**Research Question**

How are levels of rurality related to total nonprofit human services spending per person living in poverty, when controlling for other possible causes of differences in human services spending?

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**Map of 2013 County Nonprofit Human Services Expenditures Per Person Living in Poverty**

**Association Between Nonprofit Human Services Spending and County Level of Rurality**

Preliminary findings suggest that whether a county is rural and how rural a county is matters for human services spending, even after controlling for a number of other county characteristics. In particular, counties with an urban area of less than 2500 people (RUCC 8 and 9) have lower levels of spending than large metropolitan counties.

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**Data Sources**

- National Center for Charitable Statistics Business Master File
- USDA Economic Research Service Rural-Urban Continuum Codes
- US Census Bureau Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates
- National Conference of State Legislatures State Partisan Composition Data
- US Census Bureau 2010 Decennial Census
- USDA Economic Research Service County Economic Types

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**Additional Independent Variables in Model (using FY 2013 data)**

- Political affiliation of state legislature
- Racial composition of county
- Census region
- Population loss county status
- Low-employment county status
- Low-education county status
- Manufacturing dependent county status
- Percent of the county that is >18 years old
- Percent of the county that is >65 years old

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**Project Next Steps**

- Add more years of data and a random effect for county nested inside of state
- Add additional datasets to the model
  - Possibly behavioral health data, child welfare data
- Further explore data limitations
- Definitional tests
  - Test alternative definitions of rural
  - Test supplemental poverty measure
- In future project: Qualitative compliment to this research to understand the human services provider perspective

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