

Gregory W. Dobbels

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Office Contact Information

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Department of Economics
Princeton University
Princeton, NJ 08544

Graduate Studies

Princeton University	<i>2018-present</i>
PhD Candidate in Economics	
Dissertation: <i>“Essays on Regulation, Supply, and Demand in Housing Markets”</i>	
Expected Completion Date: May 2024	

Princeton University	<i>2018–2020</i>
M.A. in Economics	

REFERENCES

Professor Stephen Redding
Department of Economics
Princeton University
(609) 258-4016
reddings@princeton.edu

Professor Jakub Kastl
Department of Economics
Princeton University
(609) 258-4012
jkastl@princeton.edu

Professor Eduardo Morales
Department of Economics
Princeton University
(609) 258-3866
ecmorales@princeton.edu

Undergraduate Studies

Cornell University	<i>2008–2012</i>
B.A. in Economics and Government	

Fields

PRIMARY	Industrial Organization
SECONDARY	Urban Economics, Economic Geography

Job Market Paper

“Not in My Back Yard: The Local Political Economy of Residential Land-Use Regulations”
with Suren Tavakalov. 2023.

We provide evidence that local preferences for neighborhood characteristics play an important role in shaping the political economy of residential land-use regulations and their distributional consequences. We leverage a land-use regulation reform in Houston, TX that reduced the city-wide minimum lot size—permitting denser single-family housing—while allowing incumbent property owners on individual city blocks to opt-out of the change and adopt higher alternative minimum lot sizes. Initially wealthier, whiter neighborhoods were more likely to opt-out and adopt higher minimum lot sizes after the reform. Other areas saw increased supply of denser housing. We develop a model of regulatory choice where incumbents trade-off potential gains from redevelopment and local spillovers from housing density. We estimate large, negative local externalities from density that vary across incumbent socio-economic groups. Counterfactual exercises highlight the importance of this heterogeneity: local exemptions that may make regulatory reform more politically feasible limit housing supply where demand is the greatest and ingrain residential segregation.

Work in Progress

“Renting the American Dream: Institutional Investors and Consolidation in Single-Family Rentals.” with Felipe Kup Barbieri de Matos. 2023.

Teaching Experience

Teaching Assistant, Princeton University
ECO325: Organization and Design of Markets, with Professor Jakub Kastl Fall 2021, 2022

Honors, Scholarships, Fellowships, and Grants

National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship	2018–2023
Princeton University Graduate Fellowship	2018–2024
Princeton International Economics Section Summer Fellowship	2020–2023

Research Experience & Other Employment

Pre-Doctoral Fellow, University of Chicago	2016–2018
Research Associate, Innovations for Poverty Action	2016
Program Associate, Innovations for Poverty Action	2013–2015
Monitoring & Evaluation Specialist, USAID West Africa Trade Hub	2012–2013

Last updated: September 2023