

Congressional Briefing
Small Towns/Big Trends:
Demographic Insights on Living, Working and Thriving in Rural America
March 18, 202

SPEAKER BIOS

John J. Green, Ph.D., is Director of the Southern Rural Development Center (SRDC), an organization focused on building capacity among 30 Land-Grant Universities. Dr. Green also serves as Professor in the Mississippi State University (MSU) Dept. of Agricultural Economics and Affiliated Faculty in the Dept. of Sociology. He received his BA in Political Science and MS in Sociology from MSU, followed by his PhD in Rural Sociology from the University of Missouri-Columbia. His areas of interest include rural and regional socioeconomic development and use of data on population change to inform public policy and outreach and Extension programs. Dr. Green is President-Elect of the Rural Sociological Society and Editor of the *Journal of Rural Social Sciences* with the Southern Rural Sociological Association.

Leif Jensen, Ph.D., is Distinguished Professor of Rural Sociology and Demography at The Pennsylvania State University where he also serves as Associate Director of the Social Science Research Institute. His areas of specialization include demography, social stratification, and the sociology of economic change. He has published three books and more than 90 journal articles and book chapters on a range of topics including poverty and inequality, underemployment and other forms of employment hardship, informal work and household economic strategies, and immigration. Much of his scholarship focusses on rural people and places. He is Principal Investigator for the NIA-funded Interdisciplinary Network on Rural Population Health and Aging. His research program has been supported by grants from NSF, NIH, USDA, and USAID, as well as the Ford, Spencer, and Russell Sage foundations. He earned a B.A. in Sociology from the University of Vermont and an M.S. and Ph.D. in Sociology from the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

Kenneth M. Johnson, Ph.D., is senior demographer at the Carsey School of Public Policy and professor of sociology at the University of New Hampshire. He is also an Andrew Carnegie Fellow. His research examines national and regional population redistribution, rural demographic change, the growing racial diversity of the U.S. population, the relationship between demographic and environmental change and the implications of demographic change for public policy. Author of more than 250 articles, reports, and papers, as well as a book, Dr. Johnson's peer-reviewed publications have appeared in leading academic journals. He is frequently sought after both by policy groups and national media for his expertise and ability to explain demographic information to a broad audience. His research has been funded by grants from the NIH, NSF, USDA, USFS, and NASA. He received his doctorate from the University of North Carolina and his undergraduate training at the University of Michigan.

Shannon Monnat, Ph.D. is Associate Professor of Sociology, Director of the Lerner Center for Public Health Promotion, and Co-Director of the Policy, Place, and Population Health Lab in the Maxwell School at Syracuse University. Monnat's research examines trends and geographic differences in health and mortality, with a particular focus on rural-urban and within-rural

health disparities. She is a national expert on structural and spatial determinants of drug overdose, particularly related to understanding why overdose rates are higher in some places than others. Her most recent research has focused on rural-urban differences in COVID-19 experiences and impacts. She has produced over 100 peer-reviewed journal articles, book chapters, and public research briefs. She has been the PI or Co-I on external grants totaling over \$10 million, including from the National Institutes of Health (National Institute on Aging [NIA], National Institute on Drug Abuse [NIDA]), Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, U.S. Department of Agriculture, National Institute of Justice, and several other agencies and foundations. Monnat served on a National Academy of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine Consensus Committee that released the 2021 report: *High and Rising Mortality Rates among Working-Age Adults*. She is currently a Co-PI on the NIA-funded Interdisciplinary Network for Rural Population Health and Aging and the PI on a NIDA-funded research project to identify the effects of states' COVID-19 mitigation policies on working-age adult psychological health, drug overdose, and suicide.

Jessica Schad, Ph.D., is an Associate Professor of Rural Community and Natural Resource Sociology at Utah State University (USU). She is also the director of the Community and Natural Resource Institute (CANRI) at USU. One area of Dr. Schad's research is focused on the relationship between natural resource related trends or events (e.g., amenity migration, oil and gas booms/busts, natural resource dependency) and individual and community well-being, including social interaction and perceived indicators of quality of life. She has published this work in journals such as *The Journal of Peasant Studies*, *Population & Environment*, *Rural Sociology*, and *Energy Research & Social Science*. She earned a BA in Political Science from the University of Montana-Western, an MA in Sociology from the University of Montana, and a Ph.D. in Sociology from the University of New Hampshire.

Timothy Slack, Ph.D., is Professor of Sociology at Louisiana State University. His scholarship focuses on the areas of social stratification, social demography, community and environment, and rural sociology. An overarching theme is thinking about space and place as axes of inequality. Prof. Slack has published widely and received funding to support his research program from sources including the National Science Foundation, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and U.S. Department of the Interior. Prof. Slack's expertise has been sought for by major media outlets, such as the *New York Times* and *Advocate* (Louisiana's leading daily newspaper), as well as policy audiences, including the Louisiana State Legislature. He has served on the editorial boards of *Rural Sociology*, *Demography*, and *Population Research and Policy Review*. Prof. Slack was named a LSU Rainmaker in 2011, and received the LSU Alumni Association Faculty Excellence Award in 2015. He earned a bachelors in Rural Sociology from the University of Wisconsin-Madison, and an M.S. in Demography and Rural Sociology as well as doctorate in Rural Sociology at the Pennsylvania State University.

Marta Tienda, Ph.D., (Moderator) is Maurice P. During '22 Professor in Demographic Studies, Professor of Sociology and Public Affairs emerita at Princeton University and current president of the American Academy of Political and Social Science. She held prior appointments in the

Department of Rural Sociology at the University of Wisconsin and the University of Chicago, where she served as chair of the Department of Sociology. She is past president of the Population Association of America and is co-author of several books, among them *The Hispanic Population of the United States* (1987), *The Color of Opportunity* (2001), and *Hispanics and the Future of America* (2006). She holds a BA in Spanish from Michigan State University and a MA and Ph.D., both in Sociology, from the University of Texas at Austin.

Mildred Warner, Ph.D., is a Professor in the Department of City and Regional Planning and the Department of Global Development at Cornell University where her work focuses on local government service delivery, economic development, environmental sustainability, age-friendly planning and public health. Dr. Warner's research explores the impact of privatization and devolution on local government and the role of human services as social infrastructure for economic development. Her research explores the challenges of privatization, preemption and fiscal decentralization on local governments. Her work on age-friendly planning explores new community development models for addressing human services which link the needs of children and seniors to promote public health. Her work on economic development also focuses on the linkages to environmental sustainability action. She holds a Ph.D. in Development Sociology as well as a Masters in Agricultural Economics, both from Cornell University, and a BA in History from Oberlin College.



A USDA-supported multi-state research project on the causes and consequences of demographic change in rural America.