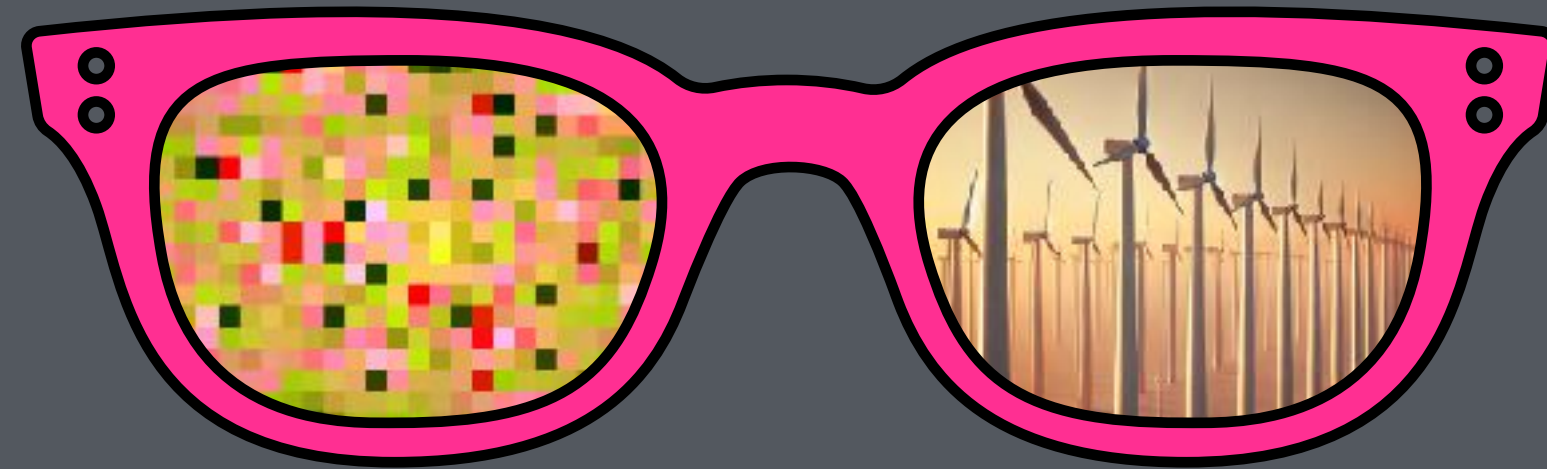


Data and the State

PUBPOL 2130 / INFO 3130



Renting

Lecture 20, Tuesday Apr 15

Announcements

- I've made the project teams, will announce tonight (after we review them at the TA meeting)
- Detailed outline / first draft is due in **16 days**, Thurs May 1
- I sent around project [**guidelines**](#) — including suggestion that the whole group plan a two-hour meeting every week, and that each person plan for 30 hours working on the project over the next month. Final submission Weds May 14 at noon (sharp).
- The projects add up to 44 points (plus up to 10 points extra credit) and they are worth 30% of your grade.
- Also remember: optional Exam 3 (cumulative) on the last day of class, Tuesday May 6

Renting a home

- Progressive Era (turn of 20th c) housing reform — **Tenement** laws and housing codes to address crowding, poor construction and sanitation
- Tenement districts include NYC (lower East Side), Boston (North End, South End), Chicago (South Side, Back of the Yards),
- New Deal created local housing authorities with subsidized housing for low-income tenants
- Goals: avoid slum conditions, create housing tied to employment opportunity



Depression, post-war, and beyond

- Public housing projects — built with great optimism! but many fell to disinvestment, disrepair, stigma

Pruitt-Igoe	St Louis	1954-1972
Cabrini Green	Chicago	1942-2011
Robert Taylor Homes	Chicago	1962-2007
Marcy Houses	Brooklyn	1949–
Nickerson Gardens	L.A.	1954–
Jordan Downs	L.A. / Watts	1944–

Brewster-Douglas	Detroit	1935-2014
Techwood	Atlanta	1936-1990s
Queensbridge	Queens	1939–
First Houses	NYC Lower East Side	1935–
Lafitte	New Orleans	1940-Katrina
Magnolia	New Orleans	1941-Katrina

- Recall the afterlife of this period from last week's classes: HUD (1965), Fair Housing Act (1968), Section 8 (1974)
- **Tenant rights** movement: security deposit limits, habitability standards, rent control, eviction procedures, right to counsel

Peter Hepburn

- Sociology professor at Rutgers-Newark, affiliated with Princeton's **Eviction Lab**
- Research into **inequality** includes
 - work and precarity
 - childcare and family structure
 - criminal justice
 - gentrification and neighborhood change



Eviction in America

Understanding and Addressing the Eviction Crisis

April 15, 2025

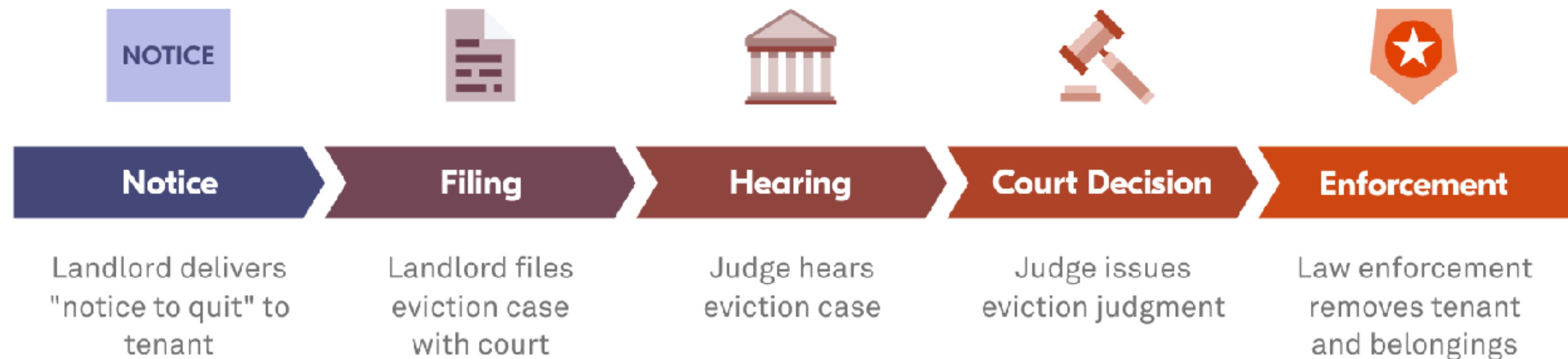
Peter Hepburn
Rutgers University-Newark
Eviction Lab, Princeton University

About me

- PhD in Sociology & Demography (Berkeley)
 - Dissertation about parental work scheduling and childcare arrangements
 - Also: the criminal justice system
- Postdoc at Princeton
 - Working on eviction and housing issues
- Assistant professor at Rutgers-Newark

Eviction in America

- Defining eviction
 - Forced removal from rental housing
 - Formal and informal eviction
- The formal eviction process



Negative repercussions of eviction

Physical Health	Mental Health	Associated Conditions Among Women	Associated Conditions Among Children	Exposure to Sub-Standard Living Conditions	Barriers to Livelihood
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Higher Mortality • Respiratory Conditions • High Blood Pressure • Poor Self-Rated General Health • Coronary Heart Disease • Sexually Transmitted Infections • Drug Use 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Depression ▪ Anxiety ▪ Mental Health Hospital-ization ▪ Exposure to Violence ▪ Suicide 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Physical Assault ▪ Sexual Assault ▪ Drug Use and Related Harms ▪ Pre-term Pregnancies ▪ Future Housing Instability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Lead Poisoning ▪ Academic Decline ▪ Food Insecurity ▪ Emotional Trauma ▪ Risk of Chronic Disease in Adulthood ▪ Low Birthweight ▪ Decreased Life Expectancy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Lead ▪ Mold ▪ Poor Ventilation ▪ Pest Infestations ▪ Crowding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Failing credit scores • Downward move • Unemployment • Residential instability • Homeless-ness • Inability to access social services

The hidden housing problem

“Each year, an untold number of Americans are evicted or otherwise forced to leave their homes involuntarily. The number is likely in the many millions, but we have no way of gauging even a modestly precise figure for renters, because such data are simply not collected on a national basis or in any systematic way in most localities where evictions take place.”

-Hartman and Robinson 2003

What is the Eviction Lab?

- Research group based at Princeton University
- Central questions
 - How common is eviction?
 - What are the causes and consequences of eviction?
 - What can we do to lower eviction rates?
- Lots of publicly-available data!
 - www.evictionlab.org

Data collection

1. National eviction database, 2000-2018
 - Purchased data from LexisNexis
 - Validated against court-reported aggregates
 2. Eviction Tracking System, 2020-present
 - Scraping public-facing court dockets
 - Requesting data from the courts
 - Granted access to court systems
- Lots of cleaning, geocoding, linkage work!

Court cases: thin data

☒ MOTION TO STRIKE ☐ JUDGMENT ON PLEADINGS ☐ TRIAL

IN THE MAGISTRATE COURT OF FULTON COUNTY
STATE OF GEORGIA

Lakeside Reserve Apartments, LLC

dba Lakeside Reserve Apartments
PLAINTIFF

VS.

Aaron Dickens

4001 Lakemont Drive Apt#: 25A
DEFENDANT
College Park, GA 30337

PROCEEDING AGAINST TENANT HOLDING OVER

CIVIL ACTION NO. 14DE001076

FILED IN OFFICE THIS THE

MAR 11 2014

DEPUTY CLERK

DEPUTY CLERK - STATE COURT
FULTON COUNTY, GEORGIA

ORDER AND JUDGMENT

The above case having regularly come on before the Court without a jury, the Defendant having answered failed to answer and appeared /failed to appear, and the Court having heard and considered evidence, pleadings and testimony, finds that the Plaintiff is entitled to a WRIT OF POSSESSION and judgment against Aaron Dickens in the amount of \$ 1,642.00 rent for the following period: 3/11/14

The Court further finds: _____

ORDER AND ADJUDGED that a WRIT OF POSSESSION be issued:

(☒) Instant () On _____
() Upon Defendant's failure to pay Plaintiff \$ _____ on or before _____

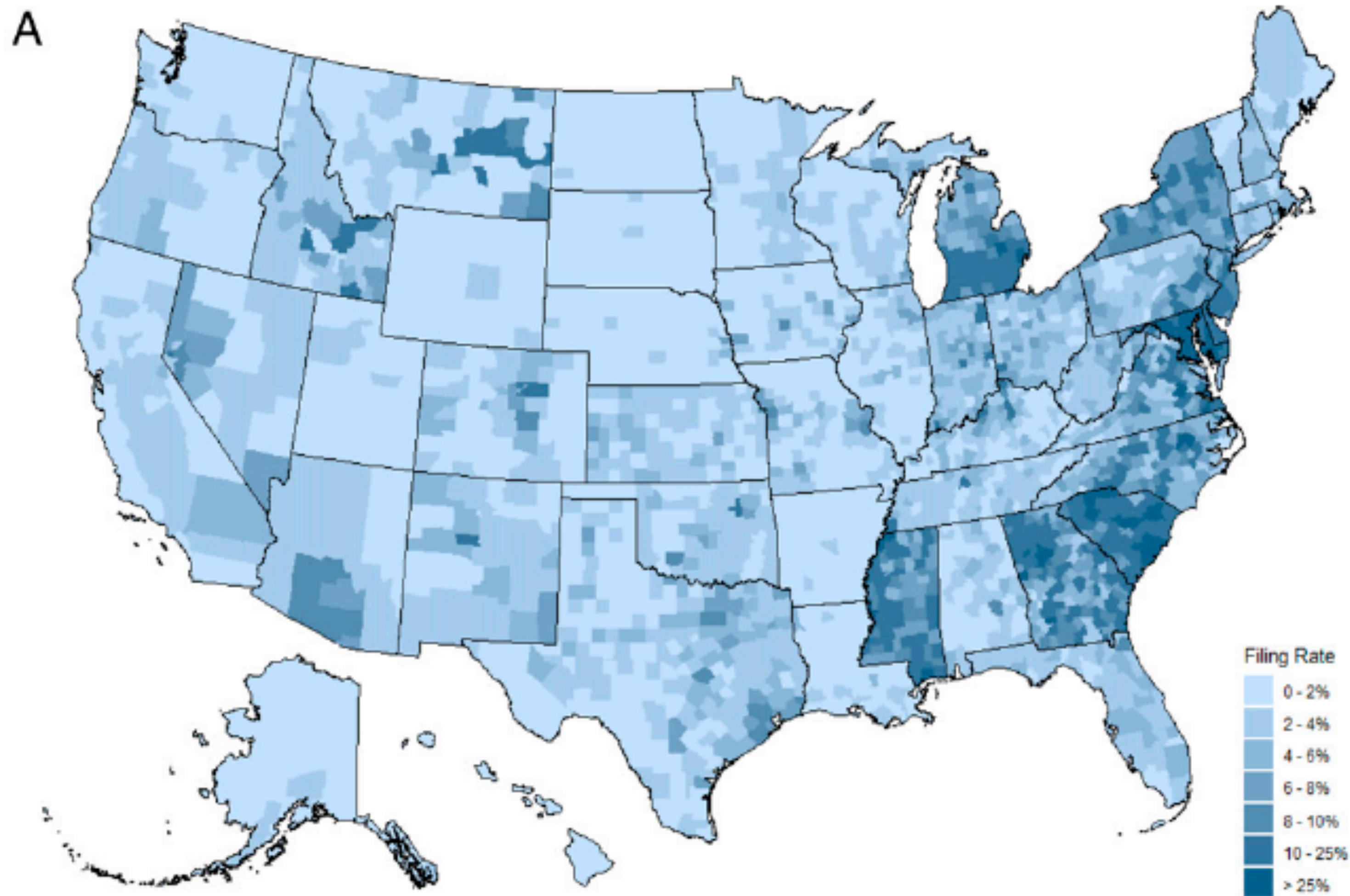
FURTHER ORDERED that: (Applicable only if space is checked)

(☒) Plaintiff recover judgment against Defendant (name) Aaron Dickens

Eviction patterns pre-COVID

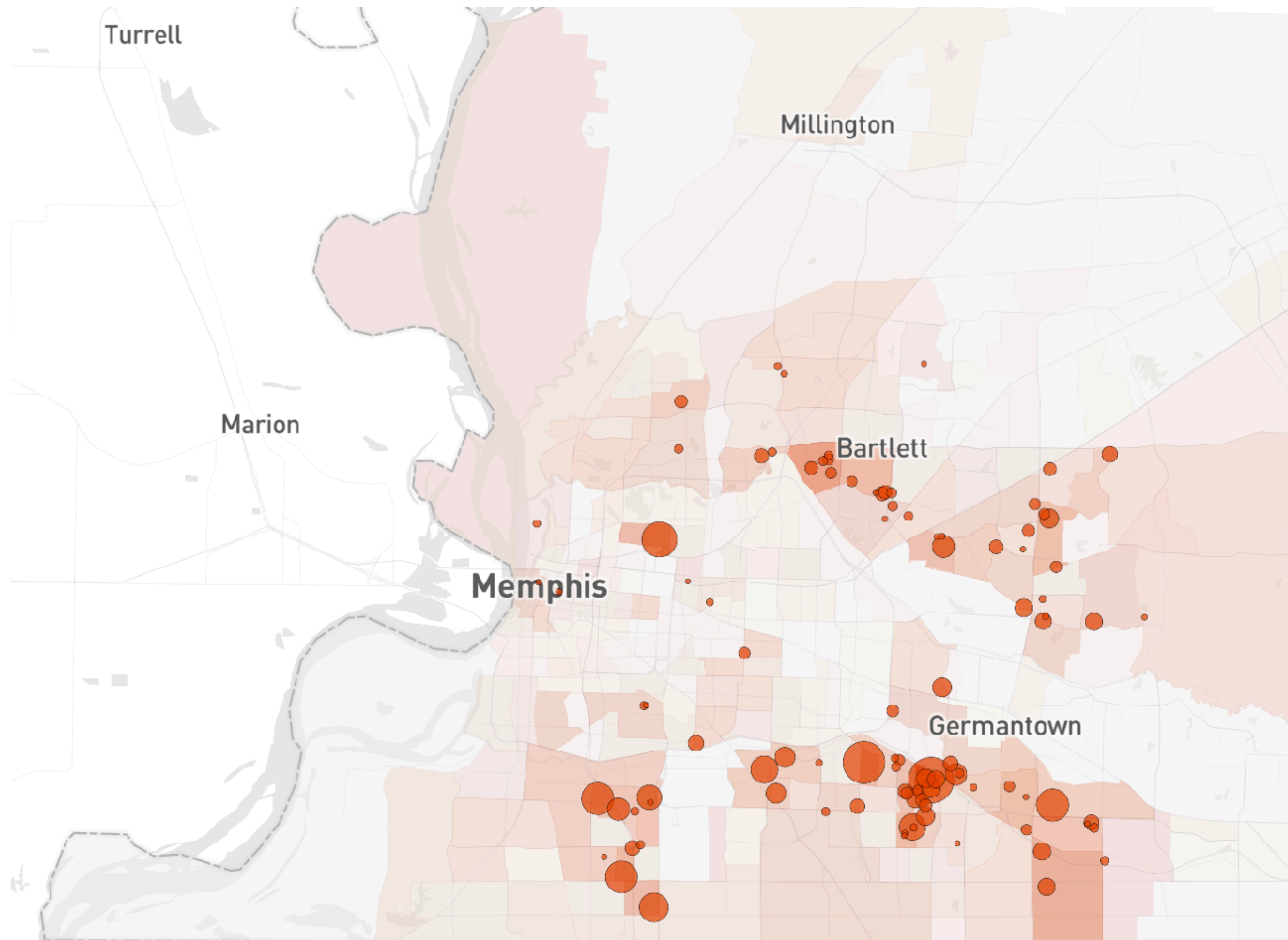
- Average of 3.6 million eviction cases every year
 - ~7% of all renter households filed against annually
 - 9% eviction filing rate in New York
- Serial eviction filings
 - Eviction as a rent collection tool
- Not just a big-city issue
 - Affects mid-size and smaller cities
 - Increasingly concentrated in suburbs
 - Risk for rural renters as well

Eviction filing rates in 2018



Variation *within* cities

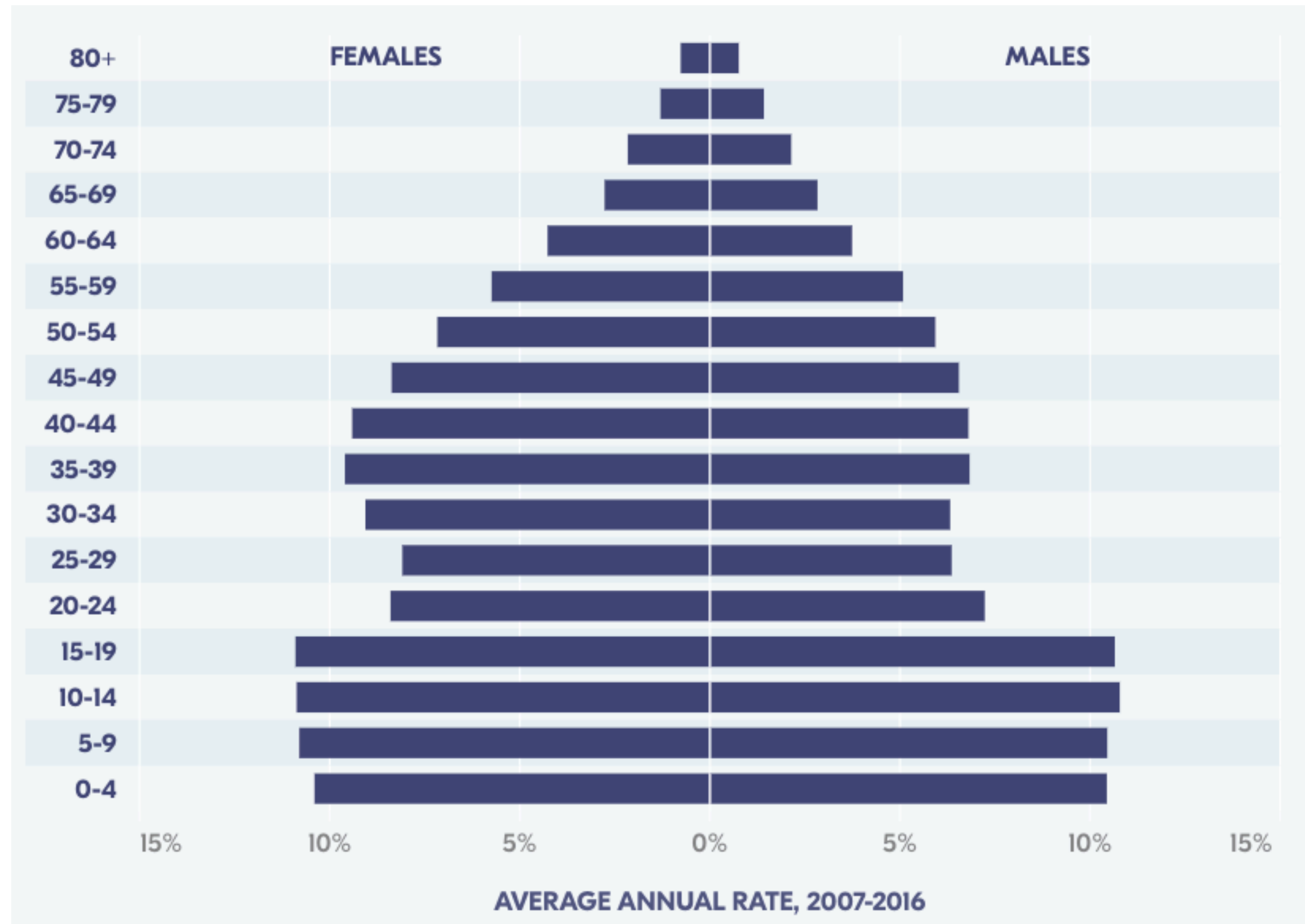
- Eviction cases are heavily concentrated
 - In buildings, not just neighborhoods
 - Same buildings, year after year



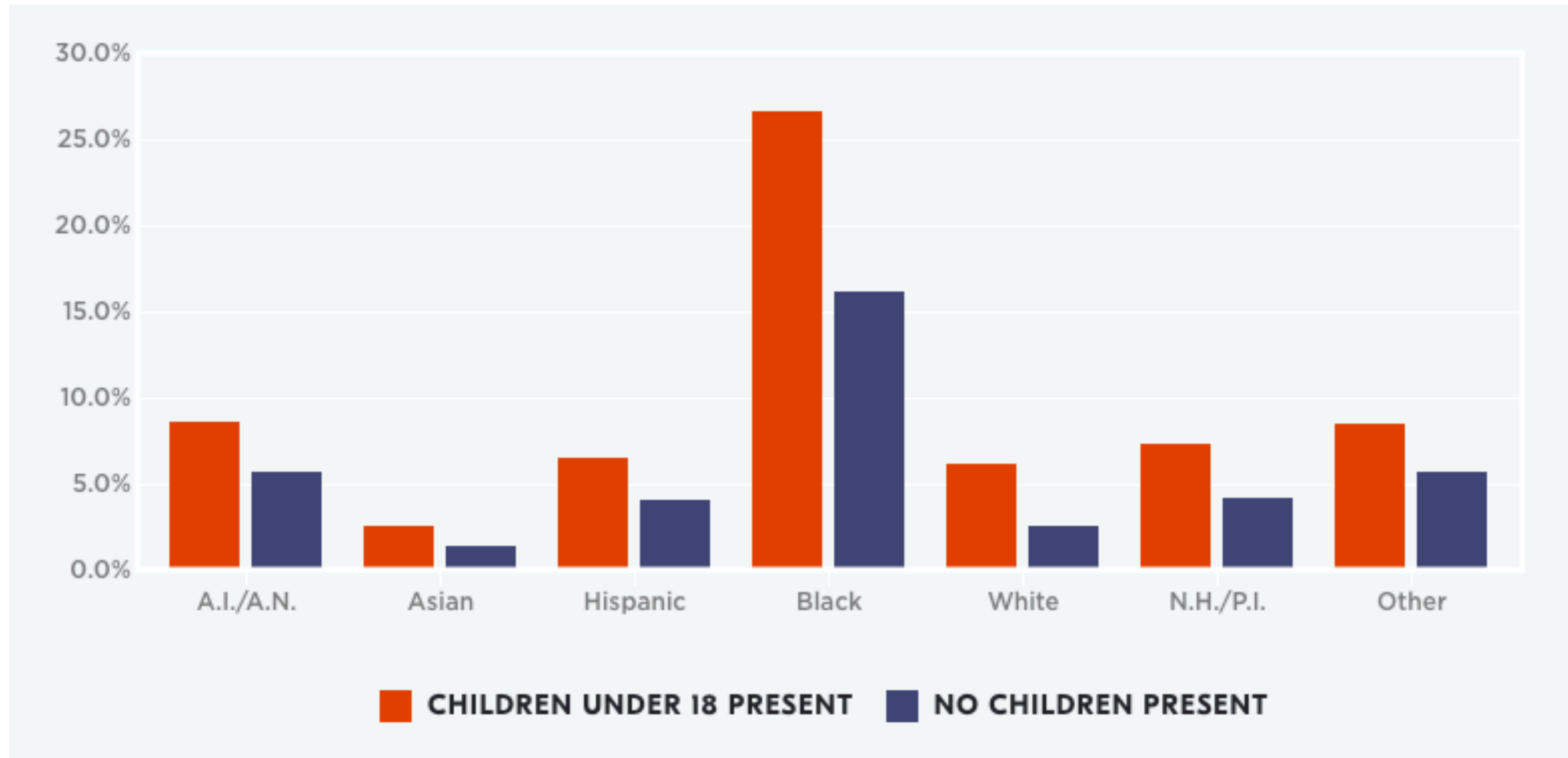
Who is evicted?

- 7.6 million individuals are threatened with eviction each year
- Children bear the brunt of the eviction crisis
 - 40% of those threatened with eviction are children
 - 2.9 million children filed against each year
- Seniors also face the risk of eviction
 - 170,000 renters aged 65+ face a filing annually

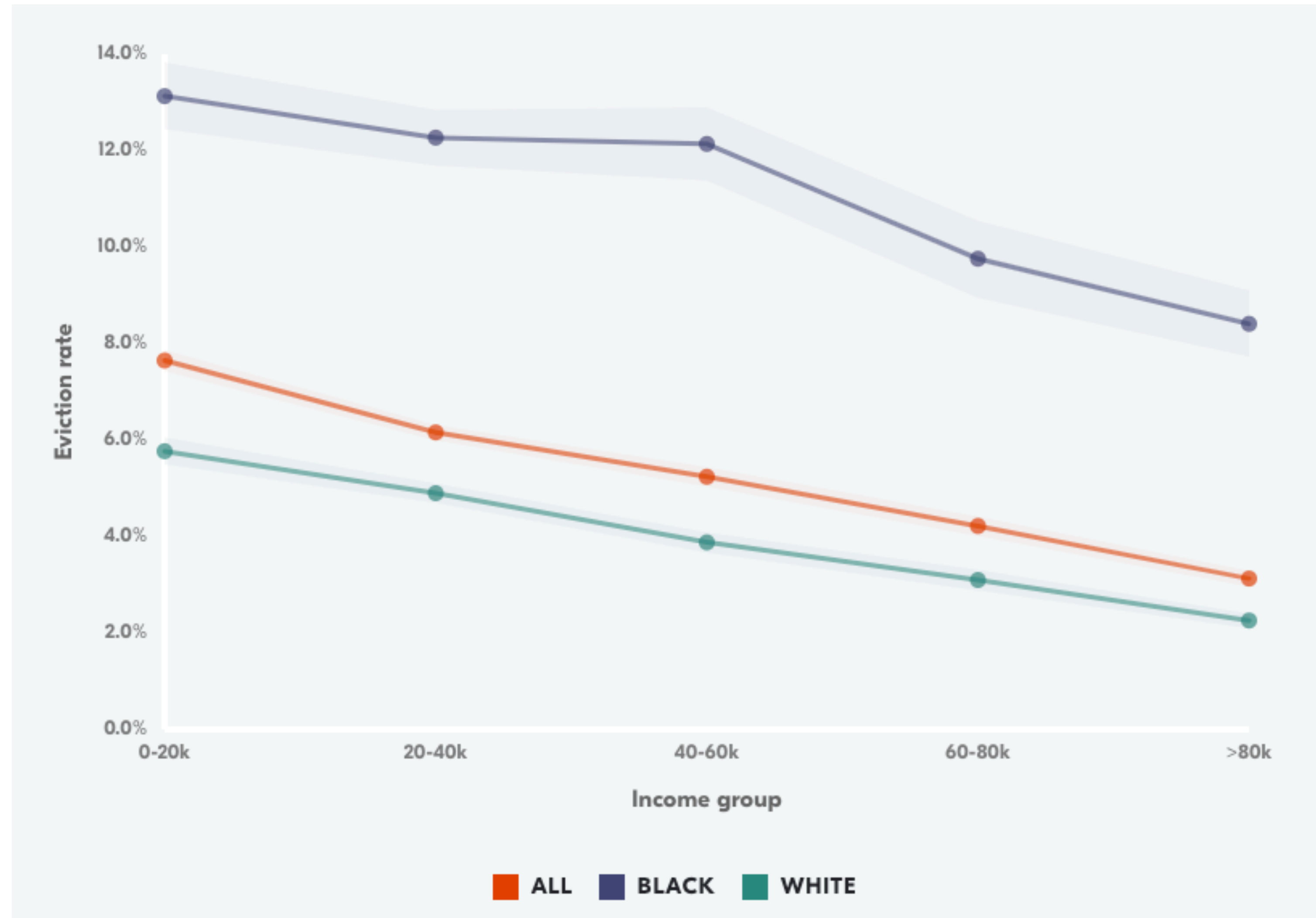
Eviction risk by age



Eviction risk by race/ethnicity



Eviction risk by income



Key take-aways

- Millions of renters face eviction every year
 - 332,000 in a typical pre-pandemic year in New York
- Significant inequalities in risk
 - Where you live matters
 - Higher risk for Black renters, those with kids
 - Plausible violations of the Fair Housing Act
- These cases have serious consequences
 - Major health repercussions
 - Disruptive for kids
 - Long-term housing instability

Solutions

- Change laws and regulations
 - Increase eviction filing fees
 - Extend notice periods
 - Enact good cause eviction statutes
 - Seal court records
- Implement new programs
 - Right to counsel
 - Eviction diversion
- Improve existing programs
 - Enforce the FHA
 - SOI protections for voucher holders
- Build more affordable housing!

Thank You

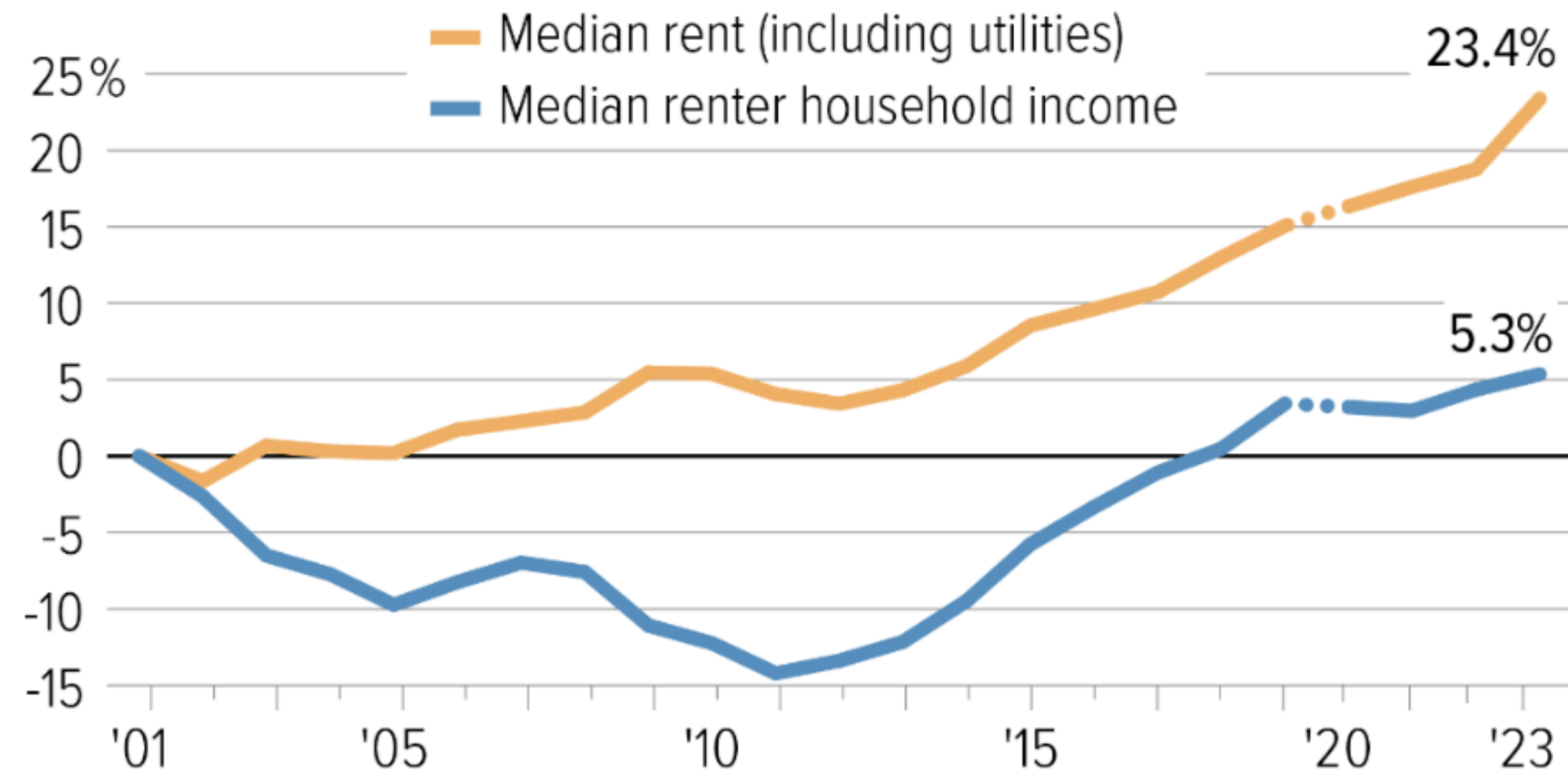


The Eviction Lab is funded by the
JPB, Gates, and Ford Foundations, c3.ai,
and the Chan Zuckerberg Initiative

Why is this happening?

Renters' Incomes Haven't Caught Up to Rising Housing Costs

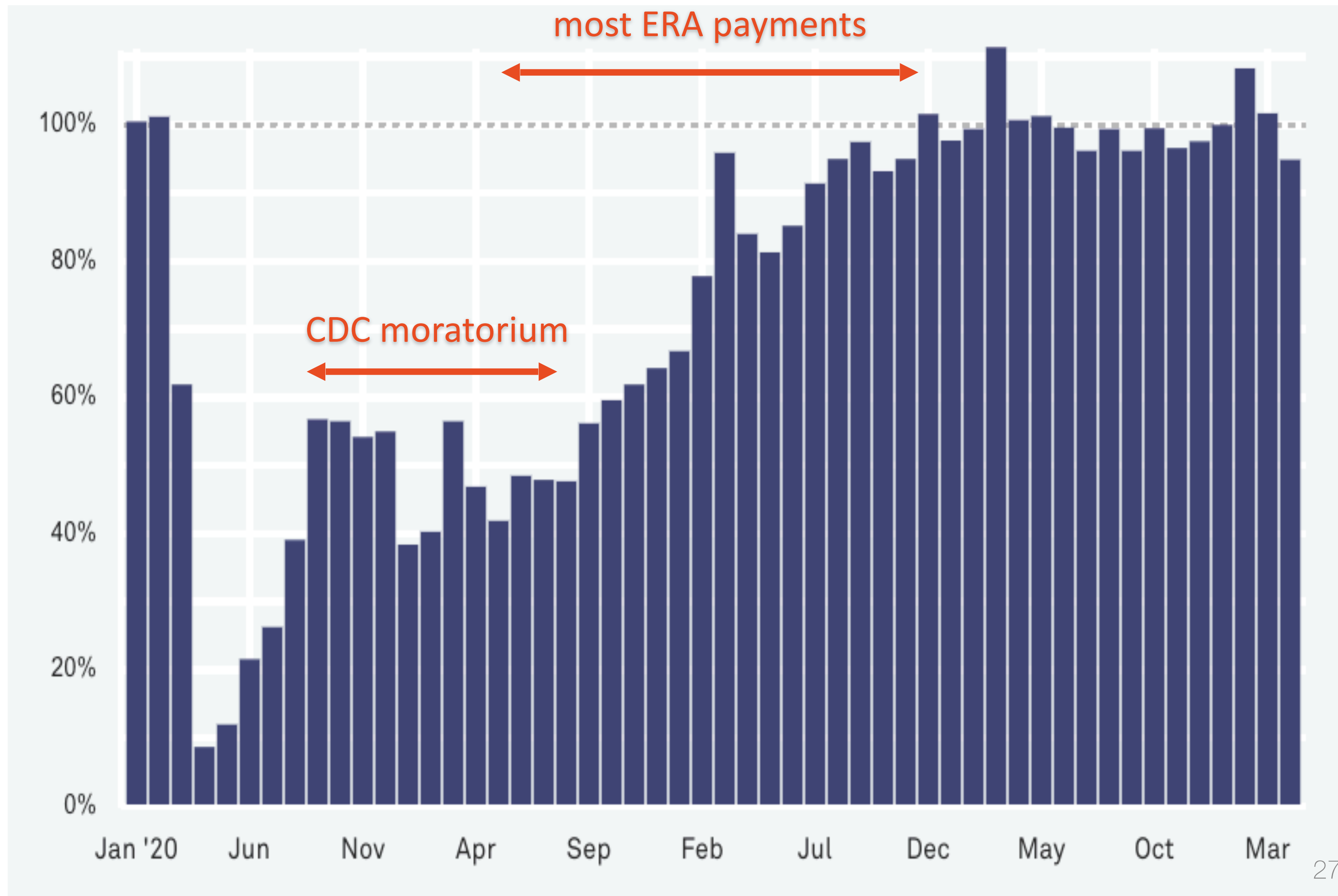
Percent change since 2001, adjusted for inflation



Source: CBPP tabulations of the Census Bureau's American Community Survey

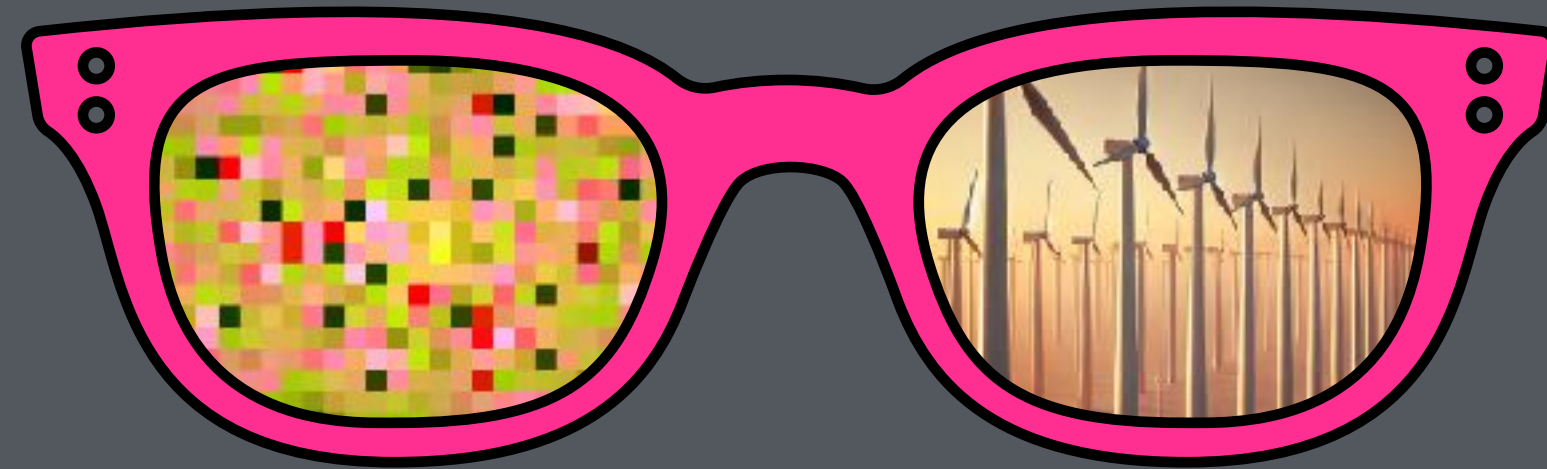
Note: Dashed line indicates missing 2020 1-year ACS data due to pandemic-related data collection issues.

Eviction filings, 2020-2024



Data and the State

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Suburbanization

Lecture 21, Thursday Apr 17