

Pre-publication draft of a developing and pending report planned for MHProNews on the topics as shown to be submitted to third-party artificial intelligence (AI) for facts-evidence-analysis checks.

'Can't See the Forest for the Trees' – What That Metaphor Means. Understanding the Big Picture in the United States of America in 2026. Plus, the Sunday Weekly MHVille Headlines in Review

""**Can't see the forest for the trees**" is an idiom meaning someone is so focused on minor details that they fail to understand the overall situation or big picture, like being unable to see a whole forest because you're only looking at individual trees. It describes getting lost in the specifics of a problem, project, or situation, losing perspective on the main point or broader context." That [explanation](#) sets the stage for the broader headline topics. 2026 is a midterm election year. 2026 is also the 250th anniversary of the founding of the United States of America (USA). There are an array of domestic and international issues vying for public attention. In no particular order of importance are the following. Venezuela. Iran. Greenland. Russia. Ukraine. China. India. The E.U. NATO. Latin America. Nigeria. Africa. Australia. The Middle East. Those are just a few places around the globe that have been in recent mainstream news headlines. Domestically, "affordability" is the buzzword going into 2026. But so is [fraud](#), as in the financial scandals being associated with certain members of [Somali community](#) in [Minnesota](#) and in other states. As [MHProNews](#) recently reported, waste, fraud, and abuse are subject of the [recent annual Festivus report, see that linked here](#). How these matters can become intersections for our profession and others will follow shortly.

But first, let's ask some questions that will become more important to some as the midterms approach.

- Who died and made performers social exemplars and the arbitrators of wisdom?
- Who died and bequeathed to billionaires and corporate elites some keen insight that made them more suitable to select the leaders of a nation?
- We decided that this or that political party had a lock on what is true?

A brief reality check will reveal why Americans of all ages and backgrounds need to rediscover the roots of the American Dream. For example. In the 1950s, a significant portion of the population was 'middle class.' The middle class in the U.S. in that era could afford a house, a car, vacations, healthcare, retirement and an often-sizable family on a single income. That single-income family was usually - but not always - earned by the man in a married household. Back then, there was a broadly felt belief that most anyone could enter and enjoy the 50s era American middle-class lifestyle.

Fast forward to 2026. Now, a two-income family with fewer or even no children may struggle to get the same things at an earlier age as is true today.

How many even raise these evidentiary points that can be backed up by known facts today?

How few are the numbers who dare to look back, consider the facts and evidence then vs. now and ask, what happened to the American Dream?

This article *does not* cover plan to answer those questions *today*. The purpose of this article is to raise such issues that will determine the outcomes of political races in all fifty of the United States.

Starting this week, a periodic series of reports will lay out the facts and evidence plus will provide analysis (FEA) that will cite other sources. But the 'final analysis' will be unique to this publication and our [MHLivingNews](#) sister site.

Naturally, manufactured housing will be part of those special reports. But the core of several of those reports could be applied to any profession, not just to HUD Code manufactured homes.

Ideally, all trade media or associations in our industry ought to be sincerely raising the kinds of topics and questions found here on [MHProNews](#) and/or [MHLivingNews](#). But the reality is that they do not do so is one reason you and roughly a million other visitors this month come to this site. Nature abhors a vacuum. When a vacuum exists and something steps in to fill that void, it is no surprise when others follow.

Just over half of the visitors to [MHProNews](#) come from a "direct request," according to [Webalizer](#) data. That means they have often bookmarked or type in this website's name. They are hungry - as you are - for information backed up by rational thought that does not mind challenging conventional 'group thought.'

That's more than sufficient to set the stage for what will come starting in the days ahead.

Now, let's pivot to the headlines for the week in review. Because those headlines are the introduction to topics that have made [MHProNews](#) the dominating trade news site in all of manufactured housing. We are so dominating that our traffic per Webalizer- which uses server data and is thus top shelf traffic and other website statistics - compared to information gleaned from [SimilarWeb reveals we have about 3x more traffic daily than the Manufactured Housing Institute \(MHI\) gets in a month](#). The facts that [MHI leaders and attorneys have been asked to transparently reveal their own server data](#) and have not done so is a good reason to believe the [SimilarWeb](#) estimates are valid.

Do not miss today's postscript.

With no further adieu, here are the headlines for the week in review from January 11th to January 18th, 2026.

Postscript

During an interview with [left-leaning](#) PBS's "Firing Line" released on Friday, Rep. James Clyburn (D-SC) responded to President Donald Trump increasing support among black male voters by saying that "people are easily brainwashed." According to a partial transcript from [right-leaning Breitbart](#), is the following.

Host Margaret Hoover said, [relevant exchange begins around 34:15] "Donald Trump had increased his share of black male voters by double, by 50%."

Clyburn responded, "Simply because people are easily brainwashed."

Hoover then asked, "You think that black male voters doubled their support for Trump because they were brainwashed?"

Clyburn answered, "They believe that's foolishness. When I first started in politics, I used to say that there's no substitute for substance. I used to say that a lot."

Hoover then asked, "Do you still believe that?"

Clyburn answered, "No. Because style trumps substance, and that is an intended pun."

When [Clyburn](#) said 'style trumps substance' that is similar to the notion of 'perception is reality.' That *doesn't mean* that the maxim or expression is true. Rather, that is an observation that some are swayed by style, are swayed by images or taglines, or catch-phrases. Common or popular beliefs can seem true and thus may be acted on by significant numbers of people as if it was true.

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Ideally, messages and theme are created that reflect reality in a stylish or compelling manner. Former House Minority Leader [Clyburn](#)'s (SC-D) observation.