortage. Additional lower-cost single-family homes will improve affordability and offer options for workers, first-time homebuyers, and older homebuyers who would like to move into a smaller house.

Rachel Siegel is a senior officer and Linlin Liang is a principal associate with The Pew Charitable Trusts' housing policy initiative.

Part II. Additional Information from sources as shown plus more [MHProNews](#) provided expert commentary

1) To be clear, [MHProNews](#) notes that much of the Pew information is fine and broadly useful. As is routinely true for academic or research performed by a nonprofit, footnotes, linked, or sources cited are provided, as Pew did in the above. That said, there are apparent oversights and omissions.

For example.

2) [MHProNews](#) directly contacted and advised Rachel Siegel at PewTrusts.org about the [Manufactured Housing Improvement Act](#) and the topic of enhanced preemption in an email exchange that occurred in November 2024. See much of that exchange is documented in the screen captures [linked here](#).

Approaching a year later, Pew published the article shown in Part I on state preemption in 9.2025 that failed to mention the Manufactured Housing Improvement Act (a.k.a.: MHIA, MHIA 2000, 2000 Reform Act, 2000 Reform Law) and its "[enhanced preemption](#)" provision.

Which begs the question. Why didn't Pew include any of those provided insights in their report on preemption and manufactured housing?

3) Per Rachel Siegel in an [email](#) to MHProNews was the following.

from: Rachel Siegel @pewtrusts.org>

to: L. A. Tony Kovach (MHProNews/MHLivingNews)

cc: Kery Murakami @pewtrusts.org
Omar Martinez @pewtrusts.org

date: Nov 21, 2024, 4:52 PM

subject: Re: Rachel and Kery, media outreach

Thank you for your clarification. I will look more into the preemption you noted and your articles. We've had recent conversations with industry and this hasn't come up so appreciate you flagging this for us.

Warm regards,

Rachel

So, Seigel and some of her colleagues acknowledged receipt of information that included remarks on "[enhanced preemption](#)" by now MHI CEO Lesli Gooch, MHARR President and CEO, Mark Weiss, J.D., the late William "Bill" Matchneer, J.D. (first administrator for the Office of Manufactured Housing Programs following the enactment of 2000 Reform Law), Democratic members of Congress explaining the legislative intent of Congress to then HUD Secretary Mel Martinez (R), and others.

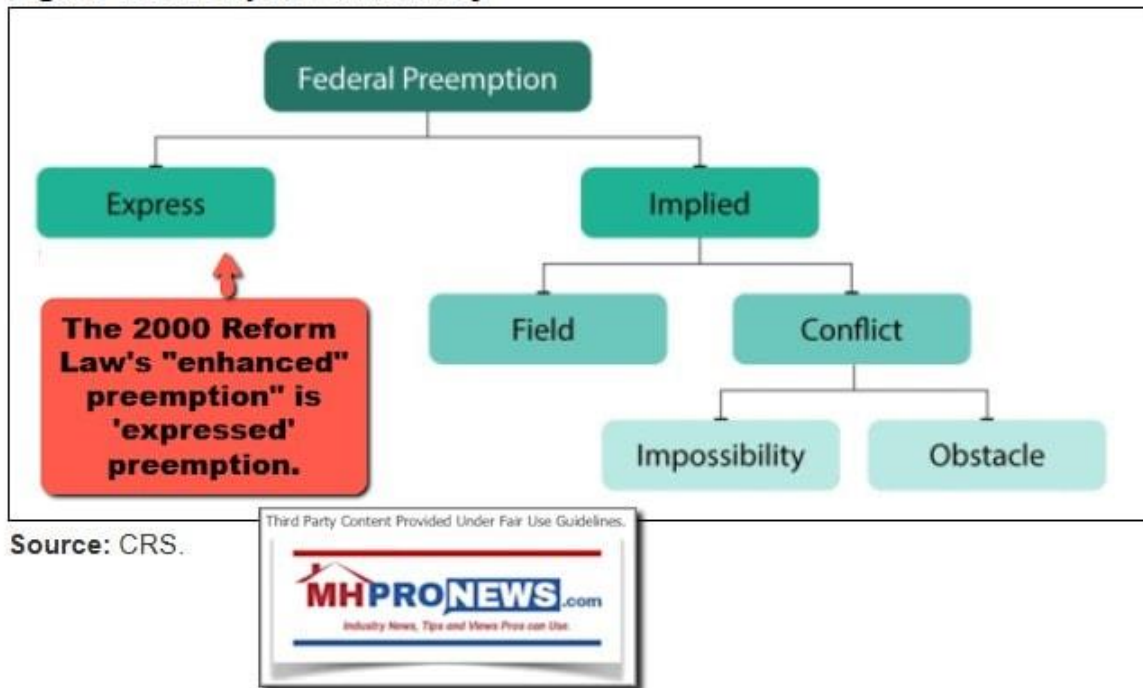
Did that influence Pew producing their recent report on state preemption? There is no clear indication of that, [other than the timing of their article following that November 2024 email exchanged with MHPProNews](#).

4) That noted, Pew failed to mention the following.

- a) [Manufactured Housing Improvement Act of 2000](#).
- b) federal [enhanced preemption](#).

[caption id="attachment_214104" align="aligncenter" width="611"]

Figure 1. Preemption Taxonomy



<https://www.manufacturedhomepronews.com/congressional-research-service-on-federal-preemption-legal-key-can-unlock-far-more-mh-sales-expert-views-insights-into-manufactured-housing-improvement-act-enhanced-preemption-importance-fea/>

[/caption]

- c) While it was useful that Pew cited the Harvard Joint Center of Housing Studies (JCHS) figure that some 3.2 million renters might become manufactured home owners if local zoning barriers were overcome, an even larger market potential was identified by the Freddie Mac, which said at the time they published their report linked below that potentially 25 to 26 million renters could afford a HUD Code manufactured home purchase.

[caption id="attachment_185771" align="aligncenter" width="600"]



<https://www.manufacturedhomelivingnews.com/are-you-or-someone-you-know-among-the-25-million-renters-who-could-buy-a-manufactured-home-today-freddie-mac-study-identifying-the-opportunities-to-expand-manufactured-housing-by-aw/>[/caption]

- d) Pew's team in their article shown in Part I linked examples of [Crossmod](#)® linked projects, without mentioning that there is no hard public data on how many (or more to the point, how few) [Crossmods](#) have been produced.

In short, much of what was handed to Seigel and her colleagues failed to make a report that was published over 9 months later. There is no apparent mention of MHARR in their report.

While it is useful to know how many states have enacted statewide preemption, there is no apparent mention of California (CA). CA has statewide preemption, but apparently their law has not been useful enough. According to [data published by MHARR, California is not even in the top ten states for new HUD Code manufactured home shipments](#). That would seem to suggest that even if the [nation's most populous state](#) preemption law was yielding some marginal advantages, it was not [proportionate the state's population or the industry's historic potential](#). Given California's success with statewide preemption for ADU (a.k.a.: accessory dwelling units, granny flats, etc.), one might wonder why that didn't make their research?

[caption id="attachment_168239" align="aligncenter" width="611"]

Chart of the week

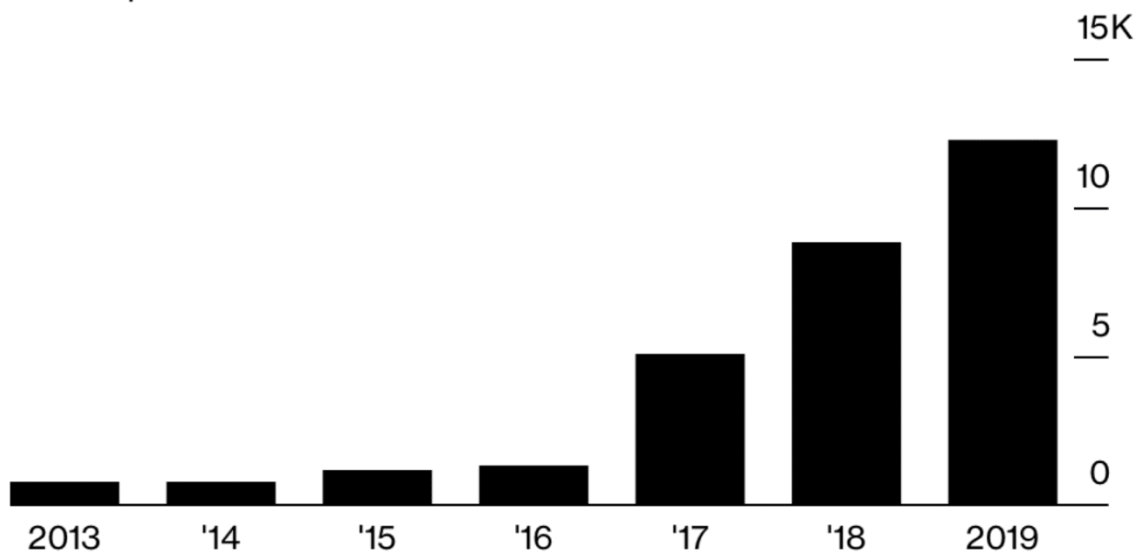
The key word in Bloomberg CityLab's summary is "preemption" as in "preemption of local zoning."

Chart of the week: ADU construction takes off in California

Bloomberg CityLab [explores](#) the boom in accessory dwelling unit (ADU) construction in California, following the state legislature's preemption of local zoning codes to legalize them in 2016. As a result of the legislature's action, "there's a meaningful amount of housing units being put into neighborhoods that were traditionally very low-density," according to one ADU manufacturer.

Accessory dwelling units (ADUs) are rising steadily across California

■ ADU permits



California Department of Housing and Community Development



HUD Code manufactured housing already enjoys federal "enhanced" "preemption."

The Manufactured Housing Improvement Act of 2000 (MHIA or 2000 Reform) law says: "Federal preemption under this subsection shall be broadly and liberally construed..." phrasing. Manufactured housing's "federal preemption" is often called "enhanced preemption" for that reason. What this graphic from MHI "coalition partner" NHC reveals is that when preemption for ADUs went into effect in California, production virtually tripled overnight. Logically, if MHIA's "enhanced preemption" was fully enforced, manufactured housing could skyrocket. The Bloomberg/NHC graphic suggests that it continued to surge over 3 years to some 700 percent growth. The Manufactured Housing Association for Regulatory Reform (MHARR), MHPronews, others have called for the 2000 Reform enforcement.

<https://www.manufacturedhomepronews.com/manufactured-housing-institute-mhi-reviewing-biden-housing-plan-mhi-coalition-partner-national-housing-conference-exposes-mhi-claimed-manufactured-housing-leader/>

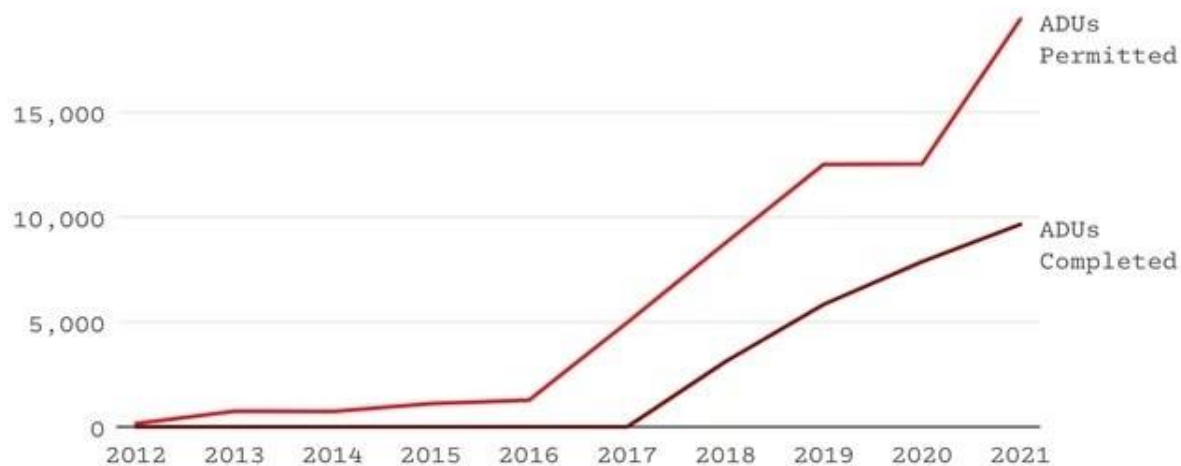
and <https://www.manufacturedhomepronews.com/what-is-an-accessory-dwelling-unit-adu-or-a-detached-accessory-dwelling-unit-dadu-the-role-of-adus-in-easing-americas-housing-crisis-by-emily-hamilton-examined-plus-mhville-market-upda/>

MHProNews Note 1: depending on your browser or device, many images in this report can be clicked to expand. or example, in some browsers/devices you click the image and select 'open in a new window.' After clicking that selection, you click the image in the open window to expand the image to a larger size. To return to this page, use your back key, escape or follow the prompts. [/caption]

The chart below was among the [items shared by MHProNews with Seigel and her colleagues at Pew.](#)

[caption id="attachment_202151" align="aligncenter" width="612"]

Accessory Dwelling Units in California



Source: California Department of Housing and Community Development

A

<https://www.manufacturedhomepronews.com/what-is-an-accessory-dwelling-unit-adu-or-a-detached-accessory-dwelling-unit-dadu-the-role-of-adus-in-easing-americas-housing-crisis-by-emily-hamilton-examined-plus-mhville-market-upda/>[/caption]

5) To be clear, Pew does seem to be 'pro' manufactured housing. That said, why are they then missing information that was [provided to Pew by MHPProNews directly and which Seigel](#) said they would look into in her emailed reply shown above?

6)

7)