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Epstein photos released by panel show Trump, Clinton

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Private firms snap up mobile home parks



The buyout of mobile home parks by investment firms is on the rise, with devastating consequences for residents. Over the past decade, rents in these parks have risen 45%, according to census data. PHOTOS VIA GETTY IMAGES

Purchases driving out often already-vulnerable residents

Cassie Powell University of Richmond | THE CONVERSATION

One of America's most affordable paths to homeownership is slipping away.

At manufactured home parks – sometimes called trailer parks or mobile home parks – rents are rapidly rising due to large-scale buyouts by private equity firms.

Although private equity's foray into the housing market is not new, the buyout of mobile home parks by investment firms is on the rise – with devastating consequences for residents. Over the past decade, rents in these parks have risen 45%, according to census data. Once a park is sold, the risk of eviction rises significantly in the following year.

I'm a poverty law attorney in Virginia, and many of my clients are residents of mobile home parks. Over the past four years, I've watched their communities get sold, one by one, to large investment firms. Many of them are desperately struggling to protect their homes – for some, their only source of wealth – in the face of exploding rents and threats of eviction.

The immovable mobile home

Today, the term "mobile home" is a misnomer.

Historically, mobile homes were trailers

designed for travelers and workers living near factories. With so many veterans returning home after World War II, trailers provided an easy and affordable way for them to obtain housing in the face of shortages. The trailers could be moved from place to place as people either attended school or sought work.

A shift occurred in the 1950s. Those with higher incomes bought houses, and those with less means continued to live in mobile homes. Eventually, mobile home communities cropped up throughout the country as places for

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In the midst of a housing affordability crisis, mobile homes are seen as a way for those with limited incomes to generate wealth and access homeownership.

Check out more than books at the library

State park passes get Californians in for free or lower cost

Roseann Cattani
Palm Springs Desert Sun
USA TODAY NETWORK

The famous California weather makes it easy for people to enjoy the outdoors year-round. Whether you want to hike in the redwoods, stroll through a meadow flush with wildflowers, or gaze out over the crashing waves of the Pacific Ocean, the Golden State has many diverse locations to explore.

To make nature more accessible, Californians with a library card can borrow a pass that provides free day-use vehicle admission at more than 200 state parks.

The California State Library Parks Pass is good for one vehicle with a capacity of up to nine people or one high-way-licensed motorcycle.

Borrow time limits are set by the individual library, and patrons check out the pass and return it as with any other item.

The program, which began in 2021 with 5,000 available passes, has since distributed more than 33,000 passes to over 1,100 public libraries throughout the state.

Earlier this year, Governor Gavin Newsom secured \$6.75 million in the state budget bill for funding through Dec. 31, 2026.

What else can I check out at the library?

The popular and equity-driven California State Parks Pass program is part of the state's Outdoor Access for All initiative.

Libraries report that these passes are among their most checked-out items, according to the California State Parks Foundation.

Due to the initiative's popularity, California State Parks significantly expanded the program in 2023.

Some libraries also have kits or backpacks filled with tools (compass, binoculars, nature guide) for outdoor experiences such as camping, stargazing, and hiking.

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Garcia released from detention facility

Judge blocks effort to have migrant returned to custody

Michael Collins and Natalie Neysa Alund
USA TODAY

In a whiplash series of events, federal judge on Dec. 12 blocked an effort to have Kilmar Abrego Garcia returned to custody a day after his release from Immigration and Customs Enforcement detention.

On Dec. 11, District Judge Paula Xinis ordered the immediate release of Abrego Garcia, the Salvadoran migrant at the center of a case that has spotlighted President Donald Trump's hard-line im-

migration policies.

Xinis said the Trump administration had no legal basis to expel him from the country and misled her at a November hearing.

Abrego Garcia left the detention facility in Pennsylvania at 4:45 p.m. ET Dec. 11, said his attorney, Simon Sandoval-Moshenberg. He was en route to his family in Maryland.

However, an immigration judge then filed a new order saying Abrego Garcia must report back to ICE custody by 8 a.m. Dec. 12.

Abrego Garcia's lawyers asked the judge to issue a temporary restraining order to block the new detention order. Xinis did so, preventing immigration authorities from re-detaining Abrego Garcia.

It was the latest turn in a labyrinthine series of events for Abrego Garcia, a sheet metal worker who entered the United States illegally in 2012. He was living with his wife and three children in Beltsville, Maryland, when he was detained by ICE agents on March 15.

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