The Political Preferences of Prospective Homeowners: Evidence from Canada

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Abstract

The political and social preferences of homeowners command significant attention from political scientists. Homeownership appears to make individuals more conservative in their preferences over redistribution and increases their political activism. Comparatively little is known about renters. While often treated as a single group, our main argument is that renters are heterogeneous in their political preferences and behaviour. Our contribution is to differentiate between renters that would like to own, a group we call *prospective homeowners*, and those that would prefer to rent, or *satisfied renters*. We use a first-of-its-kind, nationally representative survey of Canadian renters to show that prospective homeowners are more conservative than satisfied renters but are not more likely to vote for conservative parties. Our findings suggest that many of the effects ascribed to homeownership may in fact predate the purchase of a house.

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1 Introduction

Are renters truly more liberal than homeowners? A central argument in the literature on economic voting is that asset ownership makes individuals more conservative, which is reflected in their political behaviour. A particularly salient asset appears to be the home, with homeownership being associated with both more conservative views (Cabral and Hoxby 2012; Lewis-Beck and Nadeau 2011) and support for right-leaning parties (Verberg 2000; Fischel 2005). While the political preferences of homeowners command significant attention, *renters* typically enter the picture merely as a foil.[1] This is an important oversight in light of recent work suggesting that this central argument is flawed and not borne out in the data. Rather, both homeowners and renters hold complex, sometimes counterintuitive, views on housing markets and policy (Elmendorf, Nall, and Oklobdzija 2024, 2025). Fleshing out the views of renters, across developed markets, therefore can help us better understand whether the conventional asset-ownership theory of political behaviour holds, or whether housing tenure effects are more nuanced than previously assumed.

Omitting renters is a surprising gap in the political economy of developed countries for two reasons. One, rental markets are increasingly important across industrialized economies and the site of intense politics. In Canada, for example, about a third of Canadian families rent rather than own (Statistics Canada 2022), and the rise of rental prices in big cities has been one of the major economic (and therefore political stories) of the past decade, squeezing a sizable share of the population. Two, homeownership does not fall from the sky. For most renters, it entails significant, sustained financial effort and planning. A full accounting of the effects of homeownership on political behaviour must consider how the path towards ownership might challenge the conceptual distinction between homeowners and renters. We examine this issue in Canada.

Our main argument is that renters are heterogeneous in their political behaviour. We

[1] An important exception is Hankinson (2018).

differentiate between renters that, at any given moment, would like to own, a group we call *prospective homeowners*, and those that would prefer to rent, or *satisfied renters*. The standard patrimonial (economic) voting story is that homeowners are more conservative than renters by virtue of being tied geographically and financially to their home – typically one of their largest financial assets. We think of prospective homeowners similarly. Prospective homeowners must save a significant amount of wealth and dedicate a substantial amount of time to realize their purchase. While they may not own a home just yet, their intention to buy and related saving behaviour make them holders of significant assets. As they prepare for a purchase, other social and behavioural factors kick in, pushing the ideological preferences of prospective homeowners away from those of satisfied renters and closer to those of actual homeowners. For example, prospective homeowners should demonstrate an aversion to increases in property tax rates because they anticipate these issues will affect them in short order. Along the same vein, the substantial financial and emotional effort of saving might make them less supportive of taxing the wealthy – viewing homeowners as more deserving. While we do not expect alignment on all issues between prospective homeowners and actual homeowners, our hypothesis is that prospective homeowners should tend to be more conservative with regard to government intervention than satisfied renters.

Our goal is mainly theory building, not causal hypothesis testing. Though framed as a causal story about subtle shifts in political thinking, we rely on observational survey data to establish the empirical plausibility of our theories and hope that future work can fill in the gaps. To begin, we show that there are persistent differences in the political behaviour of homeowners and renters using the Canadian Election Survey's 2019 wave. In line with the extant literature, homeowners are more conservative than renters. Next, we deploy a first-of-its-kind survey of Canadian renters to probe into ideological heterogeneity among renters. Using simple statistical modelling techniques, we show that prospective homeowners are more conservative than satisfied renters. However, these preferences do not translate into increased support for conservative parties.

This study adds to the theoretical debates about the effects of homeownership on social and political beliefs. We join a limited body of work in political science theorizing about the political preferences of renters. Rather than consider how local market conditions change renters' political behaviour (Hankinson 2018), our focus is on how the home buying process generates differences in political behaviour among renters. Drawing on insights from patrimonial economic voting and political psychology (**?**; Reid 2014; **?**), we make the case that the relationship between homeownership and conservative ideology and vote-choice predates, to some extent, the actual purchase of a home.

2 Homeowners as Politically Active Conservatives

Classical work in political economy going all the way back to Engels (1935) has long argued that property ownership shapes political behaviour and preferences in predictable ways. In more contemporary work, the logic is simple. Buying a home entails making a significant financial commitment that is anchored to a relatively illiquid asset. As such, most single homeowners are "stuck" financially (to their home) and geographically (to their neighborhood, city, state). These factors sharpen the trade offs related to political participation. Because homeowners cannot (easily) vote with their feet, they must directly engage in the political process should they want to pursue change. A main prediction, therefore, is that homeowners are more politically active than renters.

Existing work from housing scholars has mostly confirmed this.[2] Earlier work demonstrates that homeowners are more likely than renters to participate in local associations and political groups (Cox 1982; DiPasquale and Glaeser 1999). Homeowners are also more likely to be engaged in local politics and vote in national elections (Kingston, Thompson, and Eichar 1984; Rossi and Weber 1996; Herbert and Belsky 2008; McCabe 2016). Various studies from political scientists reach similar conclusions: homeownership leads to higher levels of political participation (Fischel 2005; Wolfinger and Rosenstone 1980; Verba et al.

[2]For an exception, see Engelhardt et al. (2010).

1993). Recent studies using quasi-experimental designs in the US context provide evidence of a causal relationship between homeownership and participation in local elections, especially when questions about zoning laws are on the ballot (Hall and Yoder 2021; Yoder 2020).

Aside from limiting mobility, buying a house can shape political behaviour through its impacts on wealth. In the United States, buying a house remains one of the most important ways through which parents save money, invest it, and pass it on to their children (McCabe 2016; Di 2005; Turner and Luea 2009). Viewed as a wealth building endeavor, homeownership generates new predictions. The literature on patrimonial voting, for example, reasons that homeowners should be more conservative than those that rent because more liberal policies, like expanding housing supply, can lower housing prices. Similarly, homeowners should be averse to policies that raise the costs of managing their investment, such as raising property taxes.

Generally, these differences between renters' and homeowner' political and policy preferences are well-documented in the empirical evidence. Scholars have shown that homeowners generally oppose increases in property taxes (Cabral and Hoxby 2012), which has indirect effects on voting through ideology and party identification (Lewis-Beck and Nadeau 2011). In contrast, Brunner, Ross, and Simonsen (2015), for instance, show that renters are approximately 10 to 18 percentage points more likely than homeowners to favour a property tax increase over a sales tax increase to fund public services. As a result, local jurisdictions with higher shares of renters appear to spend more on local services, a phenomenon called the "renter effect" (Oates 2005). Scholars of public policy and urban studies have also confirmed that homeowners and renters express different attitudes on a variety of related issues (Oliver 2001), with renters significantly more pro-redistribution than homeowners (André and Dewilde 2016). Work on Canada supports this view. Mcgregor and Spicer (2016) argue that renters are less likely to vote in municipal elections and that they diverge sharply with homeowners on policies related to property. This may explain why homeowners are sometimes more likely than renters to support right-leaning political

parties (Studlar, McAllister, and Ascui 1990; Verberg 2000; Fischel 2005), though this is not true across all contexts and might depend on the relative policy position of parties on housing policy (Hellwig and McAllister 2019).

At the same time, recent work challenges the notion that voters fully understand housing markets or policy. Elmendorf, Nall, and Oklobdzija (2025) find that large swaths of both renters and homeowners believe that a significant increase in housing supply would either not affect or would increase local housing prices. This suggests that the political motivations of homeowners are more complex than the traditional "homevoter hypothesis" would allow. Further, voters of all types show a strong preference for non-market interventions when presented with policy options to improve housing market affordability. Elmendorf, Nall, and Oklobdzija (2024) find broad public support for policies like rent control, demand-side subsidies, and restrictions on corporate investors, while policies to increase the supply of market-rate housing are seen as less effective. Taken together, this new body of work suggests that the traditional homeowner-renter divide is blurry and that voters' policy preferences may be shaped more by heuristics and blame attribution than by sophisticated economic reasoning. This suggests a potential wedge between an individual's general ideological self-placement and their partisan choice, as specific policy beliefs may not align neatly with party platforms. This is consistent with cross-national work which suggests that as the "supply" or range of party's policy positions becomes more diverse or polarized, homeownership is more strongly associated with right-wing party support (Hellwig and McAllister 2019).

Market conditions, including changes in home value, can further complicate the relationship between homeownership and policy or political preferences. Looking at Sweden, Persson and Martinsson (2018) show that what matters is not homeownership per se but the changing *value* of the home. These findings are in line with scholarship in political psychology, which has noted that large changes in economic circumstance can alter preferences for redistribution (Peterson 2016; Doherty, Gerber, and Green 2006). Rising housing prices tend to improve homeowner's satisfaction with incumbents (Han and Shin

2021; Larsen et al. 2019), and increase homeowner's opposition to redistributive measures (Ansell 2014). Similarly, risky housing markets and significant drops in home prices seem to generate substantial backlash against the political system among homeowners. Studying this issue in Quebec, Foucault (2018) demonstrates that high-risk homeownership increases the probability of voting for a right-wing party. In contrast to earlier findings, André et al. (2018) show that in The Netherlands homeowners become more pro-welfare when their house value declines. This is nonetheless consistent with the notion that homeowners view their home as insurance against economic shocks. Finally, an emerging literature links falling housing prices to the rise of far-right parties. Adler and Ansell (2020) have argued that low housing prices increase likelihood of supporting populist causes or parties. In sum, while scholars continue to conclude that homeownership makes individuals more likely to participate in politics, new work points to the fact that their politics seem more contextual than initially thought.

While much of the literature on homeownership politics focuses on the local level, our focus on federal partisanship and ideology is particularly relevant in the Canadian context. Housing policy in Canada is a multi-level affair. While provincial and local governments hold significant regulatory and planning authority (Farhan 2024; Ontario Housing Affordability Task Force 2022), the federal government plays a crucial role through tax incentives, mortgage insurance underwriting, and direct spending (Hulchanski 2006). The issue's national salience has grown substantially. In 2017, the federal government launched a ten-year, $40 billion National Housing Strategy, and housing affordability has since become a top-tier priority for all major federal parties. In the most recent federal election, all major parties had detailed housing policy plans.[3]

[3]See for example, the CBC's summary of plans (CBC News 2025).

3 The Preferences of Satisfied Renters and Prospective Homeowners

While the differences in political behaviour and preferences between renters and homeowners are well documented, we know much less about variation in the political behaviour and preferences of renters. While the literature may not explicitly assume renters are homogeneous, it has largely overlooked potential sources of heterogeneity within this group. If homeowners differ along some key dimensions on the degree of their political ideology and vote choice, it stands to reason that renters should too. In particular, the possibility that renters differ systematically in their ideology and partisanship remains underexplored.

Our contention is that renters differ with regard to their preference over homeownership. While prospective homeowners would like to own a home in the future, satisfied renters are perfectly content renting. As we show in the next section, these individuals are not only a non-negligible share of renters but sorting into satisfied "rentership" cannot be explained solely by socioeconomic characteristics or market conditions. Thus, this distinction is rooted not in the ability to enter the real estate market, but by true preferences over the possible returns (or burdens) of owning a home versus renting *at any given moment*. We are not distinguishing between people who will never want to own a home and those that always do, but rather conceptualize preferences over homeownership as fluid. In other words, we believe that many individuals that would prefer to rent right now will eventually become prospective homeowners. It is this potential transformation that is of theoretical interest to us–does wanting to enter the housing market flip a switch that partly shapes how individuals think about politics? Our tentative answer is yes. Becoming a prospective homeowner has social, behavioural, and financial implications that affect an individual's political preferences and behaviour. We consider these in turn. (Of course, we recognize that the relationship between housing preference and ideology may be endogenous, as pre-existing political views could also influence the desire to own a home. We return to this challenge in our research design, but our primary goal here is to establish the theoretical

grounds for distinguishing among renters.)

Studies across the developed world find that homeownership is associated with life satisfaction. In the United States, for example, homeownership is tightly linked to social aspirations and the American dream (Rohe and Stegman 1994). Likewise, it increases their sense of security (Zavisca and Gerber 2016). In settings where renter protections are limited–like Canada– renters may find long-term stability and security in buying a home. But these benefits accrue only to homeowners. Prospective homeowners, on the other hand, are more likely to feel less satisfied and secure with regard to their renting situation. In contexts where home buying initiatives are robust, this might yield more sociotropic individuals. But in places where home prices are high and government support is limited, the opposite is likely to be true: individuals may find themselves more concerned with their own well-being, less likely to trust the government to provide support to buy a home, and generally more conservative than satisfied renters.

On a cognitive level, becoming a prospective homeowner might shape political behaviour through two mechanisms. One, once renters commit to becoming homeowners they may find it difficult to back out. The path to homeownership begins with shifting consumer behaviour as renters increase their savings to make a down payment. As their savings increase, however, the stakes get higher as commitment bias kicks in. The more they save, the less likely they will deviate from actually buying a house, regardless of whether or not the current costs outweigh the benefits.[4] This mechanism might operate through social channels as well. The more you advertise to friends and family that you are on the market for a house, the more likely you are to remain committed to buying a house. We would expect that in such cases prospective homeowners will share deep preferences with actual homeowners on issues like property taxes.

Two, prospective homeownership requires exercising a large amount of self-restraint in terms of saving because most people tend to value immediate returns to delayed ones, i.e. present bias (O'Donoghue and Rabin 1999; Goda et al. 2020). In high-cost housing

[4]While renters save, too, their money is not constrained by a direct future purchase.

markets, this bias may be particularly acute since the opportunity cost of saving is higher than in lower-cost markets. People engaging in something difficult may value the efforts of those that came before them more highly. As such, they may be more likely to support policies that benefit the wealthy, thinking of them as more deserving. Together these biases tend to suggest that prospective homeowners, as they start down the path of saving for a down payment, will be more likely to identify with homeowners, shifting their views towards more conservative positions.

As to the financial implications of prospective homeownership, we borrow from the literature on patrimonial voting. At its core, the patrimonial voting story is one of wealth accumulation. Property ownership shapes ideology and voting behaviour because homeowners have a significant amount of wealth invested into houses. As holders of significant wealth, homeowners may find themselves less reliant on social services, less supportive of property tax and redistribution more specifically, and more likely to engage in activities that raise housing or sustain housing prices (NIMBY activities, for instance). A similar process should be at work with regard to prospective homeowners. To be able to buy a house, these prospective homeowners must engage in the same type of wealth accumulation that we presume makes homeowners more politically active and conservative. Specifically, to buy a house, homeowners must save (or otherwise acquire) a substantial amount of capital.[5]

This is surely the case in Canada. According to the National Bank of Canada (2021), the average home price across Canada is roughly $650,000. Assuming, a minimum down payment of 10%, the average prospective homeowner will have to save about $65,000 to be eligible to buy a house- a considerable amount to hold in cash. From a political psychology perspective, this substantial wealth accumulation should lead to distinguishable political effects; namely as wealth increases we should note changes in ideological self-placement

[5]We are not dismissing the recent work discussed above that challenges the patrimonial voting story, but instead we are focused on articulating a theoretical rationale for political differences among renters based on their desire to own. We leave to others the question of differences in specific housing policy preferences among renters.

and partisanship (Peterson 2016; Doherty, Gerber, and Green 2006.) It follows that these prospective homeowners should be concerned with protecting their growing investment with implications for their support for taxation and redistribution.

Of course, prospective homeowners are not homeowners. This potentially closes off some pathways to changes in political preferences. To give on example, whereas homeowners are physically grounded by their investment, prospective homeowners are not and could potentially pick up and leave one housing market (and political unit) for the next with relative ease. We believe, however, that a nontrivial share of prospective homeowners may have strong attachment to their communities due to work or family commitments. These strong social attachments should increase their political activism to ensure, for instance, that their future property values do not plummet. In short, social and political investments may limit how mobile prospective homeowners truly are. Other differences will remain, of course. Our point is that to the degree to which wealth considerations shape political participation and political attitudes, they should push in the same direction for homeowners and prospective homeowners, and that this distinguishes the latter from satisfied renters.

We also note that this process is compatible with the "folk economics" framework (Elmendorf, Nall, and Oklobdzija 2025). While the financial discipline and future-oriented mindset required to save for a home may shift an individual's general ideological disposition on matters of wealth and redistribution, their specific beliefs about *housing policy* may still be shaped by the same intuitive heuristics that affect the general public. An individual can begin to see themselves as a future asset-holder deserving of tax breaks while still believing that rent control is the most effective way to ensure affordability, or that developers are to blame for high prices. This suggests that a shift in ideology *may not* neatly map onto a shift in partisan allegiance.

Furthermore, the link between a changing ideology and federal vote choice is not straightforward. On the one hand, comparative research suggests that asset ownership

is more strongly associated with right-wing party support when the range of party policy positions are more polarized (Hellwig and McAllister 2019). In Canada, research suggests that voters' partisanship has become more strongly associated with redistributive policy positions in recent decades (Kevins and Soroka 2018), and that parties have also become increasingly polarized in their policy positions during the same period (Johnston 2023). Together, this would suggest that as Canadian prospective homeowners become more ideologically conservative, they would be more likely to support conservative parties. On the other hand, a voter's final ballot choice is the result of a complex calculation weighing a host of policy issues, candidate evaluations, long-standing partisan loyalties, and even strategic voting (Gidengil 2022; Rivard and Lockhart 2022); housing is but one factor among many.[6] In a federal system like Canada's, this link is weakened further, as voters may not attribute responsibility for housing policy solely to the federal government (see e.g., Cutler 2008; Mosannef et al. 2025). Blame or credit can be assigned to provincial or municipal actors, complicating the connection between an individual's housing concerns and their federal partisan choice.

We derive two hypotheses from this argument. First, because we think of prospective homeowners and homeowners as analytically equivalent with respect to wealth accumulation:

> H_1: Renters that express a preferences for homeownership should be more conservative than those that express a preference for renting.

While some suggest that the effect of homeownership extends to party preferences (André et al. 2018), we note that renters and homeowners are different in their preferences over housing prices. As prices increase, prospective homeowners will be increasingly priced out of the market. Thus, while renters who are prospective homeowners may be more conservative on average along some dimensions, they are not necessarily fully conservative and might be supportive of certain policies that are more in line with redistribution. For

[6] Much of this literature also indicates that the politics of vote choice may be fundamentally different in Quebec.

example, as they still need to enter the market, they may be more likely to support policies like rent control or housing subsidy programs that are broadly popular among the public (Elmendorf, Nall, and Oklobdzija 2024).

While a shift toward a more conservative ideology seems plausible (H1), we do not expect this to translate directly into increased support for conservative parties. The link between a general ideological shift and a specific vote choice is attenuated by several factors. As noted, voters' final ballot decisions are multi-determined, influenced by a range of issues beyond housing, and in a federal system, voters may not attribute housing policy responsibility to the national government. Moreover, the "folk economic" beliefs individuals hold about housing (Elmendorf, Nall, and Oklobdzija 2025, 2024) may lead a prospective homeowner to adopt a more conservative worldview on wealth and taxation while simultaneously supporting non-market housing interventions not typically associated with conservative parties. Therefore:

> H_2: Renters that express a preferences for homeownership should not be more likley to vote for conservative parties.

4 Context: Renters in Canada

Before turning to our empirical analysis, we provide context on the political behaviour and attitudes of Canadian renters using data from the 2019 Canadian Election Study (CES) (Stephenson et al. 2020). Our task is to show that Canadian homeowners and renters conform broadly to the existing literature's expectations.

We begin by examining whether renters are more liberal than homeowners using the 2019 CES data. We identify respondents that say they (or a member of their household) own a residence and code them as homeowners. After excluding non-responses, we code the remaining respondents as renters. We then identify political views. To do so we use self-reported data from CES documenting respondent's placement on a left to right scale,

ranging from 0 to 10, where higher values indicate closer alignment with right-wing views. 1 shows the distribution of responses for renters and homeowners (n = 14,067). We note the mean of each distribution with a vertical line. The mean shows that renters (mean = 4.8) are more leftist than homeowners (mean = 5.2), and that such a difference is statistically significant at conventional levels (p-value=<0.05). Moreover, the distributions themselves are statistically distinguishable from each other (p-value=<0.05). At the same time, Figure 1 shows that there is substantial heterogeneity across groups. A great deal of homeowners *and* renters identify as having fairly conservative views. In other words, while homeowners may be, on average, more conservative than renters, quite a few renters are *more* conservative than some homeowners.

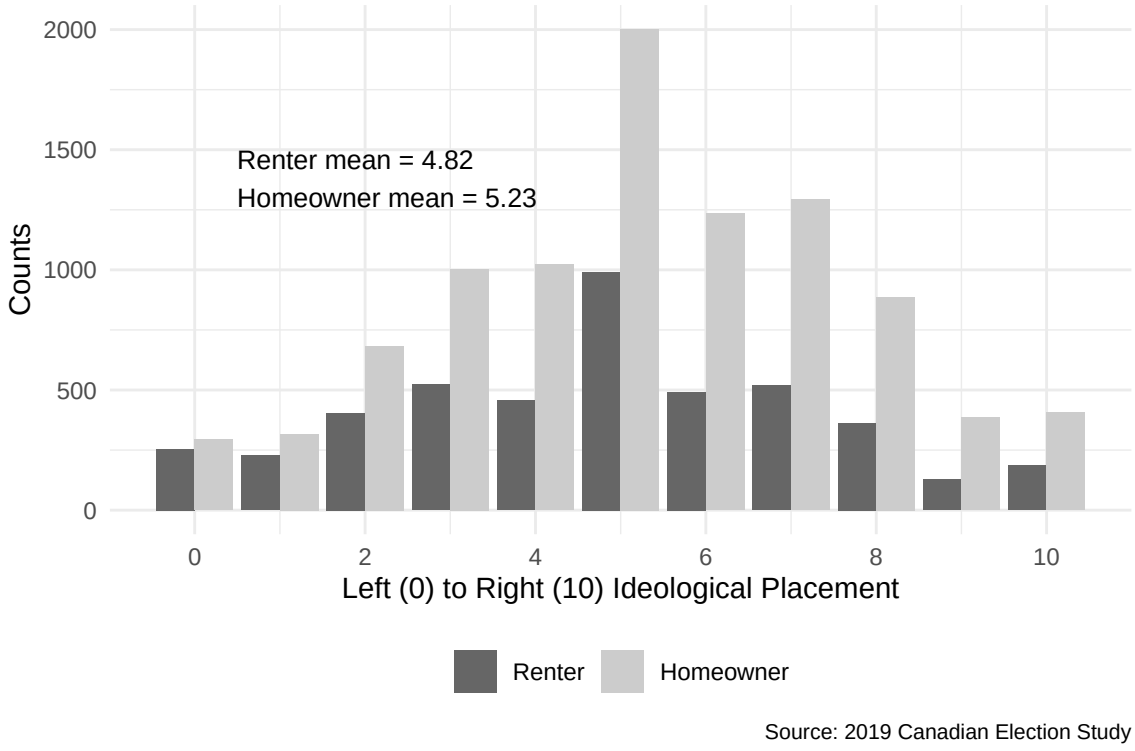

Figure 1: A Considerable Share of Renters Have Conservative Views,

Next, we examine differences in political behaviour. First, we look at broad measures of political participation. Table 1 explores differences across homeowners and renters with regard to their involvement in politics using the 2019 CES post-election survey. The post-election survey re-contacts a share of respondents from the original sample. We code

Table 1: Share Attending a Political Meeting

Homeownership	Attends	Doesn't Attend	Attends (weighted)	Doesn't Attend (weighted)
Homeowner	22.31% (1,681)	77.69% (5,854)	21.7%	78.3%
Renter	20.13% (490)	79.87% (1,944)	20.3%	79.7%

Note: Chi-square for unweighted sample, p = 0.03; for weighted, p = 0.23.

Table 2: Self-Reported Voting behaviour

Homeownership	Uncertain voter	Certain voter	Uncertain voter (weighted)	Certain voter (weighted)
Homeowner	16.24% (3,889)	83.76% (20,058)	17.7%	82.3%
Renter	29.02% (3,053)	70.98% (7,467)	31.7%	68.3%

Note: Chi-square for unweighted sample, p = 0; for weighted, p = 0.

for political participation by identifying respondents that say they have attended a political meeting within the last 12 months (n = 9,969). We code any respondent that says that they have attended any such meeting, even once, as "attended." We exclude those that prefer not to answer. The table shows the cross-tabulation of homeownership status and political meeting. The data show that homeowners (21.7%) are more likely than renters (20.3%) to report that they have attended a political meeting, though this difference is not statistically significant.

Perhaps differences are more obvious at the ballot box. We look at this question by identifying respondents that say they have voted (in an advance poll) or are certain to vote in the pre-election survey. We code this share of respondents as certain voters. After removing those who say they are ineligible to vote or prefer not to respond to the question, all remaining responses are coded uncertain voters. Table 2 shows the cross tabulation across homeownership and likely voter status. The table confirms that Canadian renters (and homeowners) behave in accordance with what the literature has described in others settings: homeowners are more likely to be certain voters, by about 14 percentage points (p-value=<0.05). No matter how we cut the data, homeowners report higher certainty regarding voting in the federal election.

Finally, we assess whether renters are more likely to vote for more conservative parties. Figure 2 shows vote choice among six national Canadian parties for the entire electorate

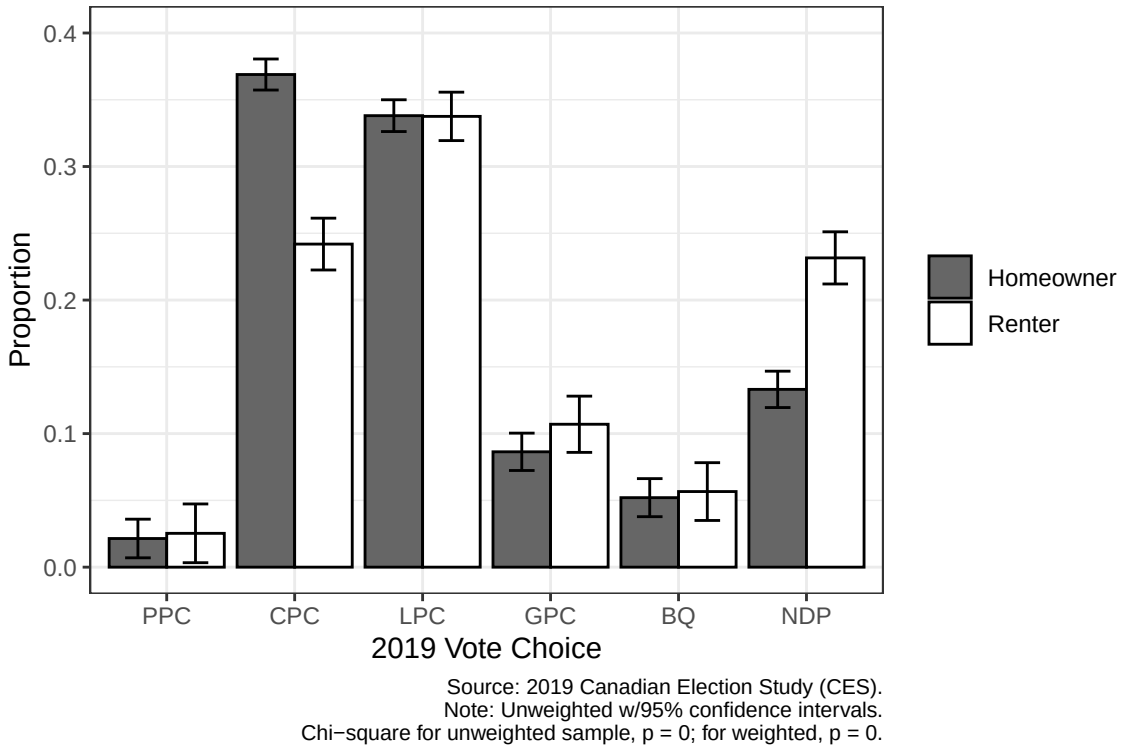

Figure 2: 2019 Vote Choice Among Homeowners and Renters

grouped by homeownership. Substantial differences are apparent. Homeowners are more likely to vote for the CPC than renters, while renters are more likely to vote for the NDP (and to some extent the GPC). Note that the share of renters voting for the CPC is not trivial; 24.2% of renters vote for the CPC. If we add voters for the PPC, 26.7% of renters vote for conservative parties.

To summarize, in line with the existing literature, Canadian renters appear to be on average more liberal than homeowners and less politically engaged. They are also less likely to vote for the CPC than homeowners. But these averages obscure quite a bit of variation in political views and engagement *among* renters. Many renters have conservative views, are fairly active across political activities, and vote for conservative parties. Our argument about prospective homeowners can explain this heterogeneity.

5 Research Design

To assess the relationship between prospective homeownership and political beliefs and behaviour, we collect a national survey of Canadian renters. Our focus is on establishing the plausibility of our argument. Studying prospective homeownership is difficult because people are not sorted randomly into preferences for homeownership. Rather, these preferences are built on contextual circumstances, including resources available to individuals as well as their pre-existing levels of political behaviour (Manturuk, Lindblad, and Quercia 2017). Prospective homeownership may very well be endogenous to ideology and vote choice. Thus, we can make no causal claims. Still existing work provides some guidance on how to proceed. We know, for example, that ownership itself is determined in part by resource accumulation which is in turn dictated by income. Similarly, age and family composition are key determinants the choice to buy a home. Our strategy, therefore, revolves around modeling this relationship by adjusting for a host of plausible confounders. We leave to future work the task of untangling the causal relationship.

Table 3: 2020 Renter Survey Descriptive Statistics

	Indicator	Mean	SD	N	Percent
	Ideology (L-R, 0-10)	3.16	1.99	1533	100.00
	CPC+PPC voter	0.08	0.27	1533	100.00
	CPC voter	0.06	0.24	1533	100.00
	Education (1-5)	2.16	0.76	1533	100.00
	Kids	0.11	0.32	1533	100.00
	Woman	0.40	0.49	1533	100.00
	Income (1-17)	6.75	4.08	1533	100.00
Age	under 30			378	24.66
	30s			411	26.81
	40s			183	11.94
	50s			179	11.68

	Indicator	Mean	SD	N	Percent
	60s			208	13.57
	70 and over			174	11.35
Location	Not big 4			709	46.25
	Montreal			353	23.03
	Vancouver			119	7.76
	Toronto			248	16.18
	Ottawa			104	6.78

5.1 Data

Our sample consists of 1,845 self-identified renters who responded to our housing survey administered by Vox Pop Labs during the last week of January and first week of February 2020 (before the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic reached Canada). Participants were aged 19 or older and Canadian residents. All participants were drawn from the Vox Pop Labs online respondent panel, which contains approximately 650,000 panelists in Canada.[7] The dataset used for the analysis consists of two components that were linked, 1) 37 questions about experiences and preferences regarding housing collected in January 2020, and 2) socio-demographic questions and political preferences from the respondents' initial participation in the Vox Pop Labs election survey conducted previously. We also use the respondent's forward sorting area (FSA) to code respondents who live in one of the four largest cities (Ottawa, Montreal, Toronto, and Vancouver) or elsewhere. Table 3 includes descriptive statistics for our sample.[8] The sample allows us to generalize about Canadian renters willing to speak on their political opinions and behaviours.

[7]No remunerative incentives were offered to participants. Potential participants were invited by email and on the Vox Pop Labs survey panel dashboard to participate in a survey study about housing. Vox Pop is a not-for-profit organization dedicated to promoting civic engagement and informed dialogue through scientifically rigorous survey-based applications. Approved by [redacted], approval #[redacted].

[8]After listwise deletion, we analyze a samples of 1,573 and 1,533 respondents over the age of 20 years old.

5.2 Dependent Variables

We have two dependent variables. The first is *ideological orientation*. We measure this concept by asking respondents to place themselves on an 11-point left (0) to right (10) scale. The resulting measure has a mean of 3.16 and a standard deviation of 1.99. This implies that most of the sample is fairly liberal in orientation. The distribution of answers among respondents can be seen in Figure 3.

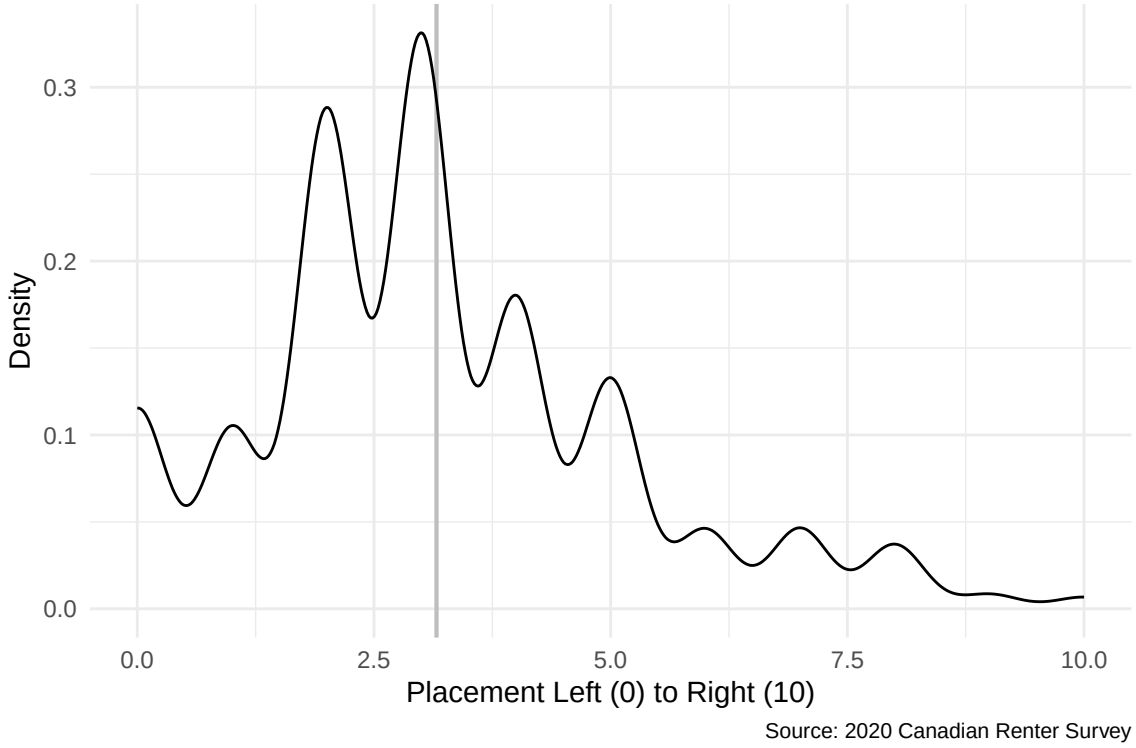

Figure 3: 2019 Ideological Self-Placement Among Renters

Second, we measure conservative vote choice. To do so, we ask respondents whether they voted and exclude those that did not or those that spoiled their ballot. We code those that voted for the CPC or PPC as *conservative voters*, given that these parties are generally considered to align with traditional, right-wing values. All other respondents casting valid ballots are the reference category. Roughly 7.63% of our sample are conservative voters.[9] The unweighted percentage of renters in our renter survey who reported voting for either

[9] In the Supplementary Materials, we repeat our analyses for CPC voters, who are 6.26% of the estimation sample.

the CPC or PPC is much lower than what renters reported in the 2019 CES. For this reason, in the statistical analyses that follow, we present weighted results in the main text.

5.3 Independent Variable

Our primary independent variable of interest is prospective homeownership. We conceptualize prospective homeowners as renters who are oriented towards future ownership, in contrast to those content with renting. We operationalize this concept by asking respondents:

> "Right now, would you prefer to own your home rather than rent?"

Respondents that say they would prefer to own are coded as *prospective homeowners*, whereas those that the prefer to rent are coded as *satisfied renters*.

We acknowledge that this question measures a preference or aspiration for ownership, rather than a concrete, active plan to purchase a home. However, we argue this is a valid and conceptually appropriate measure for our argument, which posits that the political effects of homeownership begin with the psychological and social reorientation that precedes active financial planning.[10] Our goal is to capture the crucial segment of renters whose outlooks are shaped by the aspiration of future ownership, even if they are currently constrained by material circumstances.

[10]Our thinking relies on three arguments. First, our measure effectively identifies the population from which future buyers will emerge. A preference to own is a necessary precondition for a plan to purchase. External data confirms a significant overlap. For instance, real estate market analyses consistently show that the vast majority of renters who intend to buy also prefer ownership. See Royal LePage (2024). Second, the 58.3% of our sample who prefer to own aligns with historical data from agencies like the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC), which show a similar proportion of young renters eventually transitioning to ownership. This suggests our measure captures a group with a realistic potential to become homeowners. Third, our own survey data indicate respondents interpret this preference pragmatically. The top reasons cited for not yet purchasing are financial barriers like insufficient savings and local affordability (see Supplementary Materials, Table S7), not a lack of desire. This suggests that for most respondents, the preference for ownership is not an abstract ideal but a tangible goal constrained by material factors. Taken together, our operationalization identifies a group based not on an ideological attachment to property, but on a concrete aspiration whose political effects we aim to uncover.

5.4 Estimation Strategy

We estimate a series of simple statistical models on our observational data to assess the plausibility of our arguments. First, we estimate the relationship between prospective homeownership (PH) and ideological self-placement. The estimating equation is:

$$y_i = \gamma PH + \mathbf{X}_i\beta + u_i \tag{1}$$

where y_i is ideological self-placement, PH is an indicator for whether the respondent would prefer to own a home rather than to rent, $\mathbf{X}_i$ is a vector of adjustment variables, and u_i is an error term. We estimate this as a linear equation with raking weights[11] and with fixed effects for province or region.[12]

Next, we estimate the relationship between prospective homeownership (PH) and vote choice in the last election (2019). The estimating equation is:

$$y_i = \gamma PH + \mathbf{X}_i\beta + u_i \tag{2}$$

where y_i is voting for either the CPC or PPC in fall 2019 for respondent i, PH is an indicator for whether the respondent would prefer to own a home rather than to rent, $\mathbf{X}_i$ is a vector of adjustment variables, and u_i is an error term. Because the dependent variable is binary, we estimate this equation via logit with fixed effects for province or region.

[11] Raking weights were constructed using population marginals for renters from from the population-adjusted 2016 Canadian Census Statistics Canada (2023) (province or region, binary gender, age, education) and the 2019 CES (for renters' vote choice). Weights are trimmed to exclude the 7.5% most extreme weights, which are approximately two to three times the mean weight. We also estimate the models of political ideology using ordered logistic regression, and these results are in Table S4.

[12] Provincial region is coded into five categories: British Columbia, Quebec, the Prairies, Ontario, and the Eastern provinces. Northern Territories were excluded due to too few respondents.

6 Results

6.1 Ideological Self-Placement

Our analysis finds support for H_1. Table 4 examines the association between self-placement on an ideological scale and prospective homeownership across three models. Model 1 adjusts for age, education, gender, and region, whereas Model 2 further adjusts for income. Model 3 includes vote choice in the 2019 election. We think this variable might introduce post-treatment bias since becoming a prospective homeowner makes individuals both more conservative and possibly more likely to vote for the conservative party (in our hypothesized causal ordering.) If true, the inclusion of vote choice would absorb some of the effect of prospective homeownership on ideology, attenuating the coefficient's magnitude. For these reason, we de-emphasize Model 3.[13]

Across all models, the relationship between ideology and prospective homeownership is positive and statistically significant at the $p < 0.01$ level. Since higher values on the self-placement scale indicate more conservative views, the models suggest that prospective homeowners are more conservative than satisfied renters. This relationship is fairly consistent across model specifications though, as expected, the magnitude of the effect is diminished in the model adjusting for vote choice.[14]

How large are these effects in substantive terms? Figure 4 plots the predicted effects of prospective homeownership on ideology for both satisfied renters and prospective homeowners. Predictions are adjusted for age, education, province, income, and sex.[15] While both groups are fairly liberal, with scores well under mid-point of 5 on the 0-10 scale, we expect that prospective homeowners will be notably more conservative than satisfied renters. We estimate the typical satisfied renter would take on a value of approximate 3.41

[13]We do not believe the statistical significance of the estimates suffer from high collinearity, except perhaps between ideology and vote choice. See Table S2 for a correlation matrix and Table S3 for variance inflation factors for the models in Table 4.

[14]See the Supplementary Materials, Table S8 for unweighted regression results, which are similar.

[15]Other covariates are set at their means or modal category: under 30 years old, 1.65 mean education, British Columbia, no kids, not in Vancouver, a man, and mean income of 6.54.

Table 4: Regressing ideological placement on prospective homeownership and covariates

	(1)	(2)	(3)
Prospective Homeowner	0.480**	0.467**	0.335**
	(0.151)	(0.152)	(0.110)
30-39	−0.226	−0.289	−0.191
	(0.198)	(0.203)	(0.145)
40-49	0.548*	0.462+	0.024
	(0.254)	(0.255)	(0.193)
50-59	1.042***	1.001***	0.654**
	(0.275)	(0.277)	(0.209)
60-69	0.516*	0.574*	0.344+
	(0.246)	(0.250)	(0.179)
70+	1.045***	1.136***	0.622**
	(0.249)	(0.249)	(0.190)
Education	−0.091	−0.153+	−0.132+
	(0.084)	(0.091)	(0.073)
Kids	0.169	0.121	−0.120
	(0.231)	(0.241)	(0.189)
Montreal	−0.299	−0.303	−0.033
	(0.236)	(0.237)	(0.197)
Vancouver	−0.113	−0.188	−0.218
	(0.388)	(0.395)	(0.298)
Toronto	−0.601*	−0.625*	−0.216
	(0.265)	(0.271)	(0.199)
Ottawa	−0.453	−0.501	−0.134
	(0.318)	(0.328)	(0.221)
Woman	−0.966***	−0.928***	−0.215*
	(0.141)	(0.142)	(0.109)
Income		0.057**	0.045**
		(0.019)	(0.014)
Num.Obs.	1573	1533	1533
R2	0.117	0.122	0.447
R2 Adj.	0.107	0.112	0.438
AIC	6837.3	6656.4	5964.3
BIC	8743.1	8506.9	7394.9
Log.Lik.	−4301.608	−4180.093	−3602.075
F	7.327	6.610	24.311
RMSE	1.99	1.98	1.63

+ $p < 0.1$, * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$ Note: The dependent variable is ideological self-placement, with higher values indicating more conservative ideology. Models include survey weights, fixed effects for province/region, and robust standard errors. Model in column 3 includes vote choice in 2019 election.

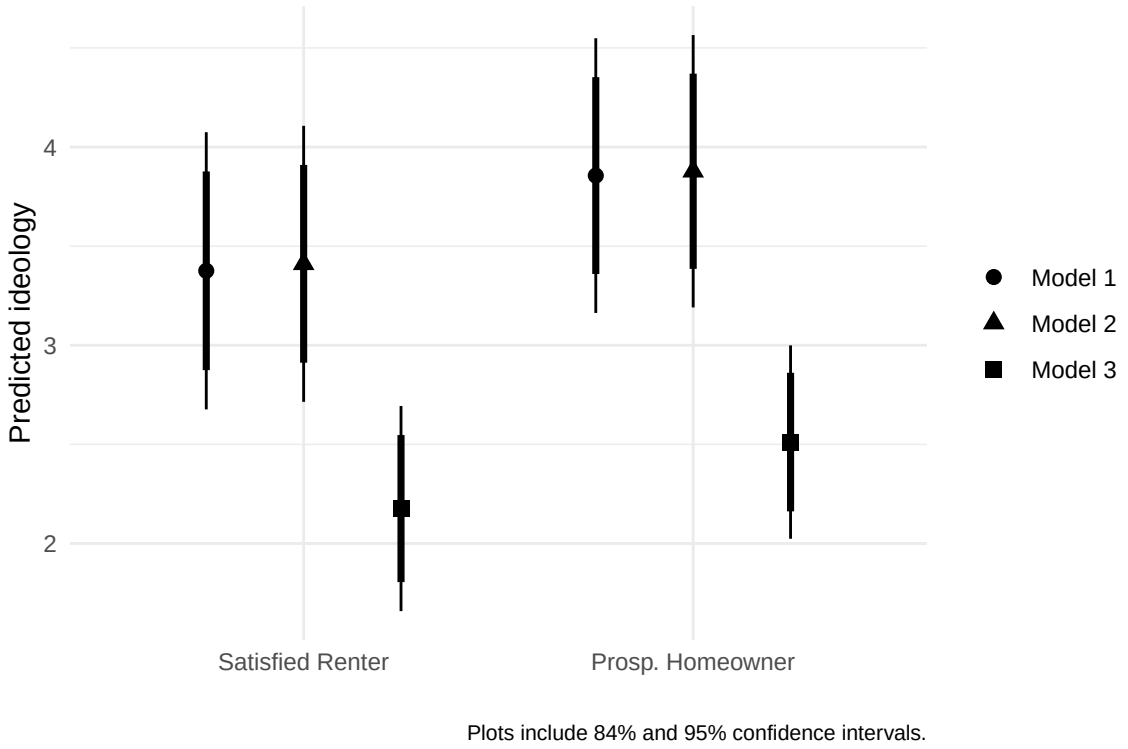

Figure 4: Predicted Ideological Self-Placement Among Renters

on the ideological scale, versus 3.88 for prospective homeowners, nearly half a point on the ideology scale, a non-negligible increase.

6.2 Vote Choice

Table 5 examines the association between voting for conservative parties (the PPC and CPC) and prospective homeownership across three models.[16] Model 1 adjusts for age, education, sex, region, and location, whereas Model 2 further adjusts for income. Model 3 includes left-to-right self-placement. Across all models, the relationship between voting for conservative parties and prospective homeownership is positive but not statistically significant at conventional levels. This finding is consistent with our theoretical expectation that a general shift in ideology does not necessarily translate into a change in vote choice.

[16]In the Supplementary Materials, Table S9 presents results for CPC voters, and Table S10 presents results for conservative parties using estimation methods appropriate for rare events (Heinze and Schemper 2002). We also include in SM Table S6 results for regressing self-reported voting on prospective homeownership, using penalized rare-events logistic regression estimates.

Table 5: Regressing Vote for PPC or CPC on Prospective Homeownership and Covariates

	(1)	(2)	(3)
Prosp. Homeowner	0.259	0.235	−0.160
	(0.240)	(0.243)	(0.313)
30-39	−0.239	−0.211	0.107
	(0.335)	(0.340)	(0.440)
40-49	0.651+	0.644+	0.868+
	(0.350)	(0.358)	(0.453)
50-59	0.513	0.441	−0.457
	(0.362)	(0.372)	(0.518)
60-69	0.172	0.231	−0.253
	(0.380)	(0.383)	(0.476)
70+	0.465	0.516	−0.195
	(0.396)	(0.400)	(0.489)
Education	−0.074	−0.090	0.071
	(0.122)	(0.130)	(0.183)
Kids	0.385	0.431	0.534
	(0.324)	(0.332)	(0.402)
Montreal	−0.918*	−0.843+	−1.168*
	(0.434)	(0.445)	(0.576)
Vancouver	−0.454	−0.503	−0.589
	(0.580)	(0.601)	(0.883)
Toronto	−0.663+	−0.569	−0.224
	(0.354)	(0.368)	(0.484)
Ottawa	−0.869+	−0.752	−0.578
	(0.505)	(0.513)	(0.547)
Woman	−1.714***	−1.663***	−1.434***
	(0.270)	(0.269)	(0.336)
Income		0.005	−0.060
		(0.029)	(0.037)
Num.Obs.	1582	1542	1533
R2	0.137	0.131	0.482
R2 Adj.	0.127	0.120	0.475
AIC	1378.1	1351.4	827.3
BIC	1440.7	1416.1	900.4
Log.Lik.	−650.348	−634.652	−373.175
F	4.519	4.014	9.752
RMSE	0.29	0.29	0.23

+ $p < 0.1$, * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$ Note: The DV is a dummy for voting for the PPC or CPC. Models include survey weights, fixed effects for province/region, and robust standard errors. Model 3 includes left-right ideology (0-10).

Our argument there was that this would be attributed to the multiple determinants of voting, of which housing policy is but one possibly small component.[17] Figure 5 presents these results in terms of predicted probabilities adjusting again for age, education, region, city size, income, and sex. Whereas we would expect satisfied renters to vote for conservative parties with a 0.23 probability, we expect prospective homeowners to do so with a 0.27-0.28 probability. The magnitude of the difference is not statistically significant, likely due to significant variation within both groups. While prospective homeowners might be more conservative, this does not directly translate into support for conservative parties.

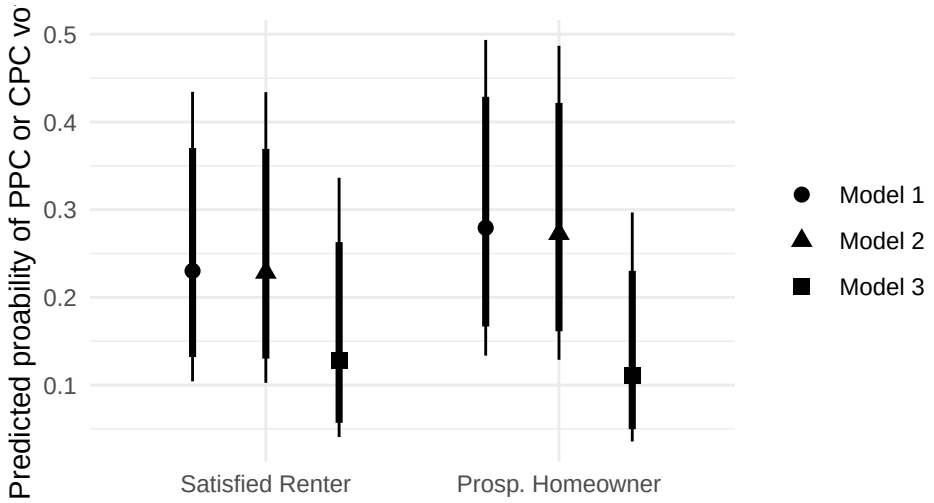

Figure 5: Predicted Vote Choice Among Renters

Together, the preceding results provide evidence consistent with both of our hypotheses. Prospective homeownership is associated with a more conservative ideological self-placement among renters, but this does not translate into a significantly higher probability of voting for conservative parties. The direction and significance of the control variables are broadly consistent with what is known about political ideology and vote choice in Canada.

[17] In the Supplemental Materials, Table S5, we regress LPC vote on prospective homewonership and find no significant relationship.

6.3 Additional Robustness Checks

In addition to the alternative measures and estimation methods noted above, we assess the possibility that specific housing markets are driving the results. We collect data on average income by FSA and merge it to our data. First, our results do not change when adjusting for these characteristics.[18] Second, we also interact average FSA income with prospective homeownership and find no heterogeneous effects by FSA income levels.[19] Third, we assess whether respondents in certain high-priced cities are responsible for the overall effects. To do so, we rely on PadMapper's Canadian Rent Report which identifies the top 10 most expensive cities in Canada to rent a 1 bedroom apartment using their own data. We use these data to operationalize high rent markets in different ways (Top 2, 3, 4, 5, and 10 most expensive cities) and interact such a term with PH.[20] We find no evidence that the effect of PH on ideological self-placement or vote choice depends on high rent markets, and that our results remain the same when adjusting for these terms.

7 Implications

The political science literature on housing has largely ignored potential heterogeneity in the political preferences and behaviour of renters. This paper addresses this gap by considering how the path to becoming a homeowner—what we call *prospective homeownership*—shapes the politics of renters. Our main argument is that renters are heterogeneous in their political preferences and behaviour. First, we make an analytic distinction between prospective homeowners and satisfied renters. We argue that prospective homeowners share political preferences, and therefore ideological self-placement, with actual homeowners and that their preferences distinguish them from satisfied renters. Using a unique survey of Canadian renters, our evidence supports this argument.

Our findings have important implications for the literature on housing. Our argument

[18] See Supplementary Materials, Table S11.
[19] See Supplementary Materials, Table S12.
[20] See Supplementary Materials, Tables S13 and S14.

is built around the notion that homeownership, and specifically the path to homeownership, is a continuous process shaping social and political identity, not a binary treatment that cleanly distinguishes those with a house and those without. More specifically, we demonstrate that the literature overstates political differences between prospective and current homeowners. Our key finding that the path to homeownership is associated with a more conservative ideology but not with conservative vote choice highlights that political identity is not monolithic. This aligns with a context where recent research reveals that the political beliefs of both groups are far more complex and internally contradictory than previously assumed (Elmendorf, Nall, and Oklobdzija 2025, 2024) and vote choice may be shaped by party policy positions on housing or other assets (Hellwig and McAllister 2019).

This paper also makes an important empirical contribution. Much of the literature on housing in North America focuses on the United States. While some authors do explore these issues in Canada, they do not typically rely on national survey data to support their claims.[21] We hope our data and findings can help inform current and future debates about these issues in Canada, and through them, influence the larger comparative literature on housing. Other scholars can use our approach to test the degree to which our claims travel to other countries.

Our findings also raise a compelling puzzle when viewed through the lens of recent American scholarship. The "folk economics" literature suggests that US voters are highly skeptical that building more homes will improve affordability (Elmendorf, Nall, and Oklobdzija 2025). Yet, in the contemporary Canadian political landscape, federal parties across the ideological spectrum have converged on a message emphasizing the need to "build more homes." We suggest that the political appeal of increased construction may resonate with parties because they believe it signals to voters that they are serious about government action to make housing available. In a political environment where voters tend to blame actors like developers for high prices (Elmendorf, Nall, and Oklobdzija 2025), a pledge to build might resonate with voters regardless of their specific beliefs about market effects.

[21] For example, Mcgregor and Spicer (2016) use administrative data.

This would explain why parties emphasize the tangible act of building without making the politically risky and potentially less credible promise of explicitly lowering prices.

We leave various questions unsettled. Does the effect of homeownership on political behaviour wane over time? Does it peak as families grow older and become more likely to retire, or when they become more numerous and outgrow the home? What do we make of homeowners refinancing their homes, or on the market to sell or buy a house? Our work pushes the comparative housing literature forward by suggesting that answers to these questions are likely to depend on what analytical groups are uncovered. When it comes to housing, our paper shows that heterogeneous effects do exist, that they deserve theorizing, and that future work should continue to untangle this relationship further.

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The Political Preferences of Prospective Homeowners: Evidence from Canada

Supplementary Materials

Table S1: Renter Survey Descriptive Statistics

		Satisfied Renter (N=639)		Prosp. Homeowner (N=894)	
		Mean	Std. Dev.	Mean	Std. Dev.
Ideology (L-R, 0-10)		3.22	1.86	3.12	2.08
CPC+PPC voter		0.07	0.25	0.08	0.28
CPC voter		0.05	0.23	0.07	0.25
Education (1-5)		2.20	0.80	2.13	0.74
Kids		0.08	0.26	0.14	0.35
Woman		0.40	0.49	0.40	0.49
Income (1-17)		6.51	4.13	6.92	4.04
		N	Pct.	N	Pct.
Age	under 30	117	18.3	261	29.2
	30s	111	17.4	300	33.6
	40s	61	9.5	122	13.6
	50s	86	13.5	93	10.4
	60s	127	19.9	81	9.1
	70 and over	137	21.4	37	4.1
Location	Not big 4	311	48.7	398	44.5
	Montreal	170	26.6	183	20.5
	Vancouver	36	5.6	83	9.3
	Toronto	82	12.8	166	18.6
	Ottawa	40	6.3	64	7.2

Source: Renter survey (2020), unweighted.

Table S2: Renter survey correlation matrix

	Ideology	CPC+PPC	CPC	Age	Ed.	Kids	Woman	Inc.
Ideology (L-R, 0-10)	NA	0.48	0.42	0.17	-0.09	0.03	-0.14	0.04
CPC+PPC voter	0.48	NA	0.90	0.02	-0.12	0.04	-0.14	-0.01
CPC voter	0.42	0.90	NA	0.04	-0.11	0.05	-0.11	0.00
Age	0.17	0.02	0.04	NA	0.02	-0.08	-0.05	-0.14
Education (1-5)	-0.09	-0.12	-0.11	0.02	NA	0.05	0.03	0.20
Kids	0.03	0.04	0.05	-0.08	0.05	NA	0.00	0.14
Woman	-0.14	-0.14	-0.11	-0.05	0.03	0.00	NA	-0.03

	Ideology	CPC+PPC	CPC	Age	Ed.	Kids	Woman	Inc.
Income (1-17)	0.04	-0.01	0.00	-0.14	0.20	0.14	-0.03	NA

Table S3: Variance Inflation Factors (VIF)

IV indicator	Ideology 1	Ideology 2	Ideology 3	VC 1	VC 2	VC 3	df
Prospective Homeowner	1.283	1.276	1.217	1.337	1.347	1.474	1
Age	1.790	1.864	2.066	2.058	2.093	3.190	5
Education	1.072	1.187	1.203	1.103	1.184	1.227	1
Woman	1.095	1.088	1.170	1.202	1.195	1.107	1
Kids	1.195	1.225	1.188	1.216	1.278	1.361	1
Location	12.490	12.600	16.148	6.664	7.468	10.866	4
Province	11.747	11.690	20.100	7.476	8.010	11.829	4
Income		1.396	1.277		1.315	1.340	1
Vote choice			2.567				6
Ideology						1.587	1

Table S4: Ordered logistic regression of ideological placement on prospective homeownership and covariates

	(1)	(2)	(3)
Prospective Homeowner	0.380**	0.365**	0.372**
	(0.122)	(0.123)	(0.118)
Age 30-39	−0.109	−0.177	−0.227
	(0.168)	(0.173)	(0.154)
Age 40-49	0.560**	0.497*	0.060
	(0.214)	(0.216)	(0.210)
Age 50-59	0.935***	0.896***	0.820***
	(0.215)	(0.217)	(0.211)
Age 60-69	0.532**	0.570**	0.427*
	(0.199)	(0.201)	(0.197)
Age 70+	1.028***	1.098***	0.738***
	(0.211)	(0.213)	(0.209)
Education	−0.082	−0.139+	−0.168*
	(0.070)	(0.076)	(0.081)
Kids	0.154	0.093	−0.072
	(0.193)	(0.205)	(0.206)
Montreal	−0.246	−0.252	−0.024
	(0.186)	(0.190)	(0.210)
Vancouver	−0.122	−0.206	−0.321
	(0.321)	(0.327)	(0.316)
Toronto	−0.496*	−0.516*	−0.203
	(0.224)	(0.229)	(0.222)
Ottawa	−0.448+	−0.474+	−0.146
	(0.269)	(0.280)	(0.240)
Woman	−0.811***	−0.788***	−0.261*
	(0.120)	(0.121)	(0.120)
Income		0.048**	0.054***
		(0.016)	(0.015)
Num.Obs.	3596	3517	3517
edf	27	28	34

+ $p < 0.1$, * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$ Note: The dependent variable is ideological self-placement, with higher values indicating more conservative ideology. Models include survey weights, fixed effects for province/region, and robust standard errors. Model in column 3 includes vote choice in 2019 election.

Table S5: Regressing Vote for LPC on Prospective Homeownership and Covariates

	(1)	(2)	(3)
Prosp. Homeowner	0.028	0.058	0.077
	(0.150)	(0.152)	(0.150)
30-39	0.042	−0.034	−0.082
	(0.200)	(0.205)	(0.205)
40-49	0.190	0.138	0.194
	(0.246)	(0.255)	(0.254)
50-59	0.566*	0.564*	0.700**
	(0.240)	(0.244)	(0.242)
60-69	0.375	0.380	0.458+
	(0.241)	(0.243)	(0.241)
70+	0.577*	0.640*	0.766**
	(0.261)	(0.267)	(0.266)
Education	0.221*	0.175+	0.173+
	(0.093)	(0.098)	(0.097)
Kids	0.032	−0.058	−0.033
	(0.230)	(0.235)	(0.234)
Montreal	0.124	0.135	0.086
	(0.261)	(0.264)	(0.267)
Vancouver	0.498	0.433	0.417
	(0.389)	(0.395)	(0.400)
Toronto	−0.165	−0.400	−0.464+
	(0.239)	(0.250)	(0.248)
Ottawa	0.018	−0.148	−0.193
	(0.312)	(0.324)	(0.324)
Woman	0.292*	0.308*	0.223
	(0.138)	(0.141)	(0.143)
Income		0.057**	0.063***
		(0.018)	(0.019)
Num.Obs.	1582	1542	1533
R2	0.032	0.040	0.049
R2 Adj.	0.022	0.029	0.037
AIC	2051.4	1991.6	1965.9
BIC	2135.2	2078.9	2059.5
Log.Lik.	−997.604	−966.029	−952.746
F	2.265	2.660	3.096
RMSE	0.45	0.45	0.45

+ p < 0.1, * p < 0.05, ** p < 0.01, *** p < 0.001 Note: The DV is a dummy for voting for the LPC. Models include survey weights, fixed effects for province/region, and robust standard errors. Model 3 includes left-right ideology (0-10).

Table S6: Regressing Voted on Prospective Homeownership and Covariates

	(1)	(2)	(3)
Prosp. Homeowner	0.010	−0.018	−0.071
	(0.278)	(0.278)	(0.279)
30-39	−0.107	−0.142	−0.076
	(0.388)	(0.392)	(0.392)
40-49	0.283	0.328	0.274
	(0.425)	(0.425)	(0.426)
50-59	0.338	0.328	0.220
	(0.423)	(0.421)	(0.423)
60-69	0.045	0.028	−0.059
	(0.451)	(0.450)	(0.451)
70+	−0.349	−0.404	−0.562
	(0.555)	(0.555)	(0.558)
Education	−0.224	−0.174	−0.113
	(0.174)	(0.178)	(0.177)
Kids	0.732*	0.689+	0.662+
	(0.329)	(0.340)	(0.338)
Montreal	0.201	0.208	0.194
	(0.400)	(0.400)	(0.401)
Vancouver	0.327	0.666	0.661
	(0.600)	(0.647)	(0.648)
Toronto	−0.214	−0.140	−0.054
	(0.647)	(0.646)	(0.646)
Ottawa	−0.154	−0.103	−0.064
	(0.696)	(0.694)	(0.693)
Woman	−0.511+	−0.578*	−0.461
	(0.281)	(0.285)	(0.289)
Income		−0.033	−0.043
		(0.035)	(0.036)
Ideological Self-Placement			0.168**
			(0.059)
Num.Obs.	1596	1556	1547
R2	0.015	0.016	0.021
RMSE	1.01	1.01	1.01

+ $p < 0.1$, * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$ Note: The DV is a dummy for reported not voting. Estimates from penalized rare event logistic regression and include fixed effects for province/region

Table S7: Reasons Why Prospective Homeowners Have Yet To Buy

	Not at all important	Somewhat important	Important	Very important
Low Savings	7.00%	8.85%	17.80%	66.36%
Affordability (area)	7.73%	8.75%	17.29%	66.23%
Affordability (size)	27.69%	13.95%	16.01%	42.36%
Bad Credit	45.09%	17.25%	13.43%	24.24%
Moving Soon	68.87%	11.83%	8.10%	11.19%
Unstable Family	68.37%	15.09%	8.95%	7.60%
Bad Investment	45.54%	26.86%	16.26%	11.33%

Table S8: Unweighted Linear Models of Ideology with Robust Standard Errors

	(1)	(2)	(3)
Prospective Homeowner	0.193+	0.184+	0.148
	(0.104)	(0.105)	(0.091)
30-39	−0.134	−0.202	−0.051
	(0.143)	(0.145)	(0.120)
40-49	0.441*	0.367*	0.118
	(0.175)	(0.178)	(0.147)
50-59	0.752***	0.704***	0.466**
	(0.186)	(0.184)	(0.153)
60-69	0.493**	0.507**	0.332*
	(0.166)	(0.168)	(0.145)
70+	0.985***	1.016***	0.648***
	(0.181)	(0.184)	(0.161)
Education	−0.233***	−0.314***	−0.153**
	(0.063)	(0.066)	(0.057)
Kids	0.309+	0.237	−0.006
	(0.158)	(0.163)	(0.141)
Montreal	−0.149	−0.162	−0.166
	(0.158)	(0.160)	(0.150)
Vancouver	0.066	−0.024	−0.194
	(0.256)	(0.259)	(0.222)
Toronto	−0.556**	−0.605**	−0.326*
	(0.191)	(0.194)	(0.164)
Ottawa	−0.144	−0.251	−0.097
	(0.232)	(0.230)	(0.190)
Woman	−0.549***	−0.522***	−0.214*
	(0.096)	(0.096)	(0.086)
Income		0.055***	0.042***
		(0.013)	(0.011)
Num.Obs.	1619	1578	1533
R2	0.084	0.092	0.340
R2 Adj.	0.074	0.082	0.329
AIC	7122.3	6942.9	7010.2
BIC	7197.8	7023.4	7122.3
RMSE	2.08	2.08	2.27

+ $p < 0.1$, * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$ Note: The dependent variable is ideological self-placement, with higher values indicating more conservative ideology. Models include fixed effects for province/region and robust standard errors. Model in column 3 includes vote choice in 2019 election.

Table S9: Regressing CPC Vote on Prospective Homeownership and Covariates

	(1)	(2)	(3)
Prosp. Homeowner	0.311	0.291	−0.070
	(0.254)	(0.258)	(0.317)
30-39	−0.238	−0.217	0.120
	(0.354)	(0.361)	(0.463)
40-49	0.540	0.511	0.685
	(0.373)	(0.383)	(0.472)
50-59	0.472	0.390	−0.521
	(0.383)	(0.396)	(0.526)
60-69	0.276	0.348	−0.016
	(0.393)	(0.397)	(0.484)
70+	0.621	0.692+	0.159
	(0.413)	(0.417)	(0.495)
Education	−0.059	−0.088	0.059
	(0.126)	(0.136)	(0.179)
Kids	0.514	0.557	0.742+
	(0.334)	(0.345)	(0.408)
Montreal	−1.308**	−1.231*	−1.708**
	(0.493)	(0.503)	(0.642)
Vancouver	−0.547	−0.616	−0.720
	(0.602)	(0.628)	(0.885)
Toronto	−0.697+	−0.624+	−0.345
	(0.363)	(0.379)	(0.477)
Ottawa	−0.919+	−0.813	−0.693
	(0.521)	(0.532)	(0.598)
Woman	−1.647***	−1.586***	−1.254***
	(0.280)	(0.279)	(0.334)
Income		0.016	−0.035
		(0.030)	(0.036)
Num.Obs.	1582	1542	1533
R2	0.141	0.135	0.465
R2 Adj.	0.132	0.125	0.458
AIC	1323.3	1295.4	820.7
BIC	1382.5	1356.6	892.0
Log.Lik.	−621.287	−604.881	−368.974
F	4.149	3.657	8.886
RMSE	0.27	0.27	0.22

+ $p < 0.1$, * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$ Note: The DV is a dummy for voting for the PPC or CPC. Models include survey weights, fixed effects for province/region, and robust standard errors. Model 3 includes left-right ideology (0-10).

Table S10: Rare event regression of PPC or CPC vote on Prospective Homeownership and Covariates

	(1)	(2)	(3)
Prosp. Homeowner	0.209	0.187	−0.103
	(0.208)	(0.210)	(0.262)
30-39	−0.282	−0.265	0.000
	(0.297)	(0.300)	(0.375)
40-49	0.690*	0.684*	0.862*
	(0.306)	(0.313)	(0.396)
50-59	0.525	0.415	−0.208
	(0.318)	(0.328)	(0.428)
60-69	0.079	0.122	−0.335
	(0.351)	(0.354)	(0.452)
70+	0.394	0.436	−0.303
	(0.359)	(0.362)	(0.450)
Education	−0.601***	−0.633***	−0.402*
	(0.142)	(0.148)	(0.178)
Kids	0.503+	0.558+	0.583
	(0.282)	(0.286)	(0.345)
Montreal	−0.281	−0.193	−0.422
	(0.372)	(0.381)	(0.453)
Vancouver	−0.046	−0.134	−0.369
	(0.514)	(0.528)	(0.664)
Toronto	−0.685*	−0.586	−0.289
	(0.343)	(0.353)	(0.463)
Ottawa	−0.726+	−0.614	−0.520
	(0.457)	(0.462)	(0.561)
Woman	−1.418***	−1.376***	−1.144***
	(0.250)	(0.250)	(0.299)
Income		0.001	−0.041
		(0.026)	(0.032)
Num.Obs.	1582	1542	1533
R2	0.073	0.072	0.388
RMSE	0.26	0.26	0.21

+ $p < 0.1$, * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$ Note: The DV is a dummy for voting for the PPC or CPC. Models estimated using penalized regression for rare events with fixed effects for province/region. Model 3 includes left-right ideology (0-10).

Table S11: Regressing Ideological Placement and PPC or CPC Vote on Prospective Homeownership, Controlling for Local Income

	Ideology	Vote Choice
Prosp. Homeowner	0.460**	0.259
	(0.153)	(0.244)
30-39	−0.296	−0.231
	(0.204)	(0.342)
40-49	0.492+	0.602+
	(0.259)	(0.364)
50-59	0.985***	0.417
	(0.270)	(0.356)
60-69	0.565*	0.234
	(0.250)	(0.380)
70+	1.127***	0.521
	(0.250)	(0.399)
Education	−0.149	−0.094
	(0.092)	(0.132)
Kids	0.103	0.431
	(0.243)	(0.334)
Montreal	−0.307	−0.837+
	(0.237)	(0.446)
Vancouver	−0.212	−0.384
	(0.400)	(0.620)
Toronto	−0.615*	−0.540
	(0.281)	(0.379)
Ottawa	−0.486	−0.714
	(0.335)	(0.522)
Income	0.059**	0.007
	(0.020)	(0.030)
Woman	−0.928***	−1.641***
	(0.142)	(0.269)
FSA Average Income	−0.048	−0.069
	(0.100)	(0.152)
Num.Obs.	1529	1538
R2	0.123	0.130
R2 Adj.	0.112	0.119
AIC	6648.7	1352.9
BIC	8500.4	1419.3
Log.Lik.	−4173.233	−632.606
F	6.270	3.788
RMSE	1.98	0.29

+ $p < 0.1$, * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$ Note: All models include survey weights, fixed effects for province or region, and robust standard errors.

Table S12: Regressing Ideological Placement and Vote Choice on Prospective Homeownership X FSA

	Ideology	Vote Choice
Prosp. Homeowner	0.988*	0.733
	(0.389)	(0.634)
FSA Average Income	0.105	0.073
	(0.130)	(0.243)
30-39	−0.291	−0.231
	(0.203)	(0.342)
40-49	0.489+	0.603+
	(0.258)	(0.364)
50-59	0.982***	0.414
	(0.270)	(0.358)
60-69	0.554*	0.222
	(0.248)	(0.377)
70+	1.142***	0.538
	(0.249)	(0.395)
Education	−0.152+	−0.094
	(0.092)	(0.132)
Kids	0.088	0.430
	(0.245)	(0.335)
Montreal	−0.322	−0.856+
	(0.240)	(0.445)
Vancouver	−0.227	−0.400
	(0.402)	(0.626)
Toronto	−0.602*	−0.523
	(0.279)	(0.376)
Ottawa	−0.476	−0.696
	(0.333)	(0.519)
Income	0.058**	0.005
	(0.020)	(0.030)
Woman	−0.918***	−1.630***
	(0.143)	(0.270)
Prosp. Homeowner*FSA	−0.252	−0.224
	(0.171)	(0.281)
Num.Obs.	1529	1538
R2	0.125	0.131
R2 Adj.	0.113	0.119
AIC	6648.3	1356.4
BIC	8500.0	1425.0
Log.Lik.	−4169.359	−631.786
F	6.621	3.709
RMSE	1.98	0.29

+ $p < 0.1$, * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$
Note: All models include survey weights, fixed effects for province or region, and robust standard errors.

Table S13: Regressing Ideological Placement on Prospective Homeownership in High Rent Markets

	HR all control	HR all	HR Top 2	HR Top 3	HR Top 4	HR Top 5
Prosp. Homeowner	0.458**	0.574*	0.404*	0.404*	0.414*	0.408*
	(0.151)	(0.241)	(0.174)	(0.174)	(0.174)	(0.177)
High Rent Mkt	−0.405*	−0.284	−0.571*	−0.571*	−0.630*	−0.751**
	(0.188)	(0.222)	(0.283)	(0.283)	(0.280)	(0.281)
30-39	−0.307	−0.311	−0.305	−0.305	−0.299	−0.297
	(0.204)	(0.205)	(0.206)	(0.206)	(0.205)	(0.204)
40-49	0.439+	0.435+	0.446+	0.446+	0.449+	0.448+
	(0.256)	(0.255)	(0.259)	(0.259)	(0.259)	(0.258)
50-59	1.000***	0.998***	0.985***	0.985***	0.984***	0.976***
	(0.278)	(0.277)	(0.278)	(0.278)	(0.279)	(0.279)
60-69	0.558*	0.555*	0.578*	0.578*	0.572*	0.573*
	(0.250)	(0.249)	(0.252)	(0.252)	(0.251)	(0.249)
70s+	1.148***	1.145***	1.142***	1.142***	1.143***	1.147***
	(0.254)	(0.253)	(0.251)	(0.251)	(0.250)	(0.251)
Education	−0.148	−0.148	−0.156+	−0.156+	−0.159+	−0.159+
	(0.092)	(0.092)	(0.093)	(0.093)	(0.092)	(0.092)
Kids	0.141	0.141	0.148	0.148	0.138	0.134
	(0.237)	(0.238)	(0.239)	(0.239)	(0.239)	(0.239)
Income	0.054**	0.055**	0.053**	0.053**	0.055**	0.056**
	(0.019)	(0.019)	(0.020)	(0.020)	(0.019)	(0.019)
Woman	−0.924***	−0.926***	−0.927***	−0.927***	−0.927***	−0.929***
	(0.141)	(0.141)	(0.141)	(0.141)	(0.141)	(0.141)
PH*High Rent		−0.208	0.246	0.246	0.193	0.215
		(0.292)	(0.336)	(0.336)	(0.334)	(0.319)
Num.Obs.	1533	1533	1533	1533	1533	1533
R2	0.120	0.120	0.119	0.119	0.121	0.123
R2 Adj.	0.111	0.111	0.109	0.109	0.111	0.114
AIC	6650.6	6653.2	6655.3	6655.3	6651.9	6647.2
BIC	8492.8	8497.5	8504.1	8504.1	8497.5	8489.9
Log.Lik.	−4184.070	−4182.760	−4186.031	−4186.031	−4182.728	−4178.917
F	7.343	6.898	7.319	7.319	7.442	7.626
RMSE	1.98	1.98	1.98	1.98	1.98	1.97

+ $p < 0.1$, * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$ Note: All models include survey weights, fixed effects for province or region, and robust standard errors.

Table S14: Regressing Vote Choice on Prospective Homeownership in High Rent Markets

	HR all control	HR all	HR Top 2	HR Top 3	HR Top 4	HR Top 5
Prosp. Homeowner	0.228	0.457	0.286	0.286	0.290	0.297
	(0.243)	(0.337)	(0.265)	(0.265)	(0.266)	(0.267)
High Rent Mkt	−0.738**	−0.442	−0.137	−0.137	−0.197	−0.454
	(0.266)	(0.368)	(0.450)	(0.450)	(0.450)	(0.457)
Woman	−1.658***	−1.673***	−1.630***	−1.630***	−1.635***	−1.644***
	(0.268)	(0.272)	(0.270)	(0.270)	(0.271)	(0.271)
30-39	−0.223	−0.236	−0.188	−0.188	−0.178	−0.169
	(0.342)	(0.348)	(0.338)	(0.338)	(0.339)	(0.340)
40-49	0.607+	0.598+	0.606+	0.606+	0.611+	0.620+
	(0.359)	(0.359)	(0.358)	(0.358)	(0.359)	(0.360)
50-59	0.437	0.433	0.433	0.433	0.436	0.438
	(0.376)	(0.373)	(0.374)	(0.374)	(0.375)	(0.378)
60-69	0.216	0.212	0.321	0.321	0.318	0.306
	(0.385)	(0.383)	(0.380)	(0.380)	(0.380)	(0.378)
70s+	0.546	0.542	0.549	0.549	0.554	0.574
	(0.407)	(0.404)	(0.395)	(0.395)	(0.395)	(0.397)
Education	−0.087	−0.087	−0.107	−0.107	−0.109	−0.107
	(0.131)	(0.131)	(0.132)	(0.132)	(0.132)	(0.132)
Income	0.006	0.007	0.002	0.002	0.003	0.005
	(0.029)	(0.029)	(0.029)	(0.029)	(0.029)	(0.029)
Kids	0.427	0.441	0.434	0.434	0.428	0.417
	(0.327)	(0.331)	(0.323)	(0.323)	(0.324)	(0.324)
PH*High Rent		−0.493	−0.397	−0.397	−0.408	−0.399
		(0.450)	(0.538)	(0.538)	(0.538)	(0.536)
Num.Obs.	1542	1542	1542	1542	1542	1542
R2	0.131	0.133	0.123	0.123	0.124	0.128
R2 Adj.	0.123	0.124	0.113	0.113	0.114	0.119
AIC	1336.7	1338.2	1353.4	1353.4	1351.9	1345.1
BIC	1392.8	1397.3	1413.1	1413.1	1411.6	1404.8
Log.Lik.	−634.014	−632.594	−640.475	−640.475	−639.724	−636.348
F	4.839	4.505	3.519	3.519	3.555	3.718
RMSE	0.29	0.29	0.29	0.29	0.29	0.29

+ $p < 0.1$, * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$ Note: All models include survey weights, fixed effects for province or region, and robust standard errors.