

# 'MHI [Manufactured Housing Institute] Will Grant Request Via Prayer' Mayor Pro-Tem Mewborn on Affordable 'Plant A Home'

*Ivory Mewborn, MHI CEO Lesli Gooch controversy-racial equity, affordable housing, swift legal solutions OpEd announced*

[www.ManufacturedHomeProNews.com/Masthead/](http://www.ManufacturedHomeProNews.com/Masthead/)

AYDEN, NC, UNITED STATES, March 5, 2022 /EINPresswire.com/ -- After reading the evidence- and fact-packed new report, analysis, and commentary on the [MHPProNews Masthead editorial blog](#), the Reverend (Rev.) Ivory

Mewborn, Mayor Pro-Tem of Ayden, N.C. said the following via email. "MHI [Manufactured Housing Institute] will

grant our request [for legal, other support for the Plant A Home program] if we pray and believe. The heart of the king is in the hand of the Lord, as the rivers of water: he turns it whatsoever way he will." Certainly, to Mewborn's point, there are Biblical supports that give millions of Christians, Jews, and other believers confidence that praying in assured faith to obtain a desired result works.<sup>1</sup> What is also clear is that some prayers are answered swiftly, while some prayers are answered only after repeated requests.<sup>2</sup> Obviously in Scripture there are verses where God makes clear that he can also say, "no" if the prayer is not in keeping with the Divine will and his commandments.<sup>3</sup> That said, Mewborn was also the source to MHPProNews that provided various documents, messages, and other elements of information used in the Masthead report. Those pointedly call into question the sincerity of the Manufactured Housing Institute (MHI) and their CEO Lesli Gooch's claims of supporting minorities and other affordable housing seekers rights who need or desire a new, modern manufactured home.

That Masthead shows Gooch's emailed response as well as the phone call notes from a phone call from Gooch to Mewborn.

On 2.8.2022, Mewborn sent an emailed message to MHI CEO Lesli Gooch, Ph.D., their North



New fact- and evidence packed MHPProNews Masthead explores manufactured housing controversy playing out in Ayden, NC that applies in towns coast-to-coast.

Carolina affiliate-NC Manufactured & Modular Homebuilders Association (NC-MHA.org), and specific MHI corporate leaders, as the Masthead op-ed evidenced.

On 3.8.2021, Gooch via NationalMortgageNews, made noble-sounding statements like these.

- As policymakers in Washington seek federal interventions to support racial equity, an important element of the strategy should be increasing the minority homeownership rate."

- Addressing systemic barriers to minority homeownership is imperative and increasing the supply of quality affordable housing must be an integral part of the effort. This is where manufactured housing comes in. Constructed according to a federal building standard that is administered by HUD to ensure quality and safety, manufactured homes are the most affordable homeownership option available. With the average cost of a new manufactured home itself below \$80,000, it is not uncommon for the purchase of a manufactured home to be less expensive than the option of renting."

- ..the law already requires HUD to "facilitate the availability of affordable manufactured homes to increase homeownership for all Americans." (42 USC 5401(b)(2)).

- To advance racial equity, HUD must stop localities from excluding manufactured homes from their communities, which many have done through actions which range from exclusionary zoning restrictions to outright prohibitions against manufactured homes. The Manufactured Housing Improvement Act of 2000 specifically states that when HUD construction and safety standards are in effect, a locality does not have authority to establish different standards."

- Unfortunately, due to lax enforcement of preemption by HUD, many localities use construction requirements that deviate from the HUD Code to accomplish an underlying objective of zoning out manufactured housing (or making it prohibitively expensive). To address this, HUD must strengthen preemption enforcement."

A solution to the affordable housing crisis is hiding in plain sight. Federal, state, local officials, and advocates could call on enforcement of existing federal law. The Manufactured Housing Improvement Act of 2000 and its "enhanced preemption" provision. Ready to go.

• To achieve racial equity, HUD should take seriously its mandate to support the growth of manufactured housing to increase homeownership for all."

Mewborn cited Gooch's op-ed in his request for MHI to intervene in the impasse in Ayden, NC regarding "Plant A Home" installation of new manufactured homes. Gooch presumably had the support of the MHI board and leaders. That's routinely part of the genesis of op-ed's like hers published by NationalMortgageNews. Oddly, Gooch never mentioned in that op-ed the phrase "enhanced preemption" with respect to the MHIA.



Each of the homes shown are a modern HUD Code manufactured home.

Additionally, Gooch never mentioned that prior [HUD Secretary Ben Carson](#) personally offered to MHI in a live, video recorded session "to usher in" a "new era of cooperation and collaboration between our Department" - HUD - and the manufactured housing industry.

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MHARR-"with respect to zoning discrimination Congress...strengthened... enhanced federal preemption...for...invalidation of state or local "requirements" "discriminating against" "manufactured homes.""  
— Mark Weiss, J.D., President and CEO of MHARR.

Gooch repeatedly said in often little-read federal comments letter that HUD was not enforcing federal preemption.

HUD has regulatory authority over manufactured homes. Federal preemption over local zoning is included, according to attorneys, lawmakers who were part of the widely bipartisan legislative process, and a former federal official.

While their methods and missions are different than MHI,

the Manufactured Housing Association for Regulatory Reform (MHARR) has said for years statements similar to Gooch's. HUD has legal preemption authority specifically given by Congress HUD often aren't using when local jurisdictions attempt what Ayden, NC seems to be doing.

The Masthead includes insights on various sides of the controversy.

For instance, On 2.16.2022 Gooch replied via email to Mewborn, saying in part “We appreciate your passion and engagement to ensure more people in Ayden, and across America, can attain homeownership through manufactured housing. As we discussed on the call, our goals are aligned.

Lesli”

Mewborn's reply on 2.17.2022 in his follow up pressed her-that's included with other in-depth Masthead information.

“Ms. Gooch,

I thank you for your recent message. Does your reply mean that you will use your legal resources on behalf of residents in Ayden, NC - or elsewhere - to see that local officials are enforcing Manufactured Housing Improvement Act mandated "enhanced preemption?" That is my goal and that of others here who want a new manufactured home. Is that how your goal and ours are aligned? Please clarify or confirm.

Thank you,

Rev Ivory Mewborn  
Mayor Pro-tem of Ayden, NC  
Vice Chair Pitt County Human Relations Commission”

Mewborn told MHPProNews/MHLivingNews that no one at MHI, nor their NC-MHA.org or corporate leaders have followed up with either himself or officials at Ayden. Our publication did a follow up to MHI and their leaders, which is also part of the Masthead linked herein and below.##

Biblical references, referenced in footnote in the opening paragraph above.

- 1) Jeremiah 29:12-13. Mark 11:24. 1 Peter 3:12. 1 John 5:15.
- 2) Luke 11:5-13. 2 Corinthians 12:8-9. Isaiah 55:8-9.
- 3) Ps66:17-20. 1Jn5:14-15. Jn15.7.

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<https://manufacturedhousingassociationregulatoryreform.org/the-incredible-shrinking-zoning->

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<https://manufacturedhousingassociationregulatoryreform.org/mharr-calls-on-hud-secretary-to-end-discriminatory-and-exclusionary-zoning-of-hud-regulated-manufactured-homes/>

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