

Where Self-Interest Trumps Ideology: Liberal Homeowners and Local Opposition to Housing Development

William Marble
Clayton Nall*

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*Corresponding Author: Clayton Nall is Assistant Professor, Department of Political Science, Stanford University, 616 Serra Street Room 100, Stanford CA 94305; Email: nall@stanford.edu. William Marble is a Ph.D. candidate in the Department of Political Science, Stanford University, 616 Serra Street Room 100, Stanford CA 94305; Email: wpmarble@stanford.edu. Thanks to Paul Sniderman, Shanto Iyengar, Dan Butler, David Broockman, Christopher Elmendorf, Justin Grimmer, Eitan Hersh, Nathan Lee, Hye Young You, and participants at the Vanderbilt Urban Political Economy Conference, NYU CESS Conference, and Princeton Workshop on Cities and Inequality for helpful comments at various stages of this project. The project also benefited from feedback from local housing practitioners and activists at community groups including Livable Sunnyvale, the Mountain View Coalition for Sustainable Planning, and SAMCEDA.

Abstract

Survey researchers have found that self-interest usually has minimal effects on policy attitudes, a finding that arises because surveys often present remote and low-stakes issues. In this paper, we examine a widely cited instance of self-interest: the response of homeowners to the threat of dense housing development. Such development may facilitate housing affordability, but threatens homeowners' property values. Liberal homeowners, especially, face a dilemma between their commitment to economic equality and their home values. In a survey of the 20 largest U.S. metropolitan areas, we find that self-interest dominates even liberal opinion. Survey experiments show that liberal homeowners are barely more likely than conservatives to support dense housing, and become more opposed when reminded of development's effect on housing costs. Highlighting development's redistributive benefits barely offsets the economic message's negative effects. Our results show that self-interest that manifests in local institutional contexts can undermine Americans' support for national policy goals.

Does economic self-interest influence policy attitudes? Political scientists have long puzzled over the reasons that Americans appear to adopt policy attitudes and voting behavior that run counter to their economic well-being. From the earliest days of the modern survey era, political scientists have accumulated evidence that Americans have incoherent ideologies, and, critically, that their vote choice is driven by factors related to group identity and socialization, and excludes economic class and rational assessment of economic self-interest (Campbell et al., 1960; Achen and Bartels, 2016). A smaller set of studies has found a larger role for self-interest in more local policies that present clearer and sometimes objectively larger stakes (e.g., Green and Cowden 1992). Voters' apparent deviation from self-interested behavior has elicited numerous explanations, including voter ignorance (Bartels, 2005, 2008), altruistic personality traits (Gilens and Thal, 2017), and even "false consciousness" deriving from religion or cultural and racial identity (Frank, 2004). Others have argued that acting against one's self-interest may be the result of material sufficiency: educated, affluent voters have the luxury to consider "post-materialist" issues and face minimal threats to their economic status (Inglehart, 1981; Gelman et al., 2007).

But most of the conclusions drawn in this sphere have been based on research into partisan vote choice and on voter attitudes towards federal economic policies that rarely threaten voters' economic standing. Studies that do find an effect of self-interest—such as in the political engagement of program-dependent issue publics (Campbell, 2003)—do so precisely when personal stakes are large, which does not characterize many many social and economic policy questions. In this article, we examine how Americans reconcile self-interest and personal ideology in a domain that has received scant attention in the study of Americans' issue attitudes: whether to allow construction of dense, sometimes low-income, housing in Americans' communities. While housing politics operates at the local level, such local concerns are at the center of Americans' daily lives, and the opposition of homeowners to more open housing policy is a major obstacle to the pursuit of national liberal economic goals. Local restrictions on multifamily housing development limit lower- and middle-income households' access to high-income, high-employment metropolitan areas and suburban job centers (Downs, 1973; Danielson, 1976; Wilson, 1996; Rothstein, 2017; Trountine, 2018).

Restrictive policies present the potential for cognitive dissonance among liberal homeowners, who may endorse specific liberal housing policies at the national level. However, they may oppose construction of the high-density apartment housing that disproportionately serves lower-income households and racial minorities. The risks to their personal self-interest associated with building high-density housing—including lowering property values, increased strain on public services, and changes to their communities—may offset the utility they might obtain from seeing liberal policies enacted.

The literature on the importance of homeownership to local political behavior—so called “homevoting”—has amply demonstrated homeowners’ self-interested engagement in local politics (Fischel, 2001; Oliver and Ha, 2007; Einstein, Palmer and Glick, 2018; Hall and Yoder, 2018), but not how this self-interest may conflict with their general political ideology. Liberal homeowners’ dilemma may be understood as an instance of the “principle-policy puzzle” under which Americans support general political ideals but balk at the specific policies needed to implement them.¹ Liberal homeowners present a hard test of the idea that partisanship and ideology dominate self-interest.

We present results of both observational and experimental survey data showing that liberal homeowners differ only minimally from conservative homeowners on questions pertaining to local housing development. Throughout, we define a “liberal” to be someone who expresses strong or moderate support for a federal guarantee of housing for all on a five-point scale, and “conservatives” as those who are neutral or opposed.² Supporting a federal housing guarantee indicates support for the *principle* of housing, but not for specific remedies.

To investigate the clash between general ideology and self-interest in local politics, we employ original survey data that includes both observational and experimental studies. First, we examine obser-

¹For example, it has been argued that some voters are racially liberal in general principle only, balking at specific non-discrimination and reparations policies (Jackman, 1978). Stouffer’s (1955) study on Americans’ civil liberties attitudes demonstrated as similar mismatch, between the principle of free speech and permitting communists to speak in one’s community (Sniderman, Brody and Tetlock, 1993: Ch. 4).

²We adopt this convention to facilitate interpretation. Treating the five-point scale as a continuous variable does not change any conclusions but complicates interpretation.

vational data on support for housing-related local and state policies. We find that liberal homeowners support redistributive housing policies, such as Section 8 housing vouchers and rent control, but are far more averse to development. Conservatives, on the other hand, consistently oppose both dense development and regulatory and redistributive schemes. Conservative homeowners and liberal renters have aligned ideology and self-interest, while liberal homeowners are potentially cross-pressured.³

We then present results of two survey experiments that test how liberal and conservative homeowners and renters react to persuasive messages and to hypothetical housing proposals that present different risks to respondents. In the first survey experiment, we asked respondents a battery of questions about their support for building more of five different housing types in their area. While low-density single-family housing receives widespread support, liberal homeowners are barely more likely than conservative homeowners to support more apartment housing—and this result is robust to a host of robustness checks, including accounting for race. Randomly informing respondents of housing development’s likely effects on local housing costs, one of the main arguments of pro-housing activists, serves to reduce liberal homeowners’ support. Highlighting development’s benefits to low- and middle-income families merely restored support to its levels in the control condition. Conservative homeowners were unresponsive to most treatments, and were consistently opposed to urbanism and dense housing regardless of presented arguments.⁴ In the second experiment, we presented respondents a more direct test of self-interest by varying features of a single, hypothetical 120-unit local apartment housing development. We gave respondents different information about their home’s distance to the project and the income status of tenants expected to occupy the housing. While liberal homeowners were more likely than conser-

³Conservative renters (only about 13% of our sample) may also face cognitive dissonance, as they may dislike dense housing but instead benefit from reduced prices that may arise from housing production.

⁴Our results align with Sears, Hensler and Speer (1979), who find that conservative white parents of school children were no more likely to oppose school busing if they thought their own children would be subjected to busing programs. Their conservative attitudes were already set. However, Green and Cowden (1992) found that directly affected households were more likely to participate in anti-busing protests.

vative homeowners to support construction of low-income apartments, their support still lagged behind renters'. Across almost all experimental conditions, liberal homeowners were less supportive of apartment development than were renters of all political stripes.

Our results demonstrate general liberal policy attitudes collide with self-interest in American politics, affecting how policy principles translate into support for specific policies. Moreover, we show that self-interested behavior deriving from homeownership is not homogeneous, or reducible to traditional left-right politics. For example, home values and housing do not just cause ideological shifts to the right or left arising from treatment of one's home as an undifferentiated financial asset or obligation (e.g., Ansell, 2014). The stakes arising from homeownership present complex influences for liberals that are less present for conservatives. Liberal homeowners who otherwise embrace liberal economic policies behave almost like conservatives on questions pertaining to local housing development specifically. This finding sheds substantial additional light on the the reasons for variation in the "principle-policy gap" that arises in local politics.

Ideology, Self-Interest, and the Significance of Housing Politics

While tensions between ideology and self-interest exist across many policy domains, we focus on the politics of housing because of the especially high stakes involved. Local housing development restrictions limit Americans' access to economic opportunity by limiting geographic mobility. They impede migration from low-productivity to high-productivity areas, with effects on both the aggregate economy and disparate geographic impacts. Hsieh and Moretti (2019), for example, estimate that local housing supply constraints reduced aggregate GDP growth between 1964 and 2009 by over a third, relative to counterfactual world with no housing supply constraints. Additionally, by limiting migration, such laws have interrupted the long-running economic convergence of states and metropolitan areas since the 1980s (Ganong and Shoag, 2017; see also Berry and Glaeser, 2005). The resulting individual cost burdens are especially acute in high-opportunity markets such as New York, Boston, Seattle, and San Francisco that suffer a severe scarcity of apartments and condos relative to the demand. Rapid job growth and restricted housing production have combined to push prices in such cities beyond the reach of the middle class, let

alone lower-income households. In San Francisco, for example, the Zillow Price Index grew by 93% between 2011 and 2018, and median rent for a one-bedroom apartment posed a financial burden to anyone earning anything less than \$136,000 per year.⁵ While reforms to housing development restrictions are only one proposed remedy, removing obstacles to construction of multi-family housing has become one widely debated measure to improve access to opportunity.

However, the politics of local development have become an unsettled issue on the political left and within the Democratic Party more specifically. Metropolitan areas with the most severe housing restrictions are often dominated by the Democratic Party (Kahn, 2011), with voters and elected officials alike supporting renter-friendly aid policies but disagreeing over development of both affordable and market-rate housing. While Americans have been adopting increasingly party-consistent positions on economic and social issues (Levendusky, 2009), often following the leads of party elites (Lenz, 2009, 2013), parties have not offered clear signals on local economic and housing development. Absent such signals, Americans may defer to self-interest. In recent years, however, Democratic Party leaders have, from time to time, challenged housing development restrictions. In late 2016, Obama Administration officials launched a media campaign against restrictive local zoning laws (*Housing Development Toolkit*, 2016; Woellert, 2016). California Governor Gavin Newsom recently announced a state lawsuit against the city of Huntington Beach for failing to meet state housing development mandates (Dillon, 2019). In the face of elite partisan messages, Democratic partisans who oppose dense housing development in their communities may experience cognitive dissonance (Festinger, 1962), and possibly shift their policy attitudes in response. But overall, there has been little clear partisan messaging on the issue of housing development.

Local housing issues may rarely appear on “most important problem” lists, but they can be high-salience, particularly for homeowners. This stands in contrast to many inquiries into the role of self-interest in national policy debates. For example, conclusions about public spending attitudes are often

⁵<http://www.zillow.com/san-francisco-ca/home-values> and <https://sf.curbed.com/2018/4/2/17189322/san-francisco-apartment-rent-april-2018>. Accessed August 25, 2018. We define housing costs as burdensome if they exceed 30 percent of pre-tax income.

based on question batteries, such as those on the General Social Survey, that ask whether respondents support more spending in areas such as “welfare” or “roads and bridges” (Smith, Marsden and Hout, 2015). While such questions can provide an indication of left-right ideology, federal spending questions rarely present the same identifiable costs and benefits that appear in local contexts (Citrin and Green, 1990; Chong, Citrin and Conley, 2001). As a result, seemingly altruistic (Gilens and Thal, 2017) or ideologically motivated attitudes may stem from researchers’ failure to measure self-interest in the right setting. By contrast, questions about competing approaches to housing policy, including questions about housing development, illustrate how Americans adopt ideological positions when asked about general policy desiderata that they may quickly abandon when asked about specific policies (Jackman, 1978). Americans’ unique affinity for their homes and neighborhoods may lead to more self-interested policy attitudes and voting than we would attribute to other, more fungible assets (Fischel, 2001; Citrin and Green, 1990).⁶ As a result, we should expect self-interest to override ideological and partisan considerations more easily around local housing politics.

We are especially concerned with how self-interest presents a conflict with voters’ stated policy preferences, and whether and how voters remove the cognitive dissonance associated that may arise as a result (Festinger, 1962). For example, homeowners facing cognitive dissonance may assign primacy to issues associated with their place of residence—such as neighborhood safety, privacy, and school quality—before considering their ideological commitments. In fact, homeowners will typically have engaged in such a rank-ordering of priorities when deciding where to live, and will likely have assigned low priority to partisan and ideological factors (Mummolo and Nall, 2017). They may see apartments and other high-density housing as a threat to their top priorities. Even if homeowners are not personally threatened by dense development, they may justify opposition to projects by citing lack of procedural fairness in local development plans. They may regard the zoning variances and exceptions needed to enable dense housing as a de facto breach of contract. This sense that local development is “unfair” appears in local campaign rhetoric around development proposals, and may engender opposition out of

⁶Strauss (2009) also finds that appeals to personal experience can override partisan biases and reduce polarization.

proportion to the magnitude of the perceived economic threat. Even if they are not opposed to a specific project, homeowners may see development generally as a long-term threat to their community.

It is unlikely that individuals who face a material conflict between their national political ideology and homeowner interest will immediately change their broader ideological commitments. While homeownership is correlated with more conservative policy views (Ansell, 2014), a recent within-subject design using administrative (voter file) data indicates that homeownership has small effects on partisan electoral participation but leads individuals to engage to a greater extent with local tax and development issues specifically (Hall and Yoder, 2018). We hypothesize that homeownership leads voters to adopt self-interested positions on local housing policies while requiring them to only minimally adjust their attitudes on national issues.

To the extent that local housing development does induce cognitive dissonance among homeowners, they may develop rationales to reconcile their self-interested behavior with their ideology. One way they may do so is by arguing for homeownership's community benefits. Homeownership and the linkage of property valuations to local public goods is said to result in pro-social behavior within one's community (Fischel, 2001). Indeed, these alleged positive externalities are sometimes used to justify the federal programs that subsidize homeownership (McCabe, 2016: Ch. 3).⁷ While such locally defensive behaviors might be derided as "NIMBYism," housing opponents who defend their "neighborhood character" (Ross, 2015) may regard doing so as progressive and communitarian. Anti-development campaigns led by liberals and conservatives vilify for-profit housing developers and local "growth machines" (Molotch, 1976), messages that resonate with liberal audiences.⁸

⁷Empirical support for the community benefits of homeownership is limited. Glaeser and Shapiro (2003) write that the positive social externalities of homeownership are "far too small to justify the [home mortgage interest] deduction." Relying on Social Capital Community Benchmark Survey data, McCabe (2016) concludes that prosocial behaviors attributed to homeownership are largely explained by owners' residential stability, not property ownership.

⁸In a survey we conducted in Silicon Valley in October 2016, respondents gave real estate developers feeling thermometer scores lower than other polarizing or controversial groups, including undocumented

Alternatively, homeowners may avoid dissonance entirely by conceiving of local housing development questions as a distinctly local, and possibly “non-political” process. Depending on how individuals prioritize features of their residential quality of life, they can disregard political and social commitments altogether through a process of “elimination by aspects” (Tversky, 1972; Mummolo and Nall, 2017). Homeowners may construe neighborhood zoning as a collective property right shared among community members, thus insulating it from regular politics (Fischel, 1987; Badger, 2018). In the process, they may dissociate local housing disputes from broader social policy concerns. The historical record offers examples involving housing and other local issues.

Data and Hypotheses

To assess the importance of self-interest in American housing policy, we conducted a survey of $n = 4,000$ voting-eligible persons (citizens over 18) in the 20 largest U.S. metropolitan areas (MSAs), many of which have rising real estate values.⁹ We quota-sampled respondents to match the aggregated demographic data for the MSAs included in each Census region.¹⁰

immigrants and tech workers. See also Monkkonen and Manville (N.d.), who address the role of anti-developer attitudes in housing development debates.

⁹In descending order by population size, these areas were: New York-Newark-Jersey City, NY-NJ-PA; Los Angeles-Long Beach-Anaheim, CA; Chicago-Naperville-Elgin, IL-IN-WI; Dallas-Fort Worth-Arlington, TX; Houston-The Woodlands-Sugar Land, TX; Washington-Arlington-Alexandria, DC-VA-MD; Philadelphia-Camden-Wilmington, PA-NJ-DE; Miami-Fort Lauderdale-West Palm Beach, FL; Atlanta-Sandy Springs-Roswell, GA; Boston-Cambridge-Newton, MA-NH; San Francisco-Oakland-Hayward, CA; Phoenix-Mesa-Scottsdale, AZ; Riverside-San Bernardino-Ontario, CA; Detroit-Warren-Dearborn, MI; Seattle-Tacoma-Bellevue, WA; Minneapolis-St. Paul-Bloomington, MN-WI; San Diego-Carlsbad, CA; Tampa-St. Petersburg-Clearwater, FL; Denver-Aurora-Lakewood, CO; and St. Louis, MO-IL.

¹⁰Within Census regions, we sought to match the demographic distributions of the Current Population Survey November 2014 voting supplement (U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, 2014). For the population living within all selected MSAs in each Census region, we matched the

After screening respondents with respect to demographics, we asked respondents a series of questions on partisanship and economic ideology. The most important of these questions, used in the remainder of the paper, asked whether they support a federal guarantee of housing for all. Respondents were asked to place themselves on a five-point (Likert) support scale with respect to the following statement: “Some people say the federal government should ensure that all Americans have housing. Others say that shouldn’t be a concern of the federal government.” A response to this question indicates support for an activist federal role in housing, but not preferred policies to that end. Hereafter, we interchangeably refer to individuals who strongly or somewhat agree with the statement as “liberal,” or “pro-guarantee,” and those opposed or neutral as “conservative,” or “anti-guarantee.”¹¹

The housing guarantee variable was interacted with housing tenure (homeownership status) to define a two-by-two moderator for use in analysis of the two survey experiments. Table 1 presents our two-by-two typology of respondents according to this objective measure of self-interest and their ideology. Additionally, Table 2 shows the distribution of respondents using this typology, broken down by three sets of subgroups, including party, race, and whether the respondent endorses “old-fashioned” racist stereotypes about blacks. All four cells of the typology have a significant number of respondents, across all subgroups.

marginal distributions for each of the following variables, organized into quota categories: age (18-24, 25-44, 45-64 and 65+), sex, race/ethnicity (Asian only, black only, non-Hispanic white only, Hispanic, and multiracial/other), income (5 categories with a top code at \$75,000 per year), and MSA. The quota-sampling was administered by Qualtrics. The Online Appendix (p. 7) lists sample demographics and quota targets. To identify eligible respondents, we presented multiple screening questions at the beginning of the survey.

¹¹Dichotomizing in this fashion captures important variation while simplifying reporting. Model results based on the five-point scale appear in the Online Appendix, p. 12. We also created a composite index from three questions: whether the government should reduce income differences; whether people are better off under a free market; and whether the government should redistribute income through heavy taxes on the rich. The left economic ideology index and the housing guarantee item are correlated at $r = .53$.

	Homeowners	Renters
Anti-Housing Guarantee (Conservative)	Consonance (30%)	Potential Dissonance (13%)
Pro-Housing Guarantee (Liberal)	Potential Dissonance (30%)	Consonance (27%)

Table 1: Two-by-two typology of homeowners and renters, by support for a federal housing guarantee, displaying expected level of cognitive dissonance prompted by proposals for dense local housing development. Percentages refer to the proportion of our sample that falls into each group.

Across our analyses, we expect liberal (pro-housing-guarantee) homeowners to exhibit behavior consistent with cognitive dissonance caused by the clash of principle and self-interest. We expect the relationship between homeownership and policy attitudes to be heterogeneous, and stronger when (1) the threat to self-interest is objectively large and (2) individuals are not already ideologically predisposed against the housing policies in question. Neither liberal renters nor conservative owners are expected to change their attitudes in response to messages emphasizing development’s effect on housing prices and on housing opportunity, given that their ideology and self-interest push them in the same direction. Conservative renters, a small fraction of our sample, may still express concerns around housing and quality of life that are not rooted in financial self-interest.¹² Liberal homeowners, therefore, are most likely to be responsive to messaging about the effects of building more housing.

We reveal the extent of homeowners’ conflict between principle and self-interest in three different analyses. First, using the two-by-two typology presented in Table 1, we present results from an observational analysis of attitudes towards proposed state and local remedies to the housing affordability crisis. We find that liberal and conservative homeowners are both less likely than renters to endorse renter aid policies. While liberal homeowners are more willing to support such policies, they and conservative homeowners agree in their opposition to pro-development policies that may push housing prices downward.

¹²One might think that pro-market libertarians would be important to our logic: renters who benefit from additional development and oppose government regulation on principle should also oppose zoning limits. However, empirically, this group makes up a small proportion of the population. Our reanalysis of an April 2015 Golden State Poll found that only 10% of California voters oppose liberal housing aid programs but support dense housing development (Hoover Institution, 2015).

	Anti-guarantee Homeowner	Anti-guarantee Renter	Pro-guarantee Homeowner	Pro-guarantee Renter
Party: Democrat	19% (382)	9% (183)	37% (721)	34% (674)
Republican	50% (483)	16% (156)	23% (219)	11% (111)
Race: White	33% (709)	14% (300)	30% (647)	24% (518)
Black	19% (119)	8% (52)	36% (224)	36% (225)
Other	32% (417)	13% (172)	27% (355)	28% (362)
Racial Stereotyping: Negative	32% (491)	15% (230)	27% (416)	26% (400)
Positive	29% (754)	11% (294)	32% (810)	28% (705)

Table 2: Distribution of respondents on the homeowner-housing guarantee, across several covariates. Percentages show row frequencies, while numbers in parentheses are sample sizes. Party includes “leaning” partisans. Racial affect is a binary variable that is coded as “negative” if respondents endorse at least one of three negative stereotype about blacks, and “positive” otherwise.

We then present results from two survey experiments designed to test messages related to housing. These experiments each entail a test of homeowners’ self-interest against their ideological commitments.

The first survey experiment tests the role of ideology and self-interest in general terms, assessing the extent to which people favor construction of five different types of housing “in their area” after they have viewed informational and persuasive messages similar to those presented by housing development advocates. We expect that pro-guarantee homeowners will be less likely than pro-guarantee renters to support apartments and other development. Reminding respondents of local housing development’s price effects could produce two divergent reactions. On the one hand, if ideological principles are dominant, messages about supply and demand could induce increased support for housing development among liberals. We are uncertain about effects among conservatives, who typically embrace free markets except around zoning, and generally dislike residential density (Pew Research Center, 2014). On the other hand, we expect messages emphasizing housing development’s effects to activate economic self-interest among both groups. For this reason, in another treatment condition we add persuasive language describing how

housing development could deliver benefits to lower- and middle-income families. We expected that this message would appeal to liberals' pro-redistribution ideology.

Our second survey experiment examines the same issues in the context of a hypothetical 120-unit apartment development project. Each respondent was randomly assigned to view one of six proposals. These proposals were varied to highlight the income groups being served, as well as the project's distance to the respondent's home. We then asked respondents to report their support on a four-point scale. Thus, liberal homeowners in particular may face a tension between supporting housing for the poor and accepting the risks associated with building such housing in their immediate vicinity. While conservative homeowners are expected to oppose apartment-style development projects regardless of the population served or the location, we expect that liberal homeowners will present evidence of cross-pressuring or cognitive dissonance. The logic of NIMBYism—that individuals object to bearing spatially concentrated costs of development but would tolerate imposition of costs on more distant neighbors—suggests that liberal homeowners will endorse low-income housing projects, but are more likely to do so if a project is remote.

Observational Evidence on Self-Interest and Housing Policy Attitudes

To examine self-interest's importance to housing policy attitudes, we first report ideological and owner-renter differences around selected state and local policies related to renter aid and protections, land use, and development rules. Among the policies designed to aid and protect renters were: measures to reduce discrimination against low-income housing voucher recipients; combating housing discrimination; issuing tax credits to renters; and expanding local rent control. Policies related to high-density development included: relaxing state environmental limits; giving neighborhoods a greater role in development decisions (a policy that is typically regarded as anti-development); implementing a state law requiring local governments to allow the construction of apartments; changing local laws to allow more construction; and allowing expanded development of housing in open space.¹³

¹³While we sought to identify a set of canonical policies pertaining to housing development, such policy questions rarely appear on the General Social Survey or similar major national surveys. Such surveys

To compare attitudes among comparable renters and homeowners across the nine policies, we estimated the following linear probability model predicting support for each policy:

$$Y_{ik} = \beta_0 + \beta_1 G_i + \beta_2 H_i + \beta_3 G_i \times H_i + \mathbf{X}_i' \delta + \epsilon_i \quad (1)$$

where Y_{ik} is a binary outcome variable indicating respondent i supports policy k , G_i is a binary variable coded 1 if the respondent opposed or was neutral with respect to a federal housing guarantee for all, and H_i was coded 1 if the respondent reported owning their home. Our two main independent variables were interacted to assess how self-interest and homeownership vary by policy type. A vector of additional covariates, \mathbf{X}_i , includes age, race, sex, and income.¹⁴ The reference category was constructed to represent liberal (pro-housing guarantee) renters who have both ideological and personal financial reasons to favor any measures to protect renters and increase housing affordability. The results for conservative and liberal homeowners are reported relative to this base group.

Table 3 presents contrasts between liberal and conservative homeowners, on the one hand, and liberal renters, on the other. It also shows the difference between liberal and conservative homeowners in the right-most column, along with associated standard errors.¹⁵ The items are reported in decreasing order as a function of the gap between liberal and conservative homeowners.

Regardless of ideology, homeowners differ from renters on most proposed policies addressing housing affordability. Where liberal and conservative homeowners disagree, they do so the most over the policies that least threaten neighborhood quality of life and home values, and the least over policies re-often ask about sentiment towards density versus sprawl (Pew Research Center, 2014), or ask about racial composition of one's neighbors (Farley et al., 1978, 1994) or levels of support for anti-discrimination laws around housing. Work by Hankinson (2018) and others has increased political scientists' attention to these issues. We adapted questions from a previous Golden State Poll housing-related survey as a baseline question set (Hoover Institution, 2015).

¹⁴We exclude partisanship from this analysis, since doing so could introduce serious additional post-treatment bias (Rosenbaum, 1984). The Online Appendix (p. 3) provides variable coding details.

¹⁵Full regression tables appear in the Online Appendix (p. 12).

Policy	Pro-guarantee homeowners	Anti- guarantee homeowners	Difference
Require accepting Section 8 tenants (state)	-0.06 (0.023)	-0.33 (0.023)	0.26 (0.019)
Pass rent control (local)	-0.09 (0.022)	-0.32 (0.023)	0.23 (0.020)
Tax credits for renters (state)	-0.22 (0.022)	-0.42 (0.022)	0.20 (0.019)
Require local govts allow apts (state)	-0.15 (0.023)	-0.31 (0.022)	0.17 (0.018)
Combat housing discrimination (state)	-0.04 (0.019)	-0.19 (0.021)	0.15 (0.018)
Change laws to allow more construction (local)	-0.10 (0.023)	-0.20 (0.023)	0.10 (0.019)
Give neighborhoods more voice (local)	-0.01 (0.018)	-0.07 (0.019)	0.07 (0.017)
Allow development of open space (local)	-0.10 (0.023)	-0.14 (0.023)	0.04 (0.020)
Relax environmental limits (state)	-0.01 (0.021)	-0.01 (0.022)	0.00 (0.017)

Table 3: Contrasts in support for various housing-related policy proposals, by homeownership and support for a federal housing guarantee. Point estimates for pro-guarantee (“liberal”) and anti-guarantee (“conservative”) homeowners reflect differences in the proportion supporting a policy, relative to liberal renters. We also report the difference of these two coefficients. Estimates are drawn from a linear probability model that accounts for basic demographics and contains an interaction of variables for homeownership and support for the housing guarantee. Robust standard errors are reported in parentheses (Zeileis, 2004).

lated to allowing expanded construction and development. Regulatory and redistributive policies such as housing vouchers, rent control, and renters’ tax credits only incidentally affect homeowners’ self-interest, leaving more room for liberals and conservatives to disagree. Liberals and conservatives agree more over development. The homeowner-renter gap is still large, but the liberal-conservative gap is only about half as large as the gap for policies targeted on the basis of income or renter status. For example, liberal homeowners are only 6 percentage points less likely than liberal renters to support requiring that landlords accept housing voucher tenants, while conservative homeowners are 33 percentage points less

likely than liberal renters to support such a policy. In contrast, liberal homeowners are 15 percentage points less likely than liberal renters to support requiring local governments to allow apartment construction, with conservative homeowners 31 percentage points less likely than liberal renters to support this policy.

On a few policy issues, liberal and conservative homeowners both align with comparably situated liberal renters. All respondents tend to support giving neighborhoods more voice and oppose relaxing environmental limits, for example.

These cross-sectional analyses suggest homeowner self-interest overcomes ideology when development poses a direct threat, but homeowners themselves are divided ideologically. While liberal homeowners are likely to provide some backing for housing aid policies, they are especially averse to development and mandates on development.

Experiment 1: Support for Development of High- and Low-Density Housing Types

Are liberal homeowners persistent in their opposition to housing development, or is it possible to persuade them to support housing development?

Our first survey experiment tests whether persuasive messages that highlight development's importance to housing affordability—which are often used in pro-housing development campaigns—change attitudes as expected. Respondents were randomly assigned to view one of several statements regarding the price effects of housing development and the possible benefits for lower- and middle-income families. These claims were attributed to experts (economists) and were meant to emulate messages used in housing development campaigns. Respondents were then asked to state their support for five different forms of housing, ranging from apartment buildings (potentially the most threatening to local quality of life) to single-family homes with large yards.

To assess how respondents' attitudes on local housing development shift in response to specific economic messages, we presented respondents a direct statement about economists' beliefs about the influence of additional housing development on housing prices. We varied the message to emphasize (or

omit) the benefits of additional housing development for low- and middle-income families. The four treatments included a no-information (“control”) condition, and three different active treatments that explain how building more housing in an area can reduce local housing costs:¹⁶

- *Expert*: “Economists have shown that building more housing in an area can reduce housing prices.” This treatment aimed to highlight the association between increased housing supply and housing prices, without mentioning any other factors. We expected that it would increase support for housing development among renters, who stand to benefit from lower prices, while reducing support among homeowners.
- *Expert, with “Escape Clause” Language*: “Economists have shown that building more housing in an area can reduce housing prices. Of course, housing prices are not the only issue affecting communities.” The added “escape clause” was an attempt to offset experimenter demand effects and invite respondents to simultaneously internalize and disregard our message (Zizzo, 2010; Mumolo and Peterson, 2018). We expect the effect of the escape clause to be largest among liberal homeowners potentially subject to cognitive dissonance.
- *Expert, with Additional Equality Language*: “Economists have shown that building more housing in an area can reduce housing prices. This can make communities more affordable to low-income and middle-income families.” This message linked market effects of additional housing supply to respondents’ support for economic redistribution and equality. We expected that this additional equality framing would boost support for dense housing among liberals relative to the control condition and the basic *expert* condition.

Respondents were then asked to indicate their level of support for the additional building of the five different housing types in their area: “Thinking about the possibility of more housing development in your area, do you support or oppose constructing more. . .”

- Apartment-only buildings

¹⁶One-fifth of the sample did not receive a survey prompt or view the housing construction questions, but did answer all remaining survey questions.

- Buildings that have both apartments and business spaces
- Multi-family housing (for example, townhomes or duplexes)
- Single-family houses in high-density subdivisions (small yards with neighboring houses close together)
- Single-family houses in low-density subdivisions (large yards with neighboring houses far apart)¹⁷

Individuals responded on a five-point Likert scale, and we analyze responses by treating these as continuous outcome variables.¹⁸

Table 4 presents the support level under the no-information condition (first column) and average treatment effect under the three active treatment conditions, along with standard errors. To simplify reporting, we report (1) support for apartment-only buildings, the greatest threat to homeowner self-interest and (2) single-family houses in low-density subdivisions, which represent a minimal threat.¹⁹ By analyzing different housing types, we were able to assess the degree to which the magnitude of the threat to self-interest interacted with support for housing for all.

Our results (top panel) demonstrate that most liberal homeowners do not support apartment housing development, and cannot be readily persuaded to support it. Reminding them of development's effects on prices prompts them to express attitudes identical to those of more conservative homeowners. When not given any additional information, liberal homeowners were split over whether to support additional apartment construction, expressing average support of 3.05 on a one-to-five scale. Conservative homeowners stated slightly less support (2.69). The "economist" (supply and demand) treatment had no effect on the already low support of conservative homeowners, but reduced liberal homeowners' support by 0.35 points ($p < 0.01$). This effect, which is -0.25 standard deviations of the mean in the control group,

¹⁷This exactly replicates language used in an April 2015 Hoover Institution Golden State Poll (Hoover Institution, 2015).

¹⁸Dichotomizing the outcome variables does not change our substantive conclusions.

¹⁹In the April 2015 Hoover Institution Golden State Poll on which our questions were based, large majorities of liberals and conservatives endorsed building of low-density single-family homes.

Support for Apartment-Only Buildings (High Threat to Homeowner Self-Interest)

Homeownership	Ideology	Outcome Mean	Average Treatment Effect		
		No-Info	Economist	Economist + Escape	Economist + Families
Homeowners:	Pro-Guarantee	3.05	-0.31** (0.11)	-0.11 (0.11)	-0.01 (0.12)
	Anti-Guarantee	2.69	0.04 (0.11)	0.00 (0.11)	-0.05 (0.11)
	Lib.-Con. Difference	0.35** (0.11)	-0.35* (0.16)	-0.11 (0.16)	0.04 (0.16)
Renters:	Pro-Guarantee	3.4	0.10 (0.12)	-0.019 (0.11)	0.172 (0.11)
	Anti-Guarantee	3.47	-0.13 (0.16)	-0.37* (0.18)	-0.18 (0.15)
	Lib.-Con. Difference	-0.06 (0.14)	0.23 (0.20)	0.35 (0.21)	0.35 (0.19)

Support for Low-Density Single-Family Housing (Low Threat to Homeowner Self-Interest)

Homeownership	Ideology	Outcome Mean	Average Treatment Effect		
		No-Info	Economist	Economist + Escape	Economist + Families
Homeowners:	Pro-Guarantee	3.87	0.01 (0.10)	0.12 (0.09)	0.00 (0.10)
	Anti-Guarantee	3.93	-0.16 (0.10)	-0.01 (0.10)	-0.10 (0.10)
	Lib.-Con. Difference	-0.06 (0.10)	0.17 (0.14)	0.13 (0.13)	0.10 (0.14)
Renters:	Pro-Guarantee	3.93	-0.06 (0.10)	0.043 (0.10)	-0.116 (0.10)
	Anti-Guarantee	3.95	-0.06 (0.15)	-0.20 (0.16)	-0.19 (0.15)
	Lib.-Con. Difference	-0.02 (0.13)	0.00 (0.18)	0.25 (0.19)	0.07 (0.18)

Table 4: Effect of various economic messages on support for apartment-only buildings (top) and low-density single-family housing (bottom) among metropolitan residents. Outcomes and average treatment effects are expressed on the five-point Likert scale. Robust standard errors are reported in parentheses. * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$

fully eliminates the gap between liberal and conservative homeowners. Adding escape-clause language removed most of the negative effect of the “economist” treatment among liberal homeowners, while adding information about additional housing’s benefits to “families” increased support more, but only to the point of restoring it to the same level as in the no-information group. As expected, support for apartment development among renters was greater at baseline, and the informational treatment had little additional effect on attitudes. Liberal and conservative renters both supported apartment development, and the various treatments mostly had minimal effects.²⁰

In contrast, the bottom panel of Table 4 displays the effects of our treatment on levels of support for low-density single-family housing, the most widely preferred housing form. Construction of more low-density single-family housing won broad support from liberals and conservatives, homeowners and renters, suggesting that their self-interest. Additional informational and persuasive messages had no detectable effect on the uniformly high support levels for any of the groups.²¹

Our results are consistent with “homevoting” behavior, but such behavior may arise from a mixture of considerations other than direct accounting of home values. For example, one reason for opposition to apartment housing is that individuals may impute the racial composition of apartment buildings, such that their racial attitudes are likely to be incorporated into home-value concerns. In this case, threats to self-interest are no less real for being a result of reaction to racial threat. While responses may be driven by racial affect, they may also be motivated by concerns about the trajectory of neighborhood

²⁰A key exception is that the “escape clause” language reduced support for apartments among anti-guarantee renters. It is possible this language encouraged them to consider issues other than housing costs, prompting them to consider negative features of apartment buildings.

²¹One point of concern is that those who distrusted economists (or experts generally) would not have responded positively and might have responded expressively (and negatively) to our treatments. In the Online Appendix (p. 15), we address this point on a Mechanical Turk sample. We found that those who distrusted economists were less responsive to the manipulation. However, the manipulation was effective, increasing by 10 percentage points the proportion identifying the “correct” expert position, and the study increased by 6 percentage points the proportion of respondents who themselves believed adding housing supply would reduce housing prices.

home values and quality of life (Ellen, 2000; Loury, 2002). Additionally, research on segregation has long noted that even mild preferences over racial composition can affect property values through market mechanisms (Schelling, 1971).

While we cannot isolate distinct effects of personal racial preferences and economic self-interest, we examined the extent to which variance in attitudes towards apartment housing is attributable to racial affect. We find that racial attitudes are only a partial factor in respondents' reaction to apartment buildings. We took two approaches to address this question.

In the first approach, we asked respondents a battery of three standard questions on black racial stereotypes (Peffley, Hurwitz and Sniderman, 1997). If respondents endorsed at least one of these negative stereotypes, we code them as having negative affect towards blacks. To measure the association between racial animus and support for dense housing, we focused on the apartment outcomes presented in Experiment 1. We restricted the sample to white respondents, then regressed support for building more apartments on the experimental conditions and multiple variables, including racial affect. The results, which are presented in full in the Online Appendix (p. 18), suggest that differences between homeowners and renters are minimally associated with racial affect. Among white respondents, endorsing a negative stereotype is associated with an insignificant 0.065 point decrease in support for apartments (on the 1-5 scale). For comparison, in the same regression, homeownership is associated with a 0.326 point decrease.

In the second approach to addressing the impact of racial preferences, we leverage data on the racial composition of areas that people recently moved to and from. In particular, we asked all respondents their current zip code, and we asked respondents who had moved in the past 5 years for their previous zip code. Using this sample of recent movers, we create an indicator variable for having moved to a less diverse zip code (defined as having a higher proportion of white residents, according to American Community Survey estimates). Those respondents have revealed a preference for living in communities that are more homogeneously white.²² We repeat the same regressions as before, except replacing the

²²We are not implying that their residential choices were *caused* by the racial composition of the community, just that they expressed a preference for the type of community that tends to have more white residents.

racial affect indicator with the indicator for moving to a less diverse zip code. Here, we find evidence that support for apartments is lower among whites who recently moved to a less diverse zip code. White homeowners who recently moved to a less diverse community show a 0.433 points lower support for building apartments, relative to whites who recently moved to a community that is equally or more diverse than their previous community (second column, Table A-9). It is notable that among the sample of all recent movers (first column, Table A-9), homeownership still predicts a large decrease in support for apartment buildings, even after controlling for our revealed preference measure of racial attitudes.

Overall, these results suggest that while racial attitudes may affect support for building high-density housing, they do not completely explain the gap between homeowners and renters. Other factors—such as economic self-interest and other quality-of-life concerns—have a meaningful role to play in the formation of attitudes towards housing development.

Experiment 2: Responses to Specific Apartment Proposals

Whereas in Experiment 1 we used persuasive informational messages to shift stated support for different housing forms, in Experiment 2 we presented each respondent a hypothetical localized threat to their self-interest: a proposed 120-unit apartment project in their community. We randomized the nature of this threat, varying each project's proximity to the respondent's home and whether units would either be rented at a market rate or half assigned to housing voucher recipients. Respondents were randomly assigned to one of six experimental conditions:

- *Control (No-Information)*: A generic description of a 120-unit apartment building, specifying neither distance nor the types of tenants served.
- *Low-Income*: The same 120-unit apartment, with 50% of units occupied by low-income housing voucher recipients. Distance was not specified.
- *Low-Income, Quarter Mile*: 50% of units occupied by voucher recipients, located one-quarter mile from the respondent's home.

Support for Proposal to Build 120-Unit Apartment Building

Homeownership	Ideology	Outcome Mean	Average Treatment Effect				
		No Info	Low Inc. No Dist.	Low Inc. 1/4 Mi.	Low Inc. 2 Mi.	Market 1/4 Mi.	Market 2 Mi.
Homeowners:	Pro-Guarantee	2.89	0.13 (0.13)	0.17 (0.13)	0.28* (0.13)	-0.12 (0.13)	0.06 (0.13)
	Anti-Guarantee	2.61	-0.27* (0.12)	-0.32** (0.12)	-0.19 (0.11)	-0.23 (0.12)	0.36** (0.12)
	Pro-Anti Difference	0.28* (0.13)	0.41* (0.18)	0.49** (0.18)	0.47** (0.17)	0.11 (0.18)	-0.30 (0.18)
Renters:	Pro-Guarantee	3.68	-0.06 (0.13)	-0.28* (0.13)	0.105 (0.12)	-0.22 (0.12)	-0.39** (0.12)
	Anti-Guarantee	3.02	0.03 (0.18)	-0.36* (0.18)	-0.03 (0.18)	0.16 (0.18)	0.06 (0.18)
	Pro-Anti Difference	0.66** (0.15)	-0.09 (0.22)	0.08 (0.22)	0.14 (0.22)	-0.38 (0.22)	-0.45* (0.22)

Table 5: Differences in stated support for different hypothetical apartment building proposals (on a 5-point scale), by homeownership and support for a federal housing guarantee. ** $p < 0.01$; * $p < 0.05$

- *Low-Income, Two Miles:* 50% of units occupied by voucher recipients, and located two miles away.
- *Market Rate, Quarter Mile:* Apartments rented at a market rate, and located one-quarter mile away.
- *Market Rate, Two Miles:* Apartments rented at a market rate, and located two miles away.

The outcome variable was again a 5-point Likert scale indicating support or opposition.²³

Table 5 displays how homeownership and support for a federal housing guarantee interacted to moderate support for various apartment development scenarios. We again find evidence that homeowners are less supportive than renters, regardless of their attitudes towards a federal housing guarantee.

Conservative homeowners consistently opposed all varieties of apartment housing except for far-away, market-rate apartments. The generic 120-unit apartment building described in the no-information (control) condition received average support of 2.61 on the 5-point scale. Describing the apartment building as being occupied by housing voucher recipients (without any distance-to-project information)

²³Our design emulates key features of a survey experiment presented in Hankinson (2018). Several of the possible treatment arms in a full-factorial design were excluded to preserve power, but we are still able to make relevant pairwise comparisons.

decreased support to 2.33 ($p = .02$, two-tailed test with robust standard errors). The only proposal with higher support than the control condition was a market rate apartment building two miles away, which garnered average support of 2.97 ($p < .01$), an increase of 0.3 standard deviations.

Pro-guarantee (liberal) homeowners were slightly more supportive of apartment housing, but substantially less so than renters. Average support for a generic (control-condition) 120-unit apartment building was 2.89 on the 1-5 scale, with roughly 40% of pro-guarantee homeowners answering that they would “somewhat” or “strongly” support such a proposal. Liberal homeowners were only slightly more support of housing occupied by voucher recipients. Relative to the control condition, pro-guarantee homeowners’ support increased by 0.17 ($p < .1$) and 0.28 points ($p = .03$), respectively, for developments located a quarter mile or two miles from their home. However, when the developments were described as being market-rate housing, liberal homeowners’ support either decreased slightly (effect size of -0.12 in the quarter-mile condition) or increased very slightly (effect size of 0.06 in the two-mile condition), though neither of these shift are statistically significant.

Liberals’ increased support for low-income apartments requires explanation that cannot be entirely provided by our experiment. Liberal homeowners asked about an apartment “in their community” in the abstract may have inferred higher risks in the absence of information. To be clear, even the low-income apartments in our design were mixed income: voucher recipients would occupy only half the units, possibly presenting a minimal threat to liberal homeowners. This still indicates that liberal homeowners are more tolerant of voucher recipients than they are of market-rate housing. Another possible explanation for our results is that they are expressive: liberals asked about housing for low-income persons give the ideologically correct and socially desirable answer, thinking that they would never tolerate such housing in their neighborhoods. But even these factors are insufficient to prompt liberal homeowners to match liberal renters’ support for specific apartment development.

As in Experiment 1, one important mechanism that we may want to consider is that opposition to apartments arises from the different racial makeup of homeowners and renters. If true, we would expect white homeowners, and white homeowners who hold prejudiced racial attitudes, to apply stereotypes to apartment buildings, and especially low-income apartment buildings, that might be occupied by racial

minorities. To address this point, we replicated Table 5 for three different groups: white, black and all nonwhite respondents (Online Appendix Tables A-10, A-11, and A-12). These results demonstrate that race is a minimal moderating factor after we account for homeownership and attitudes towards a federal housing guarantee. In fact, pro-guarantee black homeowners were, if anything, *less* supportive of apartment development than pro-guarantee white homeowners—by a difference of 0.3 points on the 5-point scale (albeit too small to be statistically significant at standard levels). Similarly, anti-black racial prejudice among whites does not appear to be driving our results: white homeowners who endorsed a federal guarantee of housing for all but agreed with anti-black stereotypes were as supportive as pro-guarantee homeowners of a 120-unit apartment building in the no-information condition (3.37 versus 3.01), but imprecise estimates suggest that liberals who stated agreement with racial stereotypes were less supportive of apartments after being given any information. (This may reflect the lower sophistication of individuals who openly admit agreement with racial prejudices. See Online Appendix Tables A-13 and A-14.) While sample sizes are too small to permit pairwise comparisons, we also examine attitudes among recent movers to more or less white zip codes. Pro- and anti-guarantee homeowners who moved to more white zip codes were, on average, less favorable towards apartments in the control group (2.75 and 2.71 respectively). Homeowners who moved to more diverse zip codes appear more divided (3.27 versus 2.86), but not at a statistically significant level due to small sample sizes. Of course, instead of reflecting personal racial preferences, such moving behavior may reflect households preferences and capability to move to low-diversity neighborhoods that score higher on a range of valence considerations, including local public goods provision. (See Online Appendix, Tables A-15 and A-16.) However, overall, race does not appear to be the central mechanism driving liberal homeowner behavior.

Conclusion

Are Americans blind to self-interest when they form policy attitudes? Previous work has suggested that economic self-interest has little bearing on vote choice or on many policy attitudes. Scholarship built on this research often neglects an important proviso that did appear in previous work: that threats to self-interest that are objectively large and appear in Americans' daily lives can be a central driver of

policy attitudes (Citrin and Green, 1990; Chong, Citrin and Conley, 2001). Such threats are especially likely to appear in the context of local political institutions, and especially around the politics of land use and development. Our results indicate that homeowners discard their ideology when presented with questions of local development policy that directly threaten their interests. Our findings also reveal the extent of variance in attitudes on diverse “liberal” policy solutions to the housing affordability crisis. Homeowners who support the broadly articulated goal of a federal guarantee of housing for all do, in fact, support specific policies that aid renters and the poor, as these programs disperse costs to taxpayers and pose little direct threat to their home values or quality of life. Liberal homeowners are less consistently opposed to apartments and other dense developments than are conservative homeowners, but remain far more opposed to dense development than liberal renters.

Our two survey experiments demonstrate consistent differences between renters and homeowners, and liberal homeowners are critical to maintaining such differences. When we prompted liberal homeowners to think about the market implications of building more housing in their area, their support for apartment development declined so much that they became indistinguishable from conservative homeowners. Reminding liberal homeowners of the welfare implications of new housing offset the supply-and-demand message’s initial effects, but did not increase net support. When we presented more specific hypothetical housing proposals in our second experiment, we again found a large homeowner-renter gap, which could be manipulated somewhat by varying the economic segment served by the apartments and the apartment’s distance. This experiment did elicit stated support from some liberal homeowners, who were more likely to support local apartments partially occupied by low-income recipients. Still, liberal homeowners remain less supportive than liberal renters, and most of the time are less supportive than conservative renters.

One obstacle to establishing liberal support for housing development is that the politics of housing do not neatly fit onto the left-right dimension that now defines party politics. The politics of housing are concerned with geographic access to economic opportunity. On the question of allowing housing development, adherence to the *principle* of housing for all only weakly correlates with support for the local housing development program needed to pursue it. Our findings also counter much of the conventional

wisdom about liberals' support for urbanism. While liberals have been shown to express a stronger taste for dense urban neighborhoods on surveys (Pew Research Center, 2014), they need not support *building* of additional urban housing forms in their communities. If they are homeowners, they are especially likely to oppose measures that might urbanize their communities. Our nationalized partisan environment (Hopkins, 2018) does little to shape debates over high-stakes local housing questions. Indeed, a likely cause of the disconnect between economic liberalism and support for housing development is that party elites—especially Democrats—have shied away from making housing development a national issue. On issues from abortion to taxation, cross-pressured voters must choose between two parties. The pro-life economic liberal or the economically conservative social liberal faces a choice based on issue ownership of national issues (Petrocik, 1996). But the absence of national debate over housing leaves Americans with none of the usual partisan heuristics for determining the correct position (Sniderman and Stiglitz, 2012). Recent policy debates in California and elsewhere suggest that, in the absence of clear party position taking, the liberal electorate's divisions are likely to remain, until partisan elites take clearer public positions.

Finally, our study develops insights for housing policy advocates seeking to support or oppose housing development. Such advocates often believe that Americans' seemingly inconsistent views over housing policy result from homeowners misunderstanding the functioning of housing markets and that they would see the need for more dense housing construction in their area if only they were reminded of its advantages. Our results confirm political scientists' skepticism about the value of corrective education (Nyhan and Reifler, 2010). Our findings, focused on the population of metropolitan areas in which such development controversies are focused, offer little hope that exposing voters to more expert information or facts about local housing markets will meaningfully shift attitudes towards more support for housing development. Even if economic self-interest does not fully overcome ideological principle, homeownership leads Americans to perceive threats of sufficient magnitude that their political commitments become, at best, secondary considerations.

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Online Appendix for “Where Self-Interest Trumps
Ideology: Liberal Homeowners and Local Opposition to
Housing Development”

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Survey Question Wording

Exact wordings for survey questions referenced in the paper, along with recoding rules, are listed here.

Age. *What is your age group?*

- *Under 18*
- *18-24 years*
- *25-34 years*
- *35-44 years*
- *45-54 years*
- *55-64 years*
- *65-74 years*
- *75 years and up*

Income. *Now, for statistical purposes only, we have a question about your income. Last year (in 2016), what was your total family income from all sources, before taxes.*

- *Less than 15,000*
- *\$15,000 - 24,999*
- *\$25,000 - 34,999*
- *\$35,000 - 49,999*
- *\$50,000 74,999*
- *\$75,000 99,999*
- *\$100,000 - 119,999*

- *\$120,000 - 149,999*
- *\$150,000 or greater*

For those who answered above \$150,000, we asked a follow-up question: *We see you make over \$150,000. Can you tell us which best represents your total family income before taxes?*

- *\$150,000-\$199,999*
- *\$200,000-\$299,999*
- *\$300,000-\$399,999*
- *\$400,000 or greater*
- *Prefer not to answer*

In analyses, we code income to be the midpoint of each category, with a top-code of \$425,000 and a bottom-code of \$10,000.

Federal Housing Guarantee. *Some people say the federal government should ensure that all Americans have housing. Others say that shouldn't be a concern of the federal government.*

- *1–Yes, the federal government should ensure that all Americans have housing*
- *2*
- *3*
- *4*
- *5–No, ensuring all Americans have housing should not be a concern of the federal government*

We code people as “pro-housing-guarantee” if they respond 1 or 2 and “anti-housing-guarantee” otherwise.

Homeownership. *Which of the following most closely describes your current housing?*

- *I own it*
- *I rent it*
- *I neither own nor rent it (live with a home owner)*

When we refer to “renters,” we group together all people who do not own their home.

Race/Ethnicity. *What is your race/ethnicity? (Please select all that apply.)*

- *White/Caucasian*
- *Black/African American*
- *Hispanic/Latino*
- *Asian*
- *Native American*
- *Pacific Islander*
- *Other*

In analyses and in quota sampling, we collapse the responses to the following categories: White, Black, Asian, Hispanic/Latino, and Other.

Gender. *What is your gender?*

- *Male*
- *Female*
- *Neither of these apply*
- *I prefer not to answer*

Education. *What is the highest level of education you have completed?*

- *Less than High School*
- *High School / GED*
- *Some College*
- *2-year College Degree*
- *4-year College Degree*
- *Masters Degree*
- *Doctoral Degree*
- *Professional Degree (JD, MD)*

In analyses, we include an indicator for having at least a 4-year college degree.

Policy Changes. We analyze attitudes on a variety of potential policy changes. We asked respondents to indicate whether they *Strongly support*, *somewhat support*, *Neither support nor oppose*, *Somewhat oppose* or *Strongly oppose* a series of potential changes to state or local policy. We code responses as 1 if they *Strongly support* or *Somewhat support* the policy change, and 0 otherwise.

Some people have proposed public policies that would affect housing in your state. Considering a few of these ideas, do you support or oppose your state...

- *Relaxing environmental limits to allow building of more housing*
- *Financing regional public transportation systems to enable people to live farther from work*
- *Providing additional tax credits for renters*
- *Requiring landlords to accept tenants who use low-income (Section 8) vouchers to pay rent*
- *Requiring local governments to allow more apartment housing*
- *Fining landlords and real estate agents that discriminate by race or ethnicity*

Do you support or oppose your local government. . .

- *Allowing more housing to be built in undeveloped open space*
- *Changing residential and business zoning laws to allow more housing construction*
- *Passing rent control*
- *Supporting expansion of bus or rail service in my community*
- *Giving neighborhoods more voice over development proposals*

Survey Quota Targets

We recruited a sample of $N = 4,000$ respondents from the largest 20 Metropolitan Statistical Areas in the United States using Qualtrics's online panel. As noted in the main text, we quote-sampled to match the within-Census region marginal distributions on the following variables: age (18-24, 25-44, 45-64 and 65+), sex, race/ethnicity (Asian only, black only, non-Hispanic white only, Hispanic, and multiracial/other), income (5 categories with a top code at \$75,000 per year), and MSA. The following tables show the targeted quotas and the actual values from the obtained sample.

Region	Target	Target N	Target Pct	N	Pct	Diff, %
Midwest	AGE: 18 - 24	87	13%	84	12%	-1%
Midwest	AGE: 25 - 44	237	35%	245	35%	0%
Midwest	AGE: 45 - 64	239	35%	244	35%	0%
Midwest	AGE: 65+	121	18%	128	18%	1%
Midwest	INCOME: \$15,000 to \$24,999	55	8%	60	9%	0%
Midwest	INCOME: \$25,000 to \$34,999	78	11%	81	12%	0%
Midwest	INCOME: \$35,000 to \$49,999	91	13%	94	13%	0%
Midwest	INCOME: \$50,000 to \$74,999	127	19%	130	19%	0%
Midwest	INCOME: \$75,000 to \$99,999+	260	38%	267	38%	0%
Midwest	INCOME: Under \$15,000	73	11%	69	10%	-1%
Midwest	MSA: Chicago-Naperville-Elgin, IL-IN-WI	323	47%	350	50%	3%
Midwest	MSA: Detroit-Warren-Dearborn, MI	154	23%	144	21%	-2%
Midwest	MSA: Minneapolis-St. Paul-Bloomington, MN-WI	113	17%	127	18%	2%
Midwest	MSA: St. Louis, MO-IL	94	14%	80	11%	-2%
Midwest	RACE: asian only	39	6%	41	6%	0%
Midwest	RACE: black only	110	16%	113	16%	0%
Midwest	RACE: hispanic	67	10%	69	10%	0%
Midwest	RACE: other/multiracial	11	2%	12	2%	0%
Midwest	RACE: white only	458	67%	466	66%	0%
Midwest	SEX: Female	354	52%	363	52%	0%
Midwest	SEX: Male	330	48%	334	48%	-1%

Table A-1: Quota targets and actual sample for included MSAs in the Midwest Census Region.

Northeast	AGE: 18 - 24	115	12%	116	12%	0%
Northeast	AGE: 25 - 44	330	35%	339	35%	0%
Northeast	AGE: 45 - 64	328	35%	337	35%	0%
Northeast	AGE: 65+	172	18%	176	18%	0%
Northeast	INCOME: \$15,000 to \$24,999	63	7%	60	6%	0%
Northeast	INCOME: \$25,000 to \$34,999	91	10%	83	9%	-1%
Northeast	INCOME: \$35,000 to \$49,999	120	13%	124	13%	0%
Northeast	INCOME: \$50,000 to \$74,999	156	17%	161	17%	0%
Northeast	INCOME: \$75,000 to \$99,999+	412	44%	468	48%	5%
Northeast	INCOME: Under \$15,000	102	11%	72	7%	-3%
Northeast	MSA: Boston-Cambridge-Newton, MA-NH	126	13%	138	14%	1%
Northeast	MSA: New York-Newark-Jersey City, NY-NJ-PA	531	56%	579	60%	4%
Northeast	MSA: Philadelphia-Camden-Wilmington, PA-NJ-DE	288	31%	251	26%	-5%
Northeast	RACE: asian only	83	9%	86	9%	0%
Northeast	RACE: black only	141	15%	145	15%	0%
Northeast	RACE: hispanic	143	15%	147	15%	0%
Northeast	RACE: other/multiracial	19	2%	19	2%	0%
Northeast	RACE: white only	560	59%	571	59%	0%
Northeast	SEX: Female	489	52%	494	51%	-1%
Northeast	SEX: Male	456	48%	468	48%	0%

Table A-2: Quota targets and actual sample for included MSAs in the Northeast Census Region.

South	AGE: 18 - 24	140	12%	93	8%	-4%
South	AGE: 25 - 44	469	39%	481	41%	2%
South	AGE: 45 - 64	385	32%	395	34%	1%
South	AGE: 65+	193	16%	198	17%	1%
South	INCOME: \$15,000 to \$24,999	99	8%	94	8%	0%
South	INCOME: \$25,000 to \$34,999	118	10%	121	10%	0%
South	INCOME: \$35,000 to \$49,999	147	12%	151	13%	1%
South	INCOME: \$50,000 to \$74,999	203	17%	208	18%	1%
South	INCOME: \$75,000 to \$99,999+	493	42%	506	43%	2%
South	INCOME: Under \$15,000	127	11%	87	7%	-3%
South	MSA: Atlanta-Sandy Springs-Roswell, GA	159	13%	177	15%	2%
South	MSA: Dallas-Fort Worth-Arlington, TX	201	17%	232	20%	3%
South	MSA: Houston-The Woodlands-Sugar Land, TX	188	16%	200	17%	1%
South	MSA: Miami-Fort Lauderdale-West Palm Beach,	188	16%	204	17%	2%
South	MSA: Tampa-St. Petersburg-Clearwater, FL	85	7%	110	9%	2%
South	MSA: Washington-Arlington-Alexandria, DC-VA-MD	365	31%	244	21%	-10%
South	RACE: asian only	71	6%	73	6%	0%
South	RACE: black only	279	23%	286	25%	1%
South	RACE: hispanic	244	21%	251	22%	1%
South	RACE: other/multiracial	29	2%	30	3%	0%
South	RACE: white only	565	48%	527	45%	-2%
South	SEX: Female	614	52%	630	54%	2%
South	SEX: Male	573	48%	536	46%	-2%

Table A-3: Quota targets and actual sample for included MSAs in the South Census Region.

West	AGE: 18 - 24	151	0.1276	131	11%	-2%
West	AGE: 25 - 44	444	0.3749	456	38%	1%
West	AGE: 45 - 64	391	0.3304	402	34%	1%
West	AGE: 65+	198	0.167	202	17%	0%
West	INCOME: \$15,000 to \$24,999	92	0.0774	108	9%	1%
West	INCOME: \$25,000 to \$34,999	136	0.1149	134	11%	0%
West	INCOME: \$35,000 to \$49,999	157	0.1322	161	14%	0%
West	INCOME: \$50,000 to \$74,999	198	0.167	203	17%	0%
West	INCOME: \$75,000 to \$99,999+	472	0.3986	484	41%	1%
West	INCOME: Under \$15,000	130	0.1099	101	8%	-3%
West	MSA: Denver-Aurora-Lakewood, CO	91	0.0769	90	8%	0%
West	MSA: Los Angeles-Long Beach-Anaheim, CA	431	0.3639	455	38%	2%
West	MSA: Phoenix-Mesa-Scottsdale, AZ	138	0.1166	152	13%	1%
West	MSA: Riverside-San Bernardino-Ontario, CA	139	0.1174	142	12%	0%
West	MSA: San Diego-Carlsbad, CA	99	0.0836	102	9%	0%
West	MSA: San Francisco-Oakland-Hayward, CA	163	0.138	143	12%	-2%
West	MSA: Seattle-Tacoma-Bellevue, WA	123	0.1037	105	9%	-2%
West	RACE: asian only	157	0.1326	161	14%	0%
West	RACE: black only	74	0.0624	76	6%	0%
West	RACE: hispanic	350	0.2954	359	30%	1%
West	RACE: other/multiracial	56	0.0472	58	5%	0%
West	RACE: white only	547	0.4624	537	45%	-1%
West	SEX: Female	605	0.5108	621	52%	1%
West	SEX: Male	579	0.4892	564	47%	-2%

Table A-4: Quota targets and actual sample for included MSAs in the West Census Region.

Observational Regression Tables

Here we report the full regression results predicting support for local and state policy changes. These regression tables correspond to the models summarized in Table 3. Each column corresponds to a different policy outcome, in the following order:

Model 1: Combating housing discrimination (state)

Model 2: Giving neighborhoods more voice (local)

Model 3: Relax environmental limits (state)

Model 4: Require accepting Section 8 tenants (state)

Model 5: Passing rent control (local)

Model 6: Tax credits for renters (state)

Model 7: Allowing development of open space (local)

Model 8: Changing laws to allow more construction (local)

Model 9: Require local governments to allow more apartment construction (state)

The estimates are presented in Table A-5.

Additionally, Table A-6 shows similar regressions, except the outcome variables and the housing guarantee scale are not dichotomized. In these regressions, the outcome variable is measured on a 1 to 5 oppose-support Likert scale. For comparability to the other results, the housing guarantee variable is coded such that 1 indicates support of a federal housing guarantee and 5 indicates opposition.

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6	Model 7	Model 8	Model 9
	Housing discrim	Neighborhood voice	Relax env. limits	Sec. 8	Rent con- trol	Renter tax credit	Develop open space	Allow con- struction	State inter- vention
Anti-housing-guarantee	-0.146*** (0.025)	-0.112*** (0.024)	-0.0002 (0.025)	-0.272*** (0.026)	-0.150*** (0.026)	-0.158*** (0.026)	-0.107*** (0.027)	-0.110*** (0.027)	-0.206*** (0.026)
Homeowner	-0.046** (0.019)	-0.011 (0.018)	-0.003 (0.021)	-0.057** (0.023)	-0.091*** (0.022)	-0.223*** (0.022)	-0.101*** (0.023)	-0.100*** (0.023)	-0.147*** (0.023)
Homeowner × Anti-housing-guarantee	-0.004 (0.031)	0.044 (0.029)	-0.001 (0.031)	0.009 (0.032)	-0.080** (0.032)	-0.038 (0.033)	0.064* (0.033)	0.011 (0.035)	0.040 (0.032)
Age: 25-34	-0.012 (0.029)	-0.017 (0.027)	0.025 (0.030)	0.018 (0.030)	0.106*** (0.031)	0.078** (0.031)	0.012 (0.031)	0.035 (0.031)	-0.049 (0.031)
Age: 35-44	0.024 (0.030)	0.014 (0.027)	-0.027 (0.030)	-0.016 (0.031)	0.112*** (0.031)	0.084*** (0.031)	-0.055* (0.031)	0.009 (0.032)	-0.083*** (0.031)
Age: 45-54	0.068** (0.030)	0.023 (0.028)	-0.019 (0.032)	-0.042 (0.032)	0.066*** (0.032)	0.117*** (0.032)	-0.025 (0.033)	0.026 (0.033)	-0.082** (0.032)
Age: 55-64	0.077*** (0.030)	0.022 (0.027)	-0.093*** (0.030)	-0.056* (0.031)	0.058* (0.031)	0.062** (0.031)	-0.066** (0.032)	-0.022 (0.032)	-0.087*** (0.031)
Age: 65-74	0.116*** (0.030)	0.049* (0.028)	-0.120*** (0.031)	-0.036 (0.032)	0.064** (0.033)	0.043 (0.032)	-0.037 (0.033)	0.002 (0.033)	-0.097*** (0.032)
Age: 75+	0.065 (0.048)	0.038 (0.045)	-0.233*** (0.038)	-0.049 (0.049)	-0.013 (0.049)	-0.022 (0.047)	-0.051 (0.053)	-0.071 (0.049)	-0.116** (0.046)
Race: Black	0.038* (0.020)	0.028 (0.018)	0.059*** (0.021)	0.012 (0.023)	0.047** (0.023)	0.045** (0.022)	0.129*** (0.023)	0.028 (0.023)	0.060*** (0.022)
Race: Hispanic	0.021 (0.019)	0.054*** (0.017)	0.057*** (0.020)	0.016 (0.020)	0.085*** (0.020)	0.056*** (0.020)	0.109*** (0.021)	0.053** (0.021)	0.044** (0.020)
Race: Asian	0.019 (0.025)	-0.014 (0.025)	0.027 (0.026)	0.020 (0.027)	0.020 (0.029)	0.030 (0.028)	0.080*** (0.029)	0.039 (0.029)	0.077*** (0.028)
Race: Other	0.064 (0.040)	-0.050 (0.043)	-0.019 (0.042)	-0.048 (0.045)	-0.067 (0.043)	0.024 (0.044)	0.021 (0.049)	-0.058 (0.045)	-0.043 (0.044)
Educ: BA or higher	0.049*** (0.016)	-0.009 (0.014)	-0.049*** (0.016)	0.003 (0.017)	-0.022 (0.017)	0.013 (0.016)	-0.004 (0.017)	-0.018 (0.017)	-0.007 (0.016)
Male	0.024* (0.014)	-0.027** (0.013)	0.056*** (0.014)	0.033** (0.015)	-0.066*** (0.015)	0.025* (0.015)	0.052*** (0.016)	0.090*** (0.016)	0.056*** (0.015)
Income (log)	0.067*** (0.010)	0.035*** (0.010)	-0.028*** (0.010)	-0.042*** (0.011)	-0.022** (0.011)	-0.017 (0.011)	-0.020* (0.011)	-0.001 (0.011)	-0.019* (0.011)
Constant	-0.027 (0.101)	0.434*** (0.097)	0.621*** (0.102)	1.045*** (0.106)	0.854*** (0.108)	0.772*** (0.108)	0.799*** (0.112)	0.462*** (0.109)	0.774*** (0.106)
N	4055	4055	4055	4055	4055	4055	4055	4055	4055
R-squared	0.056	0.023	0.035	0.101	0.099	0.115	0.038	0.038	0.087

**p < .01; *p < .05

Table A-5: Full regression results predicting support for changing various laws related to development. Income is recorded in thousands of dollars. See appendix text for description of outcome variables. Robust standard errors are reported in parentheses.

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6	Model 7	Model 8	Model 9
	Housing discrim	Neighborhood voice	Relax env. limits	Sec. 8	Rent control	Renter tax credit	Develop open space	Allow construction	State intervention
Anti-housing-guarantee (0-1)	-0.158** (0.029)	-0.113** (0.020)	0.054* (0.026)	-0.349** (0.025)	-0.218** (0.025)	-0.184** (0.027)	-0.095** (0.025)	-0.094** (0.023)	-0.216** (0.025)
Homeowner	-0.024 (0.016)	-0.004 (0.011)	-0.013 (0.016)	-0.050** (0.014)	-0.053** (0.013)	-0.129** (0.014)	-0.055** (0.015)	-0.058** (0.014)	-0.091** (0.014)
Homeowner ×	-0.043 (0.035)	0.038 (0.024)	-0.010 (0.032)	0.005 (0.031)	-0.084** (0.030)	-0.092** (0.032)	0.023 (0.031)	-0.012 (0.029)	-0.014 (0.031)
Anti-housing-guarantee (0-1)	0.003 (0.021)	-0.009 (0.014)	0.032 (0.019)	-0.001 (0.017)	0.072** (0.016)	0.050** (0.018)	0.005 (0.018)	0.034* (0.017)	-0.021 (0.017)
Age: 25-34	0.021 (0.022)	0.002 (0.014)	-0.011 (0.020)	-0.029 (0.018)	0.068** (0.017)	0.046* (0.018)	-0.040* (0.018)	0.007 (0.018)	-0.045** (0.017)
Age: 35-44	0.060** (0.022)	0.016 (0.015)	-0.027 (0.021)	-0.036 (0.019)	0.043* (0.017)	0.078** (0.019)	-0.047* (0.020)	0.0001 (0.019)	-0.067** (0.018)
Age: 45-54	0.069** (0.022)	0.011 (0.014)	-0.080** (0.020)	-0.048** (0.018)	0.024 (0.017)	0.040* (0.019)	-0.078** (0.019)	-0.035 (0.018)	-0.072** (0.018)
Age: 55-64	0.099** (0.022)	0.035* (0.015)	-0.120** (0.021)	-0.028 (0.019)	0.026 (0.019)	0.035 (0.019)	-0.059** (0.020)	-0.025 (0.019)	-0.081** (0.019)
Age: 65-74	0.072* (0.034)	0.030 (0.024)	-0.166** (0.029)	0.005 (0.030)	0.021 (0.030)	0.017 (0.029)	-0.035 (0.030)	-0.048 (0.028)	-0.099** (0.030)
Age: 75+	0.040** (0.015)	0.036** (0.010)	0.080** (0.014)	0.014 (0.014)	0.039** (0.012)	0.033* (0.013)	0.103** (0.014)	0.036** (0.013)	0.046** (0.013)
Race: Black	0.006 (0.014)	0.038** (0.009)	0.042** (0.014)	-0.003 (0.013)	0.053** (0.012)	0.034** (0.013)	0.068** (0.013)	0.021 (0.012)	0.006 (0.012)
Race: Hispanic	0.019 (0.017)	-0.002 (0.012)	0.049** (0.018)	0.041** (0.016)	0.024 (0.016)	0.038* (0.015)	0.069** (0.017)	0.040** (0.015)	0.068** (0.015)
Race: Asian	0.098** (0.026)	-0.010 (0.021)	0.015 (0.028)	-0.003 (0.028)	-0.024 (0.028)	0.041 (0.028)	0.037 (0.026)	-0.003 (0.023)	0.002 (0.025)
Race: Other	0.038** (0.011)	-0.002 (0.008)	-0.061** (0.011)	0.0004 (0.010)	-0.025** (0.009)	-0.001 (0.010)	-0.003 (0.010)	-0.014 (0.010)	-0.004 (0.010)
Educ: BA or higher	0.025* (0.010)	-0.018* (0.007)	0.031** (0.010)	0.023* (0.009)	-0.042** (0.009)	0.018 (0.009)	0.043** (0.010)	0.050** (0.009)	0.021* (0.009)
Male	0.045** (0.007)	0.008 (0.005)	-0.034** (0.007)	-0.031** (0.007)	-0.020** (0.006)	-0.011 (0.007)	-0.017* (0.007)	-0.001 (0.006)	-0.012* (0.006)
Income (log)	0.257** (0.074)	0.713** (0.050)	0.823** (0.071)	1.047** (0.066)	0.945** (0.063)	0.808** (0.067)	0.832** (0.067)	0.607** (0.062)	0.826** (0.063)
Constant	4055 0.066	4055 0.034	4055 0.072	4055 0.179	4055 0.185	4055 0.167	4055 0.064	4055 0.057	4055 0.148
N									
R-squared									

** p < .01; * p < .05

Table A-6: Regression results predicting support for changing various laws related to development. The outcome variable ranges from 0 (strongly oppose) to 1 (strongly support). The federal housing guarantee item is on a 0-1 scale where 0 indicates support for a federal housing guarantee and 1 indicates opposition. Income is recorded in thousands of dollars. See appendix text for description of outcome variables. Robust standard errors are reported in parentheses.

Mechanical Turk Survey for Manipulation Checks and Trust in Economists

As noted in footnote 21 of the main text, we conducted a follow-up survey on Mechanical Turk to assess two possible explanations for our mostly null results. First, it might have been the case that our treatment primes were not sufficiently strong. Second, respondents may be skeptical of experts, which would dampen the effects of our primes which appeal to experts.

To test the first possibility, we took two approaches. We replicated the main experiment with the original “economist” prime, along with an extended “explanation” prime that explained the economic logic of why increasing housing supply should decrease prices. We expected that this prime would be stronger than a mere appeal to experts. Additionally, we included explicit manipulation checks to assess the effect of the primes on (a) respondents’ own beliefs about the relationship between housing development and prices and (b) respondents’ beliefs about what economists say on the same question. If the treatment prime is weak, then we will not be able to reject the null hypothesis that the treatment has no effect on these manipulation check measures.

To test the second possibility, we included the following question prior to the experiment:

“Which of the following statements best capture your view of economists? You may select more than one. (a) They’re generally unbiased (accurate and objective); (b) They’re often biased for business reasons; (c) They’re often biased for political reasons; (d) They’re often biased for some other reason.”

Respondents who selected any of the bias answers are classified as “low-trust,” while those who selected that economists are generally unbiased are classified as “high-trust.”

First, in Table A-7 we report the results of the manipulation checks, for the full sample and by the trust variable. Generally, the treatments had a small effect on respondents’ own beliefs but had a relatively large effect on their beliefs about economists’ views. We take this as evidence the treatments are informative, but that respondents are resistant to updating their own views.

Second, we report the results of the replication. Figure A-1 shows the same patterns of response among homeowners and renters that we document in the main text. More importantly, Figure A-2 shows the results split by trust in economists. Among people who think that economists are biased, we again see mostly null results. Among people who think economists are unbiased, however, the treatments appear

to have a stronger effect. In particular, the primes induce people to decrease their support of low-density housing relative to the controls. Interestingly, the vanilla “economist” prime has a negative effect on support for building apartment-only buildings, but the “explanation” prime has a positive effect. It also has a positive effect on support for mixed-use housing and townhouses.

	<i>Dependent variable:</i>					
	Respondent’s Own Beliefs			Beliefs about economists		
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Economist treatment	0.060*	0.031	0.074*	0.101***	0.055	0.121***
	(0.035)	(0.064)	(0.042)	(0.034)	(0.059)	(0.041)
Explanation treatment	0.036	0.073	0.017	0.102***	0.104*	0.098**
	(0.035)	(0.062)	(0.042)	(0.033)	(0.056)	(0.041)
Constant	0.460***	0.504***	0.440***	0.602***	0.669***	0.571***
	(0.025)	(0.046)	(0.030)	(0.025)	(0.043)	(0.030)
Sample:	Full	High trust	Low trust	Full	High trust	Low trust
Observations	1,223	385	838	1,223	385	838
R ²	0.002	0.004	0.004	0.010	0.009	0.012

Robust standard errors in parentheses

*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table A-7: The outcome variable is an indicator for whether respondents believe building more housing will reduce prices (columns 1-3) and whether respondents think that *economists* believe building more housing will reduce prices. The “low-trust” subsample includes people who said economists were biased in at least one way. The “high-trust” subsample includes people who did not indicate that they thought economists were biased. Models estimated via OLS with robust standard errors in parentheses.

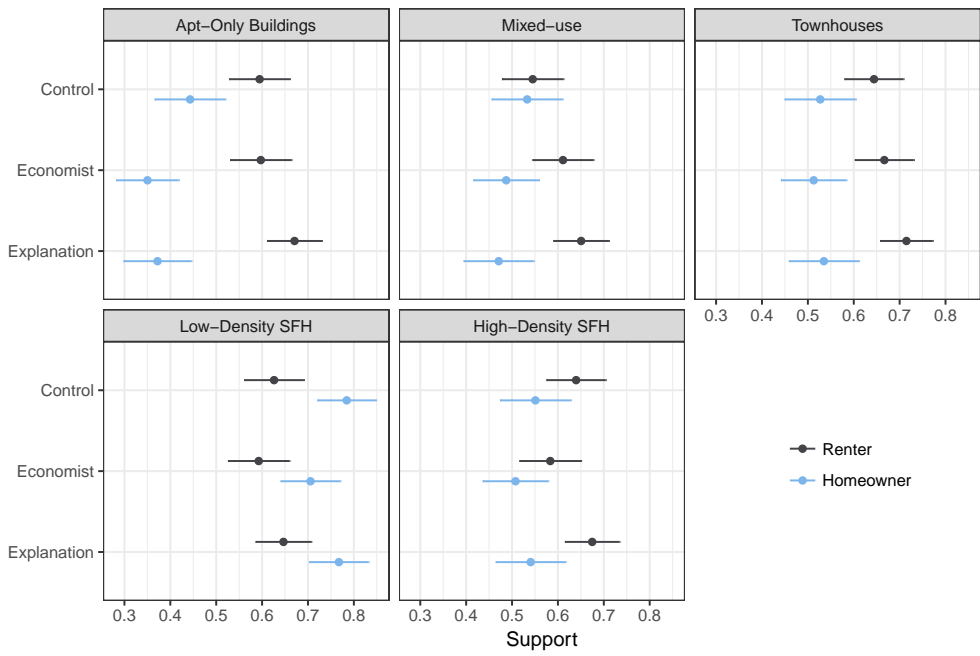


Figure A-1: Support for building additional housing, by homeownership status. Source: Authors' January 2018 MTurk study.

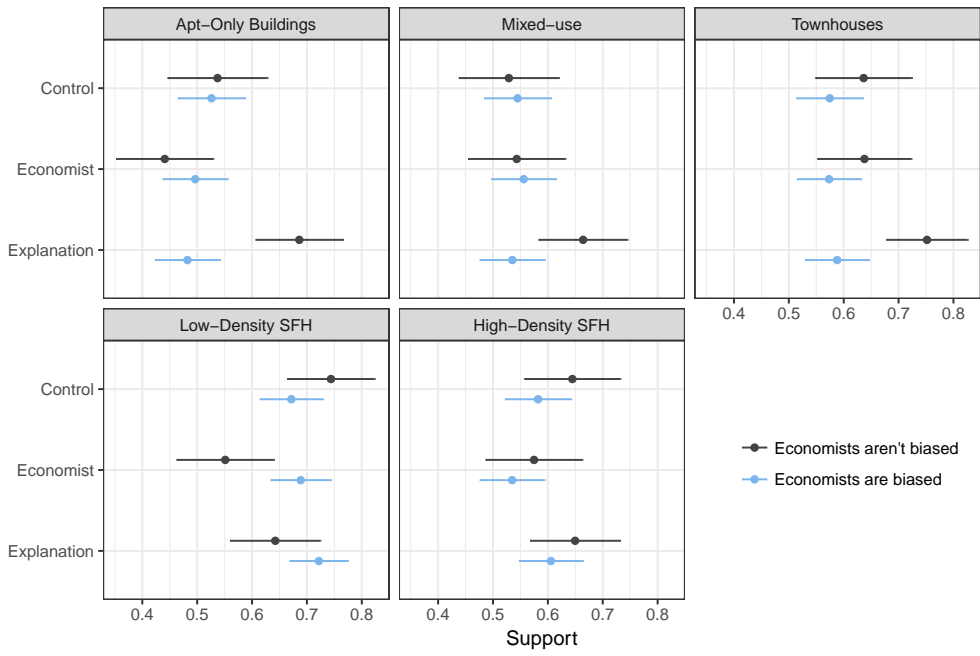


Figure A-2: Support for building additional housing, by trust in economists. Source: Authors' January 2018 MTurk study.

Racial Affect

Here we investigate the role of racial affect in shaping opinions towards construction of high-density housing. Table A-8 reports regression results from Experiment 1 predicting support for construction of apartment-only buildings. Covariates include the experimental condition, support for a federal housing guarantee, an indicator for endorsing negative stereotypes about blacks, and sociodemographic controls. Column 1 reports the results for all whites, column 2 for liberal (pro-guarantee) white homeowners, and column 3 for conservative (anti-guarantee) white homeowners.

In addition to the stated racial affect measures, we also employ a revealed-preference measure of racial affect. We asked respondents who moved to their current home within the past 5 years what zip code they previously lived in. We then merged data on the racial makeup of zip codes from the American Community Survey to examine whether they moved to a place that was more or less diverse (defined as the proportion of non-white residents). We then created an indicator that equals 1 if their current zip code is less diverse than their previous zip code, and 0 otherwise. We include the indicator in an analogous set of regressions predicting support for building apartments among various subsets of white respondents. The results are presented in Table A-9.

Roughly a third of our sample ($N = 1,378$) moved in the last 5 years and provided their previous zip code. When we subset this group just to whites, the sample size is reduced to 572.

	Support for Building Apartments			
Condition: Economist	-0.059 (0.083)	-0.084 (0.105)	-0.439** (0.151)	0.222 (0.144)
Condition: Economic/Escape	-0.046 (0.080)	-0.009 (0.101)	-0.184 (0.150)	0.151 (0.136)
Condition: Economist/Families	0.089 (0.080)	0.031 (0.104)	-0.030 (0.154)	0.089 (0.140)
Negative racial affect	-0.065 (0.060)	-0.093 (0.078)	-0.135 (0.117)	-0.059 (0.105)
Homeowner	-0.326** (0.074)			
Anti-housing guarantee	-0.197** (0.058)	-0.227** (0.074)		
Income (log)	-0.042 (0.040)	-0.076 (0.054)	-0.123 (0.078)	-0.032 (0.072)
Educ: BA or higher	0.162* (0.064)	0.196* (0.081)	0.313* (0.126)	0.084 (0.107)
Age: 25-44	-0.380** (0.094)	-0.584** (0.191)	-0.298 (0.253)	-1.054** (0.273)
Age: 45-64	-0.684** (0.100)	-1.094** (0.183)	-0.853** (0.234)	-1.489** (0.269)
Age: 65+	-0.850** (0.106)	-1.181** (0.181)	-0.951** (0.240)	-1.607** (0.264)
Constant	4.267** (0.395)	4.648** (0.553)	5.036** (0.789)	4.265** (0.798)
Sample:	All whites	White homeowners	Pro-guarantee white homeown- ers	Anti-guarantee white homeown- ers
N	1726	1076	504	572
R-squared	0.115	0.093	0.107	0.086

**p < .01; *p < .05

Table A-8: Re-analysis of Experiment 1 among white respondents, including controls for racial affect. Outcome variable is support for building apartments on a 1-4 scale. Robust standard errors are reported in parentheses.

	Support for Building Apartments			
Condition: Economist	0.006 (0.140)	-0.014 (0.241)	-0.293 (0.324)	0.523 (0.334)
Condition: Economic/Escape	-0.016 (0.138)	0.130 (0.245)	0.243 (0.356)	0.116 (0.325)
Condition: Economist/Families	0.107 (0.135)	0.053 (0.263)	0.562 (0.388)	-0.286 (0.366)
Moved to less diverse Zip	-0.190 (0.105)	-0.433** (0.186)	-0.542** (0.276)	-0.364 (0.242)
Homeowner	-0.276** (0.119)			
Anti-housing guarantee	-0.107 (0.101)	-0.040 (0.184)		
Income (log)	0.025 (0.068)	0.021 (0.126)	-0.286 (0.163)	0.280 (0.160)
Educ: BA or higher	-0.029 (0.115)	-0.052 (0.222)	0.173 (0.317)	-0.473 (0.316)
Age: 25-44	-0.475*** (0.134)	-0.916*** (0.329)	-0.178 (0.506)	-1.653*** (0.296)
Age: 45-64	-0.659*** (0.169)	-1.319*** (0.341)	-0.830 (0.512)	-1.819*** (0.350)
Age: 65+	-0.668*** (0.218)	-0.918** (0.363)	0.025 (0.501)	-1.979*** (0.486)
Constant	3.661*** (0.659)	3.885*** (1.205)	6.488*** (1.574)	1.761 (1.620)
Sample:	All white recent movers	White home- owners, recently moved	Pro-guarantee white home- owners, recently moved	Anti-guarantee white home- owners, recently moved
N	551	190	97	93
R-squared	0.087	0.113	0.188	0.268

**p < .01; *p < .05

Table A-9: Re-analysis of Experiment 1 among whites who moved in the past 5 years, including an indicator for having moved to a zip code with a higher proportion of whites. Outcome variable is support for building apartments on a 1-4 scale. Robust standard errors are reported in parentheses.

Support for Proposal to Build 120-Unit Apartment Building, Black Respondents							
Homeownership	Ideology	Outcome Mean	Average Treatment Effect				
		No Info	Low Inc., No Dist.	Low Inc., 1/4 Mile	Low Inc., 2 Miles	Mkt. Rate, 1/4 Mile	Mkt. Rate, 2 Miles
Homeowners:	Pro-Guarantee	2.68	0.42 (0.32)	0.29 (0.34)	0.61 (0.34)	0.12 (0.32)	-0.08 (0.36)
	Anti-Guarantee	2.58	-0.08 (0.36)	0.06 (0.33)	-0.04 (0.45)	-0.54 (0.30)	0.49 (0.43)
	Pro-Anti Difference	0.10 (0.35)	0.50 (0.48)	0.23 (0.47)	0.65 (0.56)	0.66 (0.44)	-0.57 (0.56)
Renters:	Pro-Guarantee	3.8	-0.23 (0.31)	-0.11 (0.32)	0.172 (0.30)	0.11 (0.29)	-0.40 (0.33)
	Anti-Guarantee	3.64	-0.26 (0.59)	-1.06 (0.57)	-0.82 (0.52)	-0.64 (0.42)	-0.14 (0.53)
	Pro-Anti Difference	0.16 (0.40)	0.03 (0.66)	0.96 (0.66)	0.99 (0.60)	0.74 (0.51)	-0.26 (0.62)

Table A-10: Experiment 2 results (Table 5) for black respondents only. Outcome variable is a five-point scale indicating support for building a hypothetical apartment building. Robust standard errors are reported in parentheses.

Support for Proposal to Build 120-Unit Apartment Building, White Respondents							
Homeownership	Ideology	Outcome Mean	Average Treatment Effect				
		No Info	Low Inc., No Dist.	Low Inc., 1/4 Mile	Low Inc., 2 Miles	Mkt. Rate, 1/4 Mile	Mkt. Rate, 2 Miles
Homeowners:	Pro-Guarantee	3.01	0.02 (0.17)	0.02 (0.18)	0.15 (0.17)	-0.26 (0.17)	0.09 (0.17)
	Anti-Guarantee	2.50	-0.14 (0.16)	-0.23 (0.17)	0.07 (0.15)	-0.02 (0.16)	0.61** (0.16)
	Pro-Anti Difference	0.50** (0.16)	0.16 (0.24)	0.25 (0.25)	0.09 (0.23)	-0.23 (0.23)	-0.52* (0.23)
Renters:	Pro-Guarantee	3.73	-0.03 (0.18)	-0.257 (0.19)	0.065 (0.16)	-0.40* (0.18)	-0.47** (0.17)
	Anti-Guarantee	3.04	0.03 (0.24)	-0.50* (0.24)	-0.09 (0.24)	0.34 (0.24)	-0.02 (0.23)
	Pro-Anti Difference	0.69** (0.21)	-0.07 (0.30)	0.24 (0.30)	0.16 (0.29)	-0.74* (0.30)	-0.46 (0.28)

Table A-11: Experiment 2 results (Table 5) for white respondents only. Outcome variable is a five-point scale indicating support for building a hypothetical apartment building. Robust standard errors are reported in parentheses.

Support for Proposal to Build 120-Unit Apartment Building, Nonwhite Respondents							
Ideology	Homeownership	Outcome Mean No Info	Average Treatment Effect				
			Low Inc., No Dist.	Low Inc., 1/4 Mile	Low Inc., 2 Miles	Mkt. Rate, 1/4 Mile	Mkt. Rate, 2 Miles
Homeowners:	Pro-Guarantee	2.75	0.24 (0.23)	0.34 (0.24)	0.50* (0.23)	-0.06 (0.23)	-0.02 (0.24)
	Anti-Guarantee	2.71	-0.49* (0.20)	-0.37 (0.21)	-0.49* (0.21)	-0.54* (0.22)	0.01 (0.22)
	Pro-Anti Difference	0.03 (0.24)	0.73* (0.31)	0.71* (0.32)	0.99** (0.31)	0.48 (0.32)	-0.02 (0.32)
Renters:	Pro-Guarantee	3.71	-0.13 (0.19)	-0.316 (0.19)	0.134 (0.18)	-0.11 (0.18)	-0.41* (0.19)
	Anti-Guarantee	3.15	-0.18 (0.30)	-0.41 (0.33)	0.01 (0.31)	-0.22 (0.31)	0.03 (0.33)
	Pro-Anti Difference	0.03* (0.26)	0.05 (0.36)	0.10 (0.38)	0.13 (0.36)	0.10 (0.36)	-0.44 (0.38)

Table A-12: Experiment 2 results (Table 5) for nonwhite respondents. Outcome variable is a five-point scale indicating support for building a hypothetical apartment building. Robust standard errors are reported in parentheses.

Support for Proposal to Build 120-Unit Apartment Building Among Whites Who Endorse At Least One Negative Black Stereotype							
Ideology	Homeownership	Outcome Mean No Info	Average Treatment Effect				
			Low Inc., No Dist.	Low Inc., 1/4 Mile	Low Inc., 2 Miles	Mkt. Rate, 1/4 Mile	Mkt. Rate, 2 Miles
Homeowners:	Pro-Guarantee	3.37	-0.37 (0.34)	-0.33 (0.32)	-0.54 (0.31)	-0.42 (0.31)	-0.78* (0.33)
	Anti-Guarantee	2.52	-0.26 (0.25)	-0.32 (0.29)	-0.09 (0.24)	-0.18 (0.29)	0.57* (0.25)
	Pro-Anti Difference	0.85** (0.29)	-0.11 (0.42)	0.00 (0.43)	-0.45 (0.39)	-0.24 (0.42)	-1.35** (0.42)
Renters:	Pro-Guarantee	3.77	-0.41 (0.28)	-0.511 (0.33)	-0.113 (0.26)	-0.57 (0.30)	-0.68* (0.28)
	Anti-Guarantee	3.36	-0.36 (0.38)	-0.84* (0.38)	0.00 (0.37)	-0.05 (0.34)	-0.49 (0.32)
	Pro-Anti Difference	0.41 (0.31)	-0.05 (0.47)	0.33 (0.50)	-0.11 (0.45)	-0.52 (0.46)	-0.19 (0.43)

Table A-13: Experiment 2 results (Table 5) for white respondents who agree with at least one negative black stereotype. Outcome variable is a five-point scale indicating support for building a hypothetical apartment building. Robust standard errors are reported in parentheses.

Support for Proposal to Build 120-Unit Apartment Building, Among Whites Who Endorse No Negative Black Stereotypes							
Ideology	Homeownership	Outcome Mean	Average Treatment Effect				
		No Info	Low Inc., No Dist.	Low Inc., 1/4 Mile	Low Inc., 2 Miles	Mkt. Rate, 1/4 Mile	Mkt. Rate, 2 Miles
Homeowners:	Pro-Guarantee	2.86	0.18 (0.20)	0.16 (0.22)	0.49* (0.20)	-0.23 (0.20)	0.43* (0.19)
	Anti-Guarantee	2.49	-0.06 (0.21)	-0.17 (0.21)	0.18 (0.19)	0.06 (0.20)	0.64** (0.20)
	Pro-Anti Difference	0.37 (0.20)	0.24 (0.29)	0.32 (0.31)	0.31 (0.28)	-0.28 (0.28)	-0.21 (0.27)
Renters:	Pro-Guarantee	3.69	0.17 (0.23)	-0.088 (0.22)	0.178 (0.21)	-0.28 (0.22)	-0.35 (0.21)
	Anti-Guarantee	2.79	0.34 (0.30)	-0.24 (0.30)	-0.13 (0.30)	0.63 (0.33)	0.32 (0.31)
	Pro-Anti Difference	0.90** (0.27)	-0.17 (0.38)	0.15 (0.37)	0.30 (0.36)	-0.91* (0.39)	-0.67 (0.38)

Table A-14: Experiment 2 results (Table 5) for white respondents who agree with no negative black racial stereotypes. Outcome variable is a five-point scale indicating support for building a hypothetical apartment building. Robust standard errors are reported in parentheses.

Support for Proposal to Build 120-Unit Apartment Building, Among Recent Movers to Less White Zip Codes							
Homeownership	Ideology	Outcome Mean	Average Treatment Effect				
		No Info	Low Inc., No Dist.	Low Inc., 1/4 Mile	Low Inc., 2 Miles	Mkt. Rate, 1/4 Mile	Mkt. Rate, 2 Miles
Homeowners:	Pro-Guarantee	3.27	0.05 (0.44)	0.03 (0.56)	0.64 (0.41)	-0.27 (0.41)	-0.16 (0.59)
	Anti-Guarantee	2.86	-0.86 (0.52)	-0.69 (0.49)	0.03 (0.53)	-0.49 (0.49)	0.48 (0.57)
	Pro-Anti Difference	0.41 (0.50)	0.90 (0.68)	0.72 (0.74)	0.62 (0.67)	0.23 (0.64)	-0.63 (0.82)
Renters:	Pro-Guarantee	4	-0.18 (0.28)	-0.519 (0.29)	-0.156 (0.24)	-0.36 (0.24)	-0.52* (0.25)
	Anti-Guarantee	2.86	0.40 (0.35)	-0.65 (0.40)	0.03 (0.40)	0.53 (0.35)	0.44 (0.34)
	Pro-Anti Difference	1.14** (0.30)	-0.58 (0.45)	0.13 (0.50)	-0.18 (0.47)	-0.89* (0.42)	-0.96* (0.42)

Table A-15: Experiment 2 results (Table 5) for white respondents who moved since 2012 to a zip code with a smaller proportion of white residents. Outcome variable is a five-point scale indicating support for building a hypothetical apartment building. Robust standard errors are reported in parentheses.

Support for Proposal to Build 120-Unit Apartment Building Among Movers to More White Zip Codes							
Ideology	Homeownership	Outcome Mean	Average Treatment Effect				
		No Info	Low Inc., No Dist.	Low Inc., 1/4 Mile	Low Inc., 2 Miles	Mkt. Rate, 1/4 Mile	Mkt. Rate, 2 Miles
Homeowners:	Pro-Guarantee	2.75	0.03 (0.76)	0.75 (1.62)	0.25 (1.10)	-0.42 (0.76)	0.25 (0.94)
	Anti-Guarantee	2.71	0.29 (0.66)	0.29 (0.72)	-0.08 (0.67)	-0.30 (0.67)	0.54 (0.62)
	Lib.-Con. Difference	0.04 (0.84)	-0.26 (1.00)	0.46 (1.78)	0.33 (1.29)	-0.12 (1.01)	-0.29 (1.13)
Renters:	Pro-Guarantee	4.12	-0.01 (0.44)	-0.839 (0.43)	-0.725 (0.39)	-0.71 (0.41)	-1.40** (0.35)
	Anti-Guarantee	2.78	0.32 (0.53)	-0.14 (0.51)	0.44 (0.57)	0.52 (0.52)	0.08 (0.53)
	Lib.-Con. Difference	1.35** (0.48)	-0.34 (0.69)	-0.70 (0.67)	-1.17 (0.69)	-1.23 (0.67)	-1.48* (0.63)

Table A-16: Experiment 2 results (Table 5) for white respondents who moved since 2012 to a zip code with the same or higher proportion of white residents. Outcome variable is a five-point scale indicating support for building a hypothetical apartment building. Robust standard errors are reported in parentheses.