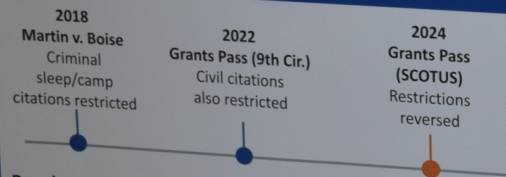


Courts and the Policing of Homelessness

Did *Martin v. Boise* and *Grants Pass* reshape enforcement and visible homelessness?

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Legal Setting and Research Question



Popular claim: the Ninth Circuit rulings constrained anti-homeless (sleep/ camp) citations and increased visible homelessness on the West Coast US

We study how these court cases affected: (1) police enforcement, (2) visible homelessness, (3) shelter provision

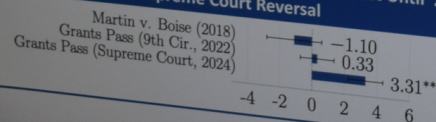
Data and Design

New data collected via 140+ public records requests and city open-data portals (2016-2025)

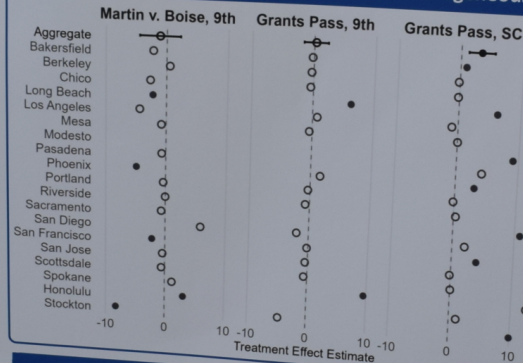
- 35 cities anti-sleeping anti-camping citation records
- 43 cities with 311 reports used to measure encampments
- HUD PIT and HIC data for CoCs nationwide.

Main design: Synthetic difference-in-differences, comparing Ninth Circuit cities to weighted controls outside the 9th Circuit

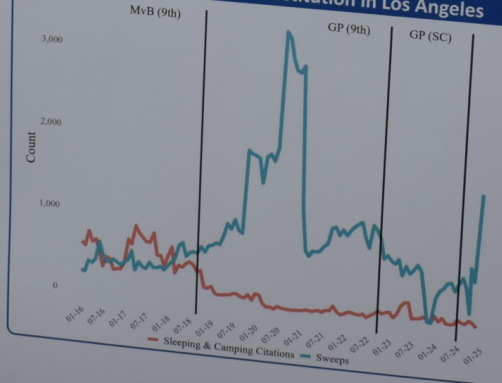
Result 1: Average Enforcement Effects Are Modest Until 2024 Supreme Court Reversal



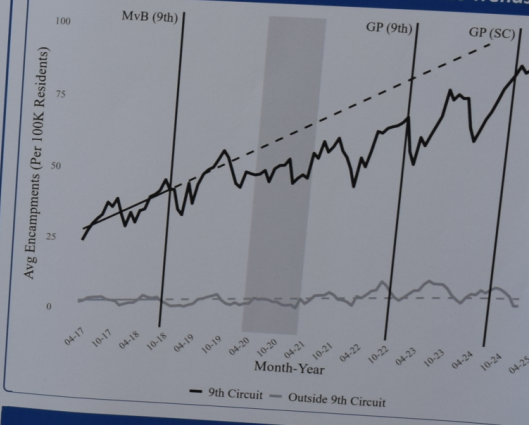
Result 2: But, City Responses Are Highly Heterogeneous



Example: Enforcement Substitution in Los Angeles



Result 3: No Clear Change in Homelessness Trends



Takeaways

1. Restrictive rulings did not produce a large aggregate drop in targeted citations.
2. City responses were uneven, and some cities substituted into other enforcement tools.
3. Visible homelessness does not show a clear aggregate change after the rulings
4. Shelter provision rises only modestly and does not keep up with need (not shown here)

Bottom line: Court doctrine changed legal risk, but local responses were heterogeneous and often occurred along other enforcement margins.