

## Letter: Solving the home affordability problem



Posted Jun 29, 2017 at 12:01 AM

A new study released by Michigan State University purports how deadly “mobile homes” are in tornadoes. The researchers featured Professor Mark Skidmore, who has a solid reputation in economics.

MSU’s study was picked up by Forbes and others.

So? Haven’t there been similarly sensational studies claiming how dangerous “mobile homes” are?

Mark Weiss, president/CEO of the Manufactured Housing Association for Regulatory Reform, engineer Danny Ghorbani and myself engaged Skidmore and his colleagues in an all-email on-the-record discussion. Skidmore’s revelations should be front-page news nationwide. Why?

His on-the-record admissions weren’t in MSU’s media releases. Let’s commend Skidmore’s candor, as quoted:

– “I think the benefits of manufactured homes are great.”

- “I see them as filling an important niche in the housing market.”
- “Maybe it’s just the older mobile homes.”
- “Or maybe its improper tie downs.”
- “Or maybe is the improper additions you highlighted.”
- “Certainly there is variability in quality of manufactured housing ... I’d be quite happy to live in some but others are shoddy.”
- “Perhaps additional analysis could help zero in on what is happening?”

There have been no mobile homes built in the U.S. in 40 years. Manufactured homes aren’t mobile homes. When weathermen, researchers or others fail to make distinctions, false conclusions occur.

In 2016, NOAA reported 12 tornado-related deaths in “mobile homes” — a 0.00000055 percent chance of dying in a tornado. Rephrasing, the odds were 1,833,333-to-1 in your favor that you wouldn’t die in tornado in 2016.

False impressions discourage many from realizing housing dreams with a manufactured home, and costs businesses, investors and taxpayers billions. It costs renters the equity they’d build.

More than one in 10 Floridians live in a mobile or manufactured home. Tax dollars can’t solve housing affordability. The solution’s hiding in plain sight.

Tony Kovach  
Lakeland

##

The above was originally published at the link below

<http://www.theledger.com/opinion/20170629/letter-solving-home-affordability-problem>

All Third-Party Images are Shown Under Fair Use Guidelines.

