FOUNDATION FOR
ADVANCING ALCOHOL
RESPONSIBILITY


2015 State of

# Drunk Driving Fatalities IN AMERICA

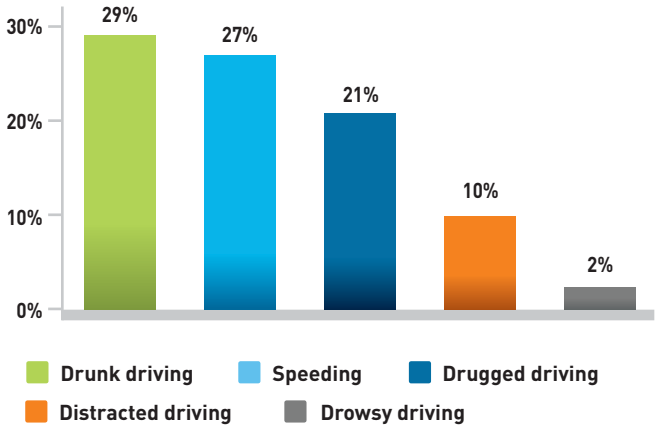
# Letter from President & CEO

FOUNDATION FOR ADVANCING ALCOHOL RESPONSIBILITY

Any life lost in a traffic fatality is one too many especially due to preventable human choices behind the wheel such as distracted driving, drowsy driving, drugged driving or drunk driving. In 2015, the number of people who died on our nation's roadways increased seven percent – the largest single year increase in 50 years. Drunk driving fatalities increased three percent from 9,943 fatalities in 2014 to 10,265 in 2015. Over the long term, drunk driving fatalities have been declining at a faster rate than overall traffic fatalities, accounting for 29 percent of total motor vehicle fatalities in 2015.

Other human factors that impact motor vehicle fatalities include speeding, accounting for 27 percent of fatal crashes, drugged driving (21 percent), distracted driving (10 percent) and drowsy driving (2 percent).

## Various Factors Involved in Fatal Motor Vehicle Traffic Crashes—2015




More than two-thirds of drunk driving fatalities (69 percent), where there is a known alcohol test result for the driver, involved a high BAC driver (.15+) – a trend that has remained relatively unchanged over the past decade. However, during this same period, drugged driving increased nearly 55 percent proportionally. Among fatally injured drivers with a known test result, drugs were present in 43 percent of drivers in 2015, up from 28 percent in 2006.

In just the past year, Responsibility.org has brought together more than 30 traffic safety, advocacy, and health organizations committed to spreading the word that together we can #EndImpairedDriving.

Until our roads are safe from impaired drivers, our work remains unfinished.

**Ralph S. Blackman**
President & CEO
Foundation for Advancing Alcohol Responsibility
2345 Crystal Drive, Suite 710
Arlington, Virginia 22202
Phone 202-637-0077

# Terminology

FOUNDATION FOR ADVANCING ALCOHOL RESPONSIBILITY

## Alcohol-Impaired Fatality

Drivers in all 50 states and D.C. are considered to be alcohol-impaired if their blood alcohol concentration (BAC) is .08 grams per deciliter (g/dL) or higher. Any fatality occurring in a crash involving at least one driver, or motorcycle operator, with a BAC of .08 or higher is considered to be an alcohol-impaired driving, or drunk driving, fatality. The term alcohol-impaired does not indicate that a crash or a fatality was the result of alcohol impairment. In producing national and state alcohol-impaired statistics, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) estimates the extent of alcohol involvement when alcohol test results are unknown.

## Alcohol-Involved Fatality

Alcohol-involved fatalities are those where at least one driver, or motorcycle operator, has a positive BAC of .01 or higher. In producing national and state alcohol-involved statistics, NHTSA estimates the extent of alcohol involvement when alcohol test results are unknown.

## Blood Alcohol Concentration (BAC)

BAC is measured in grams of alcohol per 100 milliliters of blood. A BAC of .01 indicates .01 grams of alcohol per 100 milliliters of blood. As of July 2004, all 50 states and D.C. have passed legislation establishing a driver with a BAC of .08 to be legally intoxicated. Additionally, 48 states and D.C. have laws that increase penalties for those convicted of driving with elevated or "high" BAC levels.

## Hardcore Drunk Drivers

Hardcore drunk drivers, those who drive with a high BAC of .15 or above, do so repeatedly, as demonstrated by having more than one drunk driving arrest, and are highly resistant to changing their behavior despite previous sanctions, treatment or education efforts.

## Rates per 100,000 Population

The rate of alcohol-impaired fatalities per 100,000 population is the number of alcohol-impaired fatalities for every 100,000 persons in the population being measured. For example, an alcohol-impaired fatality rate of 3.2 per 100,000 population nationally means that for every 100,000 people in the nation, there were approximately three alcohol-impaired fatalities.

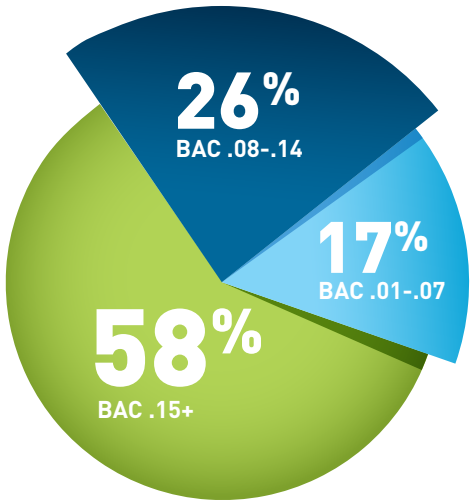
## Repeat Offenders

The NHTSA/FARS data records prior driving records (convictions only, not violations) for driving while intoxicated events occurring within three years of the date of the crash. The same driver can have one or more of these convictions during this three year period. Drivers who have a prior conviction in this three year period are reported as repeat offenders.

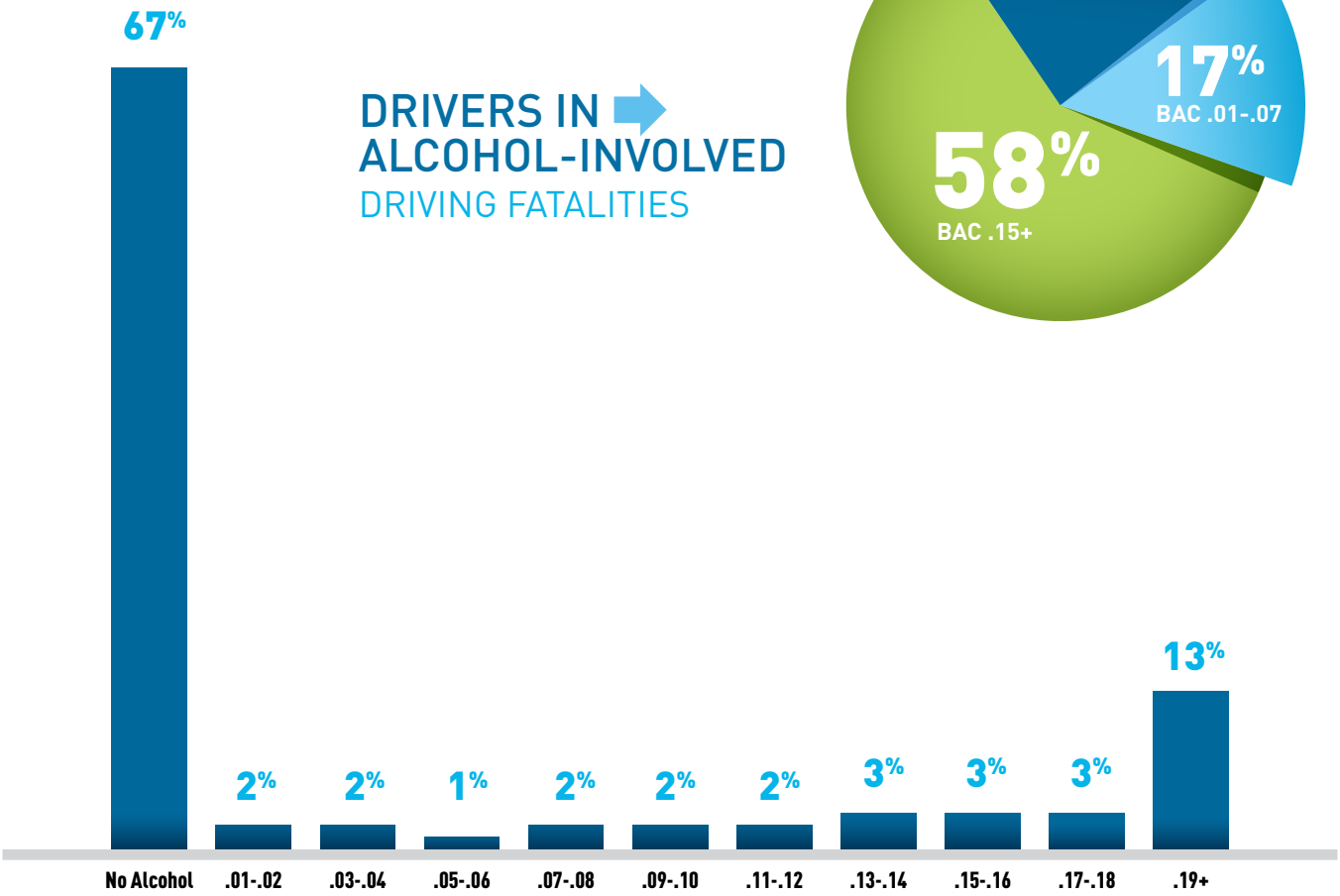
# Percent of 2015 Driving Fatalities by BAC Test Result

FOUNDATION FOR ADVANCING ALCOHOL RESPONSIBILITY

In 2015, drunk driving accounted for 29% of all traffic fatalities. Nearly sixty percent of alcohol-involved fatal crashes involved high BAC drivers.




## DRIVERS IN ALCOHOL-INVOLVED DRIVING FATALITIES

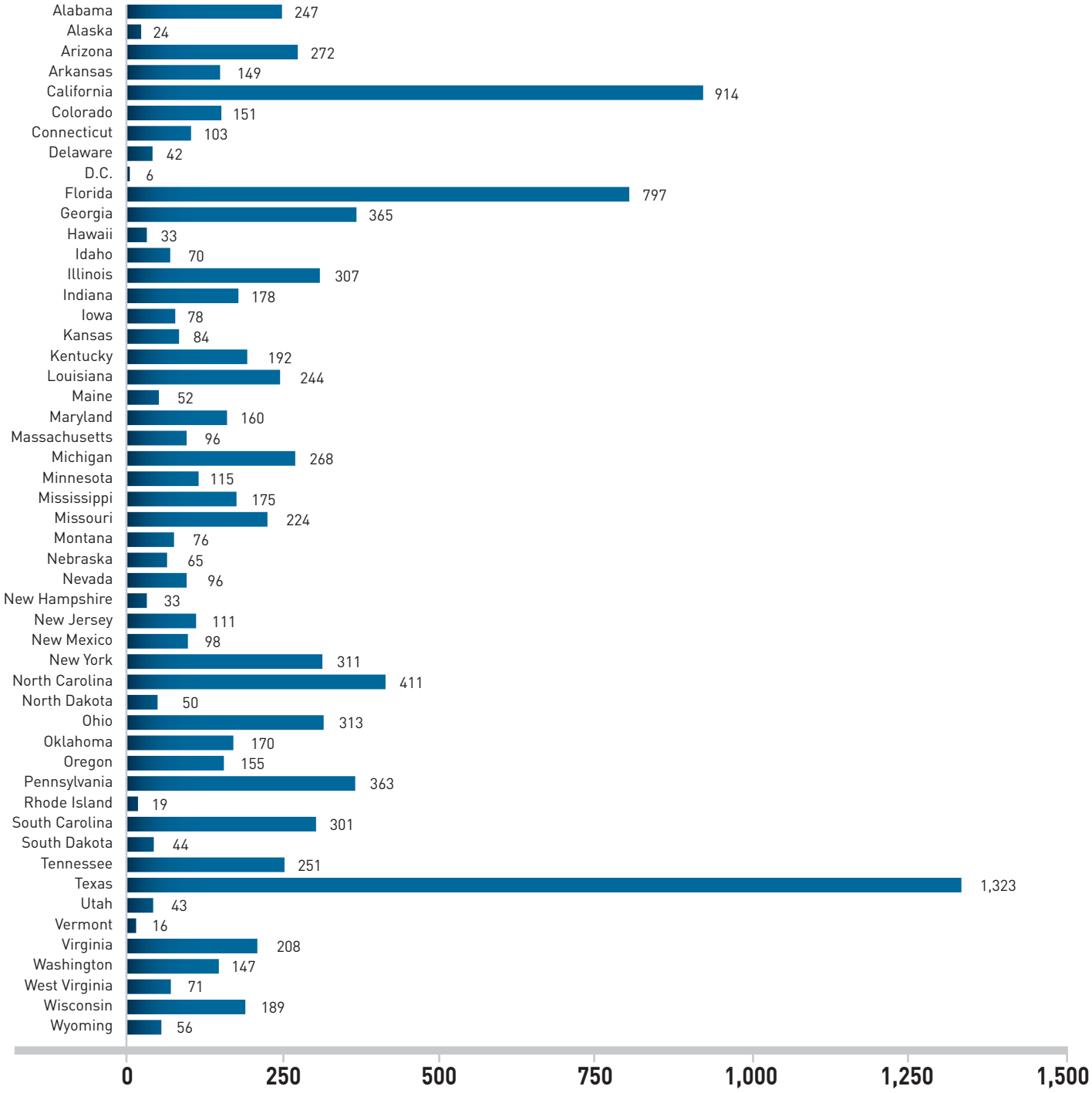



## KNOWN ALCOHOL TEST RESULTS OF DRIVERS INVOLVED IN FATAL TRAFFIC CRASHES

Source: NHTSA, FARS ARF of Drivers with Known BAC, 10/16
**Total may not equal the sum of categories due to rounding.**

# Alcohol-Impaired Driving Fatality Data 2015

FOUNDATION FOR ADVANCING ALCOHOL RESPONSIBILITY

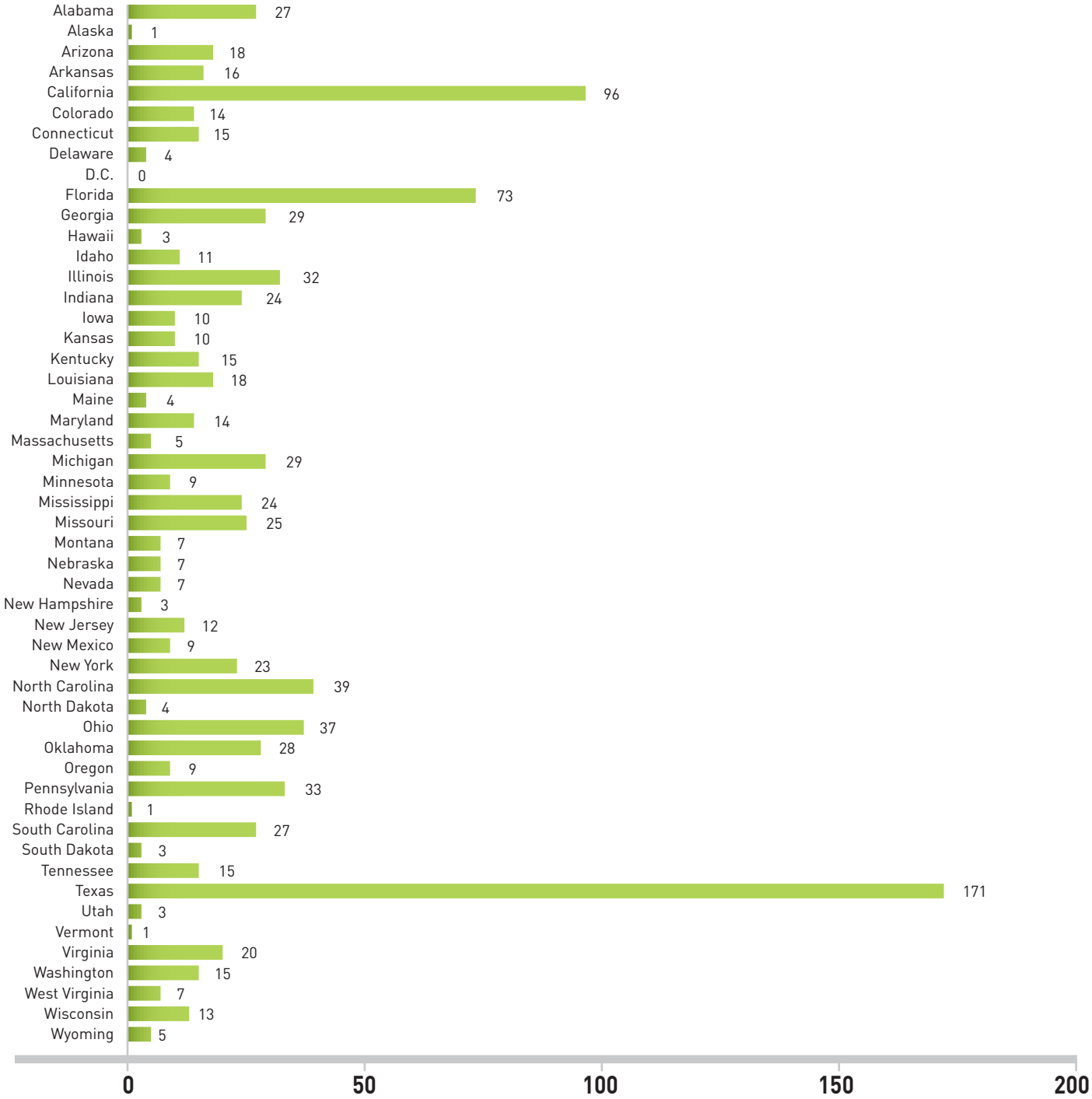



Source: NHTSA, FARS, 10/16
**Total may not equal sum of the states due to rounding.**

US TOTAL 10,265

# Under 21 Alcohol-Impaired Driving Fatality Data 2015

FOUNDATION FOR ADVANCING ALCOHOL RESPONSIBILITY

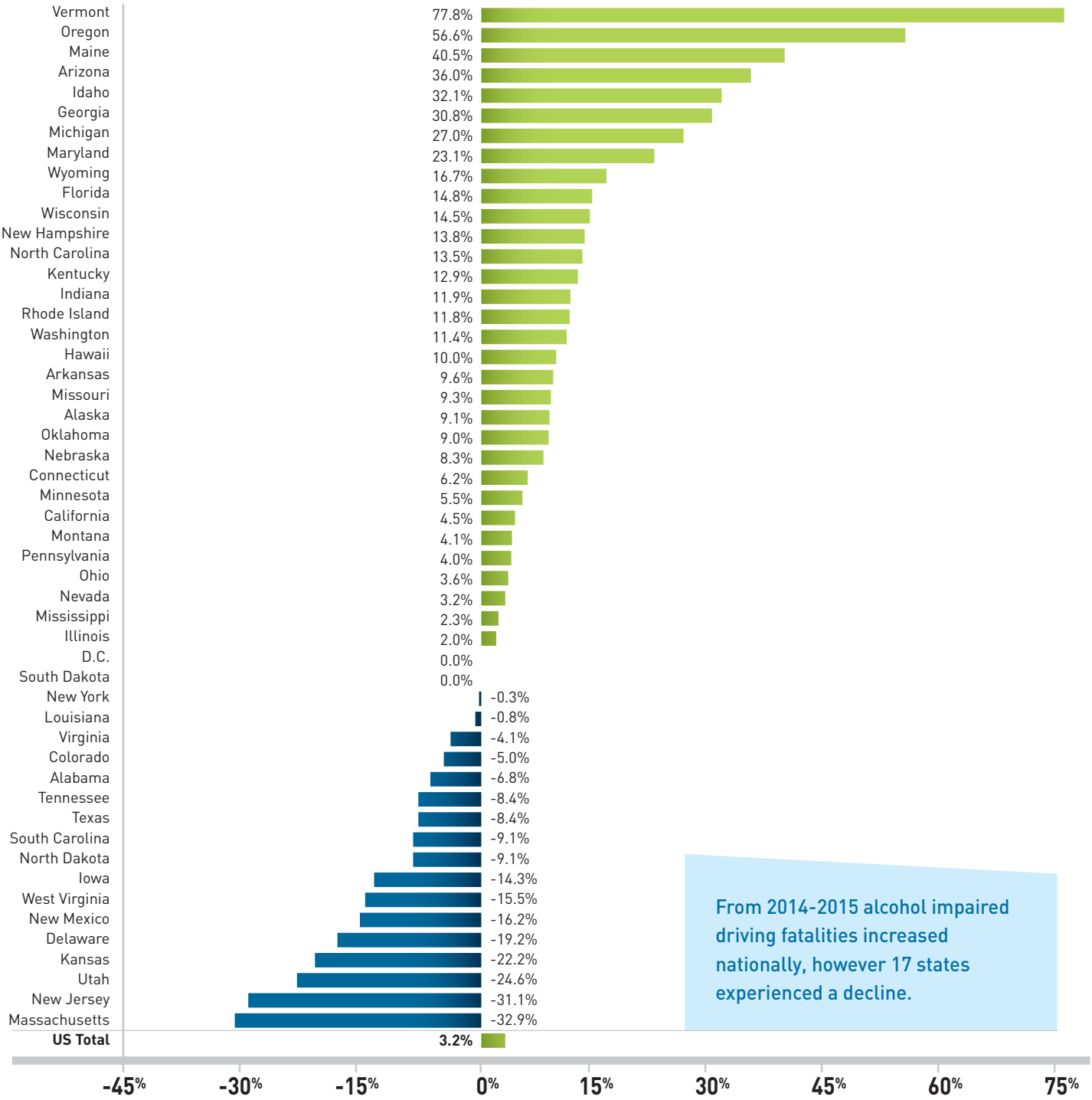



Source: NHTSA, FARS, 10/16
**Total may not equal sum of the states due to rounding.**

US TOTAL 1,021

# Percent Change in Alcohol-Impaired Driving Fatalities from 2014 to 2015

FOUNDATION FOR ADVANCING ALCOHOL RESPONSIBILITY

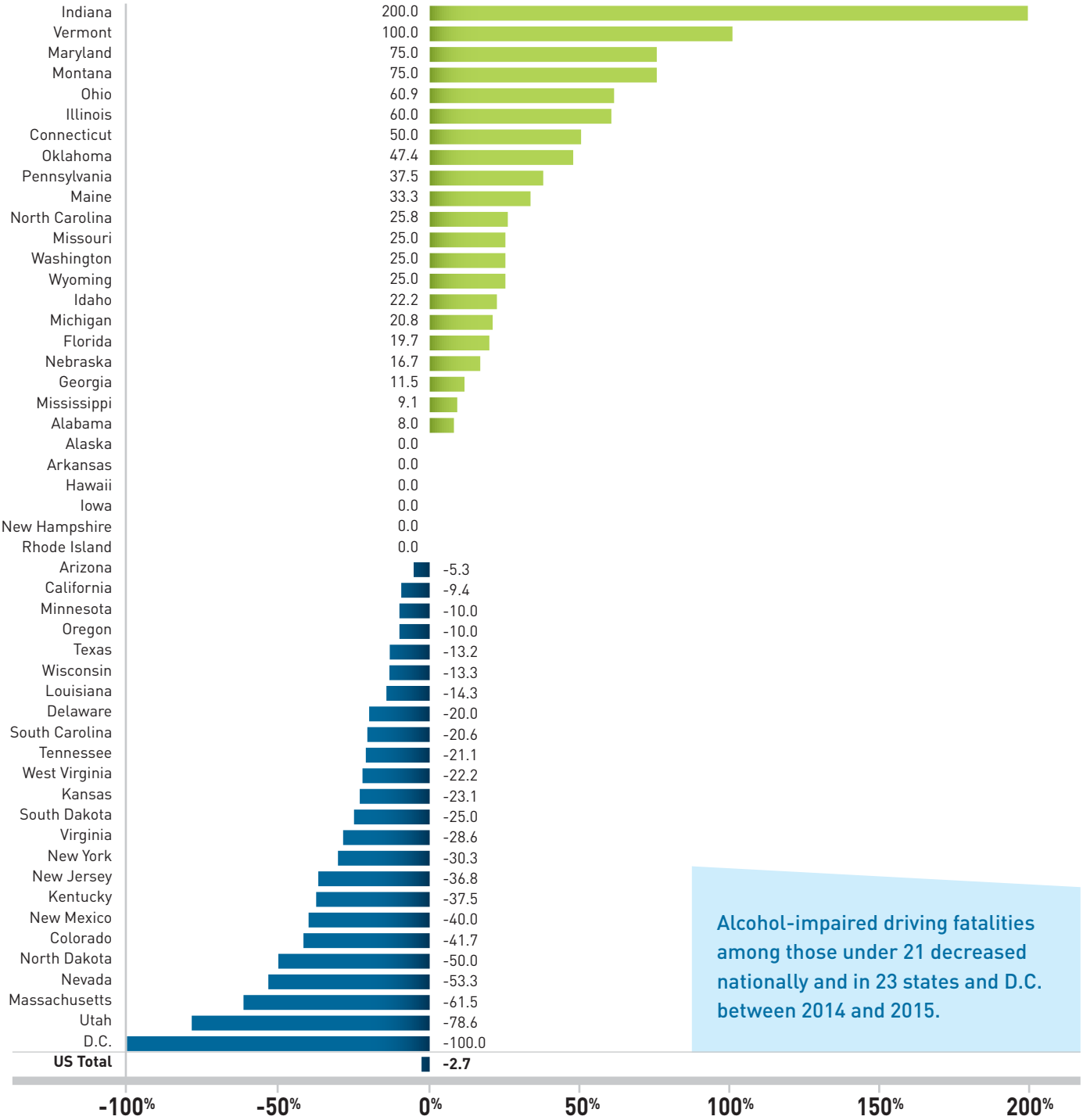



From 2014-2015 alcohol impaired driving fatalities increased nationally, however 17 states experienced a decline.

Source: NHTSA, FARS, 10/16

# Under 21 Percent Change in Alcohol-Impaired Driving Fatalities from 2014 to 2015

FOUNDATION FOR ADVANCING ALCOHOL RESPONSIBILITY



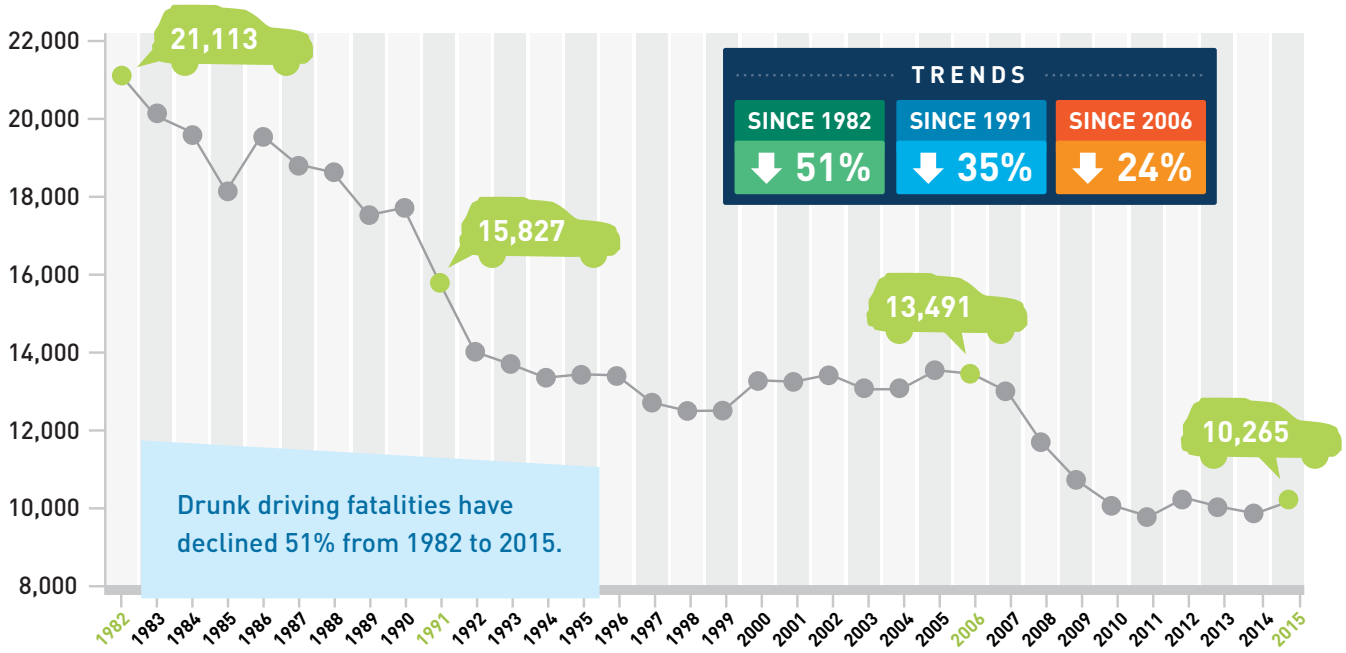

Alcohol-impaired driving fatalities among those under 21 decreased nationally and in 23 states and D.C. between 2014 and 2015.

Source: NHTSA, FARS, 10/16

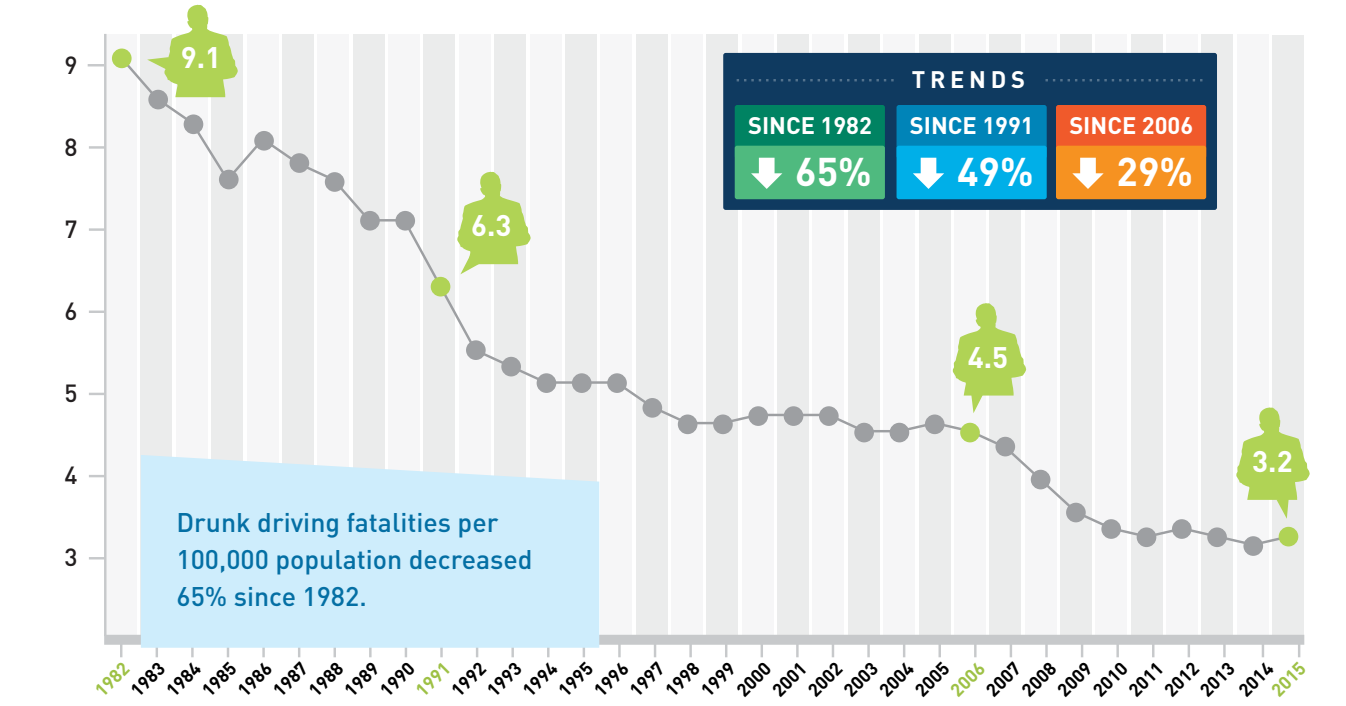
# Alcohol-Impaired Driving Fatalities 1982-2015

FOUNDATION FOR ADVANCING ALCOHOL RESPONSIBILITY

## TOTAL ALCOHOL-IMPAIRED DRIVING FATALITIES




## RATE OF TOTAL ALCOHOL-IMPAIRED DRIVING FATALITIES PER 100,000 POPULATION

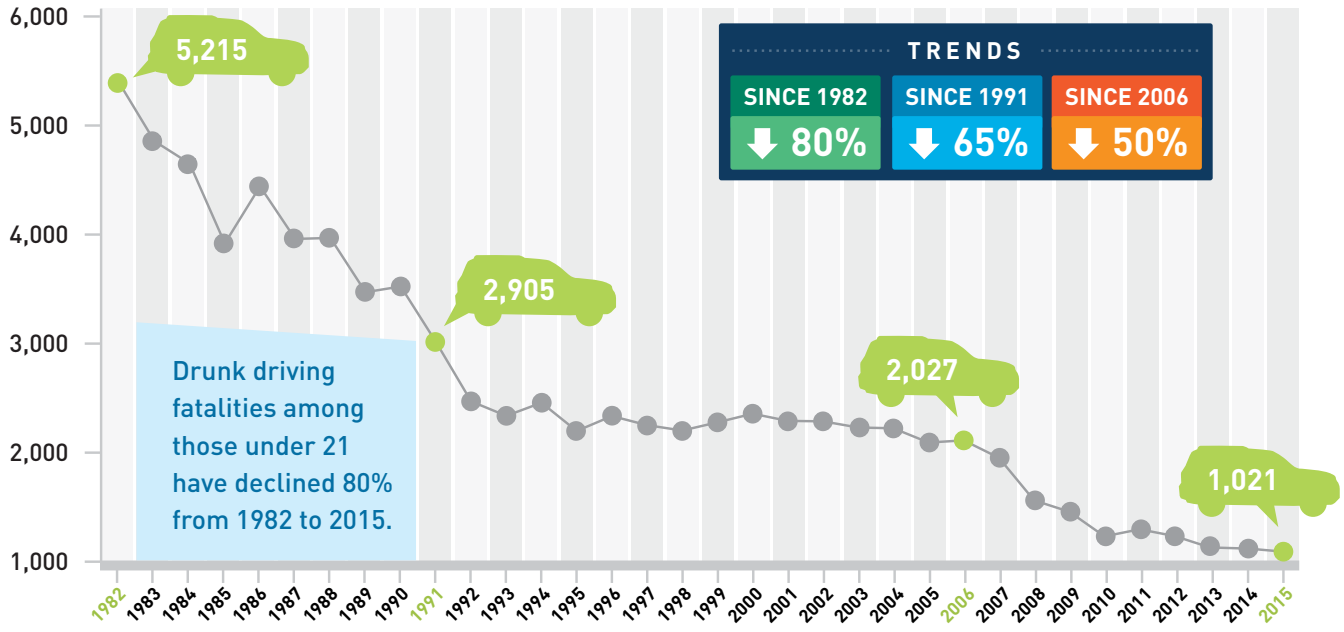



**Top Chart -** Source: NHTSA/FARS, 12/16
**Bottom Chart -** Source: NHTSA, FARS and U.S. Census Bureau, 12/16

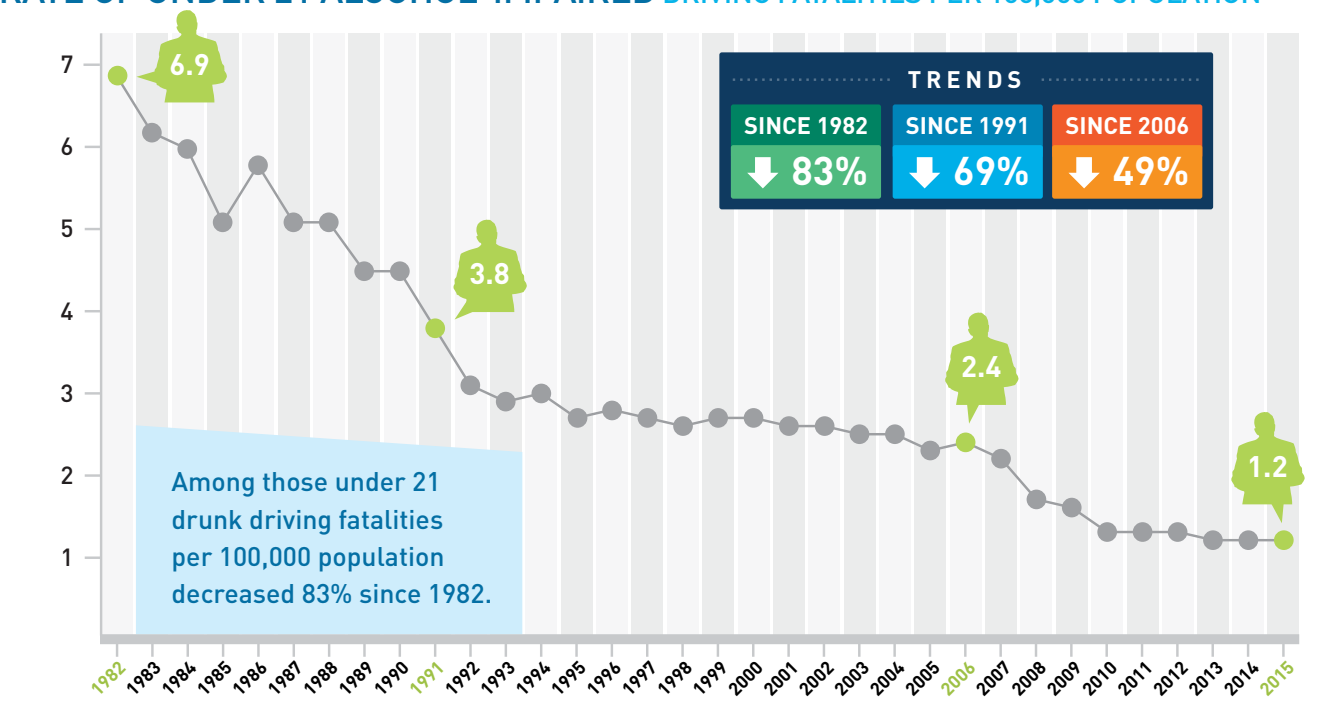
# Under 21 Alcohol-Impaired Driving Fatalities 1982-2015

FOUNDATION FOR ADVANCING ALCOHOL RESPONSIBILITY

## UNDER 21 ALCOHOL-IMPAIRED DRIVING FATALITIES



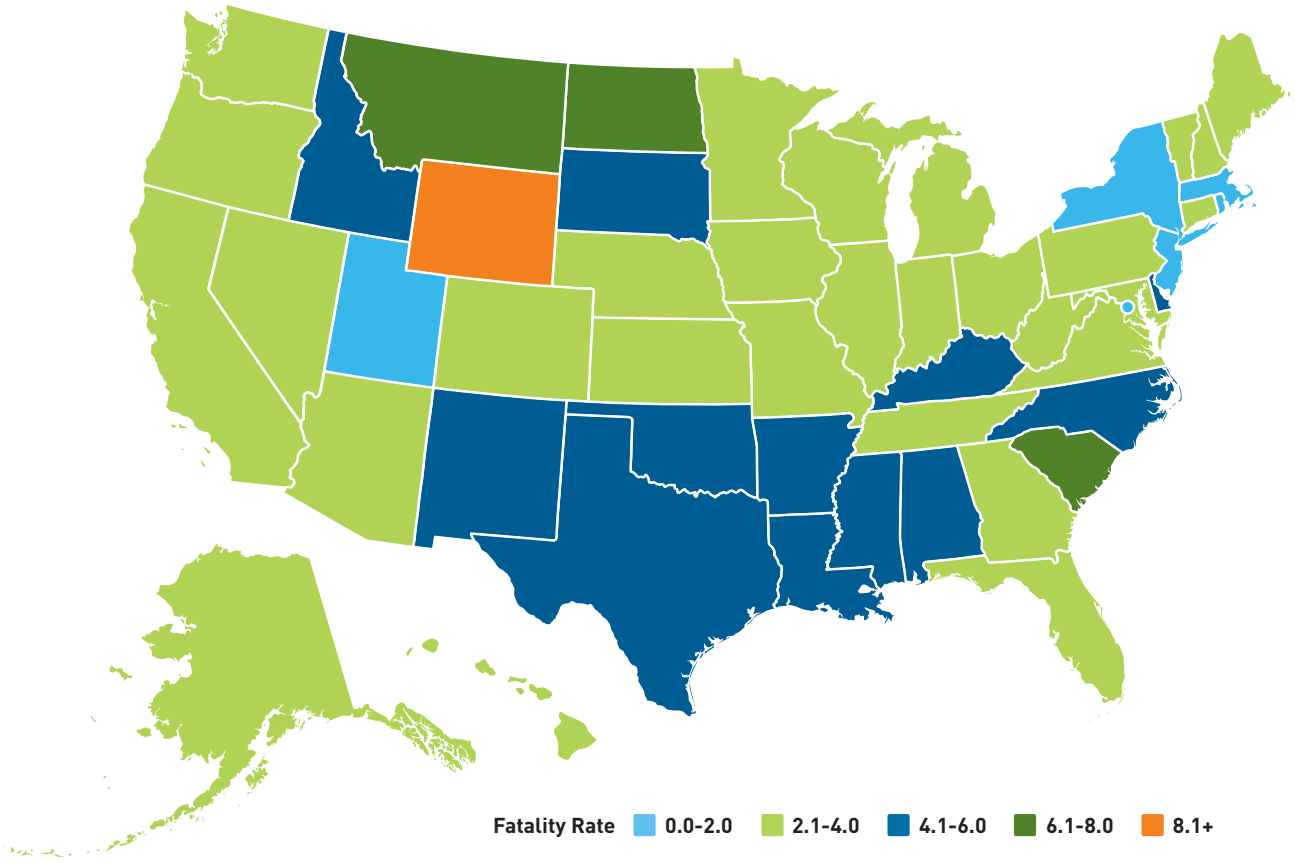

## RATE OF UNDER 21 ALCOHOL-IMPAIRED DRIVING FATALITIES PER 100,000 POPULATION




**Top Chart -** Source: NHTSA/FARS, 12/16
**Bottom Chart -** Source: NHTSA, FARS and U.S. Census Bureau, 12/16

# 2015 Alcohol-Impaired Driving Fatalities Per 100,000 Population by State

FOUNDATION FOR ADVANCING ALCOHOL RESPONSIBILITY



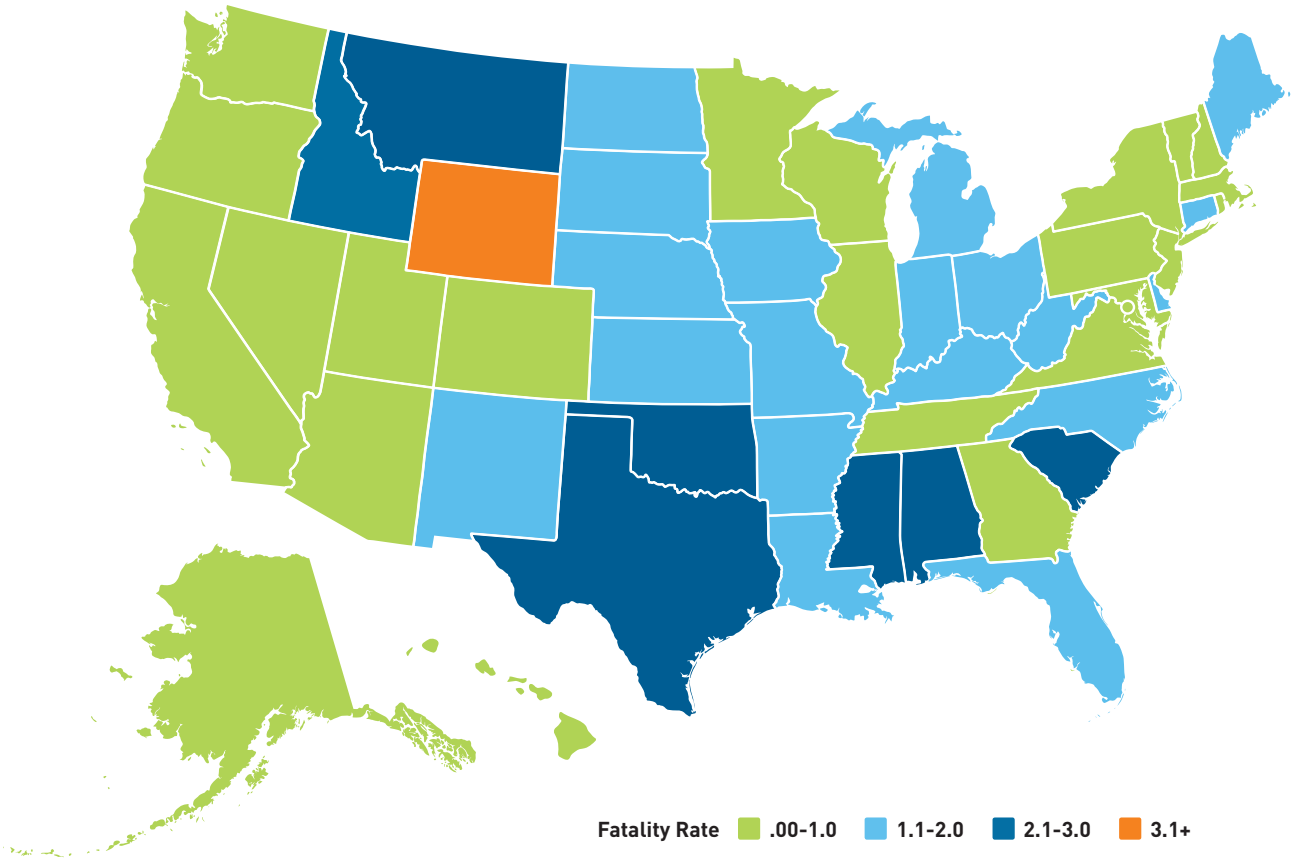

In 22 states and D.C., alcohol-impaired driving fatalities per 100,000 population were at or below the national average of 3.2 deaths per 100,000 population.

| | |
|---|---|
| Alabama | 5.1 |
| Alaska | 3.4 |
| Arizona | 4.0 |
| Arkansas | 5.0 |
| California | 2.3 |
| Colorado | 2.8 |
| Connecticut | 2.9 |
| Delaware | 4.5 |
| D.C. | 0.9 |
| Florida | 3.9 |
| Georgia | 3.6 |
| Hawaii | 2.4 |
| Idaho | 4.2 |
| Illinois | 2.4 |
| Indiana | 2.7 |
| Iowa | 2.5 |
| Kansas | 2.9 |
| Kentucky | 4.4 |
| Louisiana | 5.2 |
| Maine | 3.9 |
| Maryland | 2.7 |
| Massachusetts | 1.4 |
| Michigan | 2.7 |
| Minnesota | 2.1 |
| Mississippi | 5.9 |
| Missouri | 3.7 |
| Montana | 7.4 |
| Nebraska | 3.4 |
| Nevada | 3.3 |
| New Hampshire | 2.5 |
| New Jersey | 1.2 |
| New Mexico | 4.7 |
| New York | 1.6 |
| North Carolina | 4.1 |
| North Dakota | 6.7 |
| Ohio | 2.7 |
| Oklahoma | 4.4 |
| Oregon | 3.8 |
| Pennsylvania | 2.8 |
| Rhode Island | 1.8 |
| South Carolina | 6.2 |
| South Dakota | 5.1 |
| Tennessee | 3.8 |
| Texas | 4.8 |
| Utah | 1.4 |
| Vermont | 2.6 |
| Virginia | 2.5 |
| Washington | 2.1 |
| West Virginia | 3.9 |
| Wisconsin | 3.3 |
| Wyoming | 9.6 |
| **US Total** | **3.2** |

Source: NHTSA, FARS and U.S. Census Bureau, 10/16

# 2015 Under 21 Alcohol-Impaired Driving Fatalities Per 100,000 Population by State

FOUNDATION FOR ADVANCING ALCOHOL RESPONSIBILITY




In 28 states and D.C., under 21 alcohol-impaired driving fatalities per 100,000 population were at or below the national average of 1.2 deaths per 100,000 population.

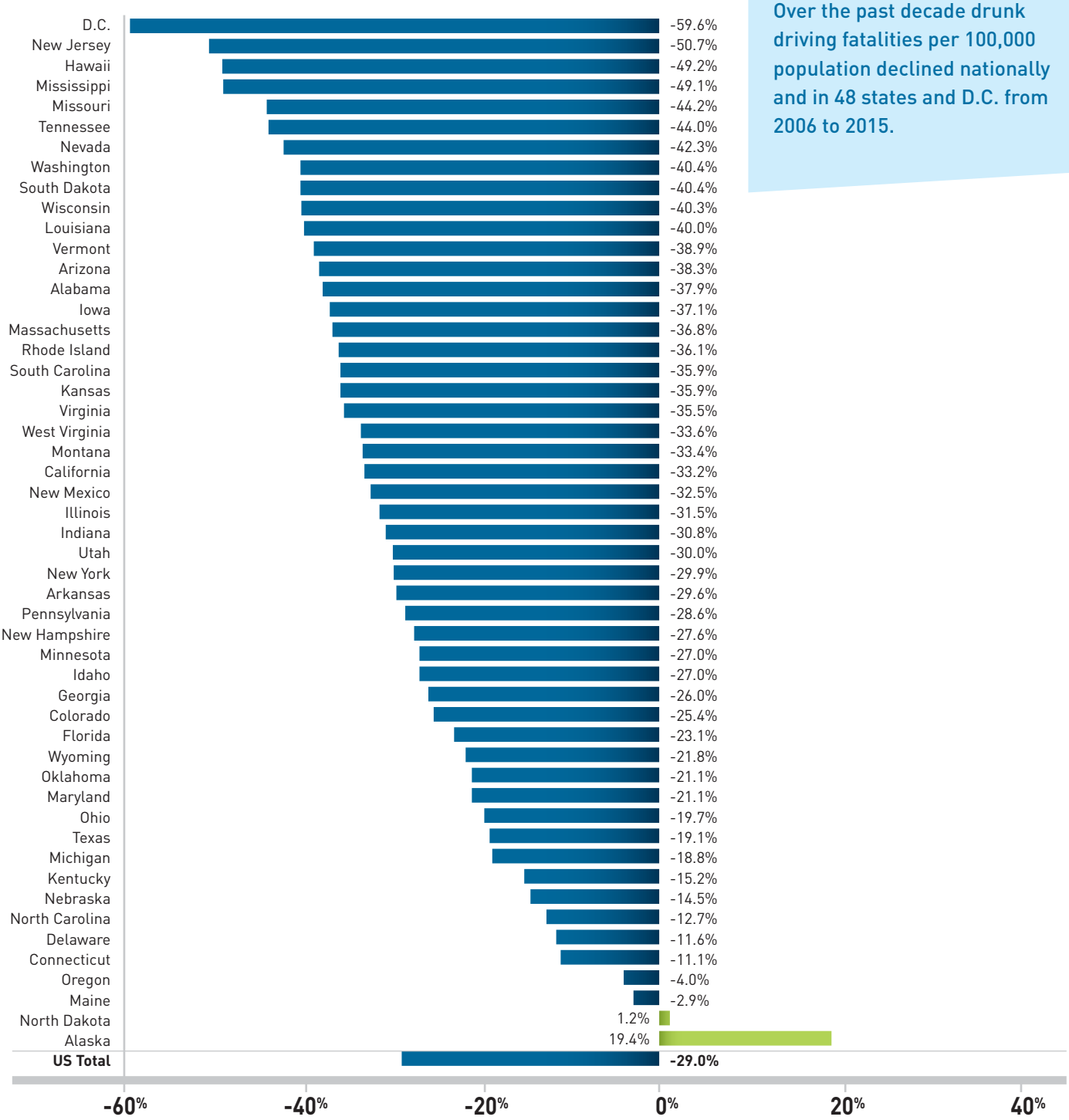
| | |
|---|---|
| Alabama | 2.1 |
| Alaska | 0.5 |
| Arizona | 0.9 |
| Arkansas | 1.9 |
| California | 0.9 |
| Colorado | 1.0 |
| Connecticut | 1.6 |
| Delaware | 1.7 |
| D.C. | 0.0 |
| Florida | 1.5 |
| Georgia | 1.0 |
| Hawaii | 0.8 |
| Idaho | 2.2 |
| Illinois | 0.9 |
| Indiana | 1.3 |
| Iowa | 1.2 |
| Kansas | 1.2 |
| Kentucky | 1.3 |
| Louisiana | 1.4 |
| Maine | 1.3 |
| Maryland | 0.9 |
| Massachusetts | 0.3 |
| Michigan | 1.1 |
| Minnesota | 0.6 |
| Mississippi | 2.8 |
| Missouri | 1.5 |
| Montana | 2.6 |
| Nebraska | 1.3 |
| Nevada | 0.9 |
| New Hampshire | 0.9 |
| New Jersey | 0.5 |
| New Mexico | 1.6 |
| New York | 0.5 |
| North Carolina | 1.5 |
| North Dakota | 1.9 |
| Ohio | 1.2 |
| Oklahoma | 2.5 |
| Oregon | 0.9 |
| Pennsylvania | 1.0 |
| Rhode Island | 0.4 |
| South Carolina | 2.1 |
| South Dakota | 1.2 |
| Tennessee | 0.9 |
| Texas | 2.1 |
| Utah | 0.3 |
| Vermont | 0.7 |
| Virginia | 0.9 |
| Washington | 0.8 |
| West Virginia | 1.6 |
| Wisconsin | 0.8 |
| Wyoming | 3.1 |
| **US Total** | **1.2** |

Source: NHTSA, FARS and U.S. Census Bureau, 10/16

# Percent Change in Drunk Driving Fatality Rates from 2006 to 2015 by State Rank

FOUNDATION FOR ADVANCING ALCOHOL RESPONSIBILITY

Over the past decade drunk driving fatalities per 100,000 population declined nationally and in 48 states and D.C. from 2006 to 2015.

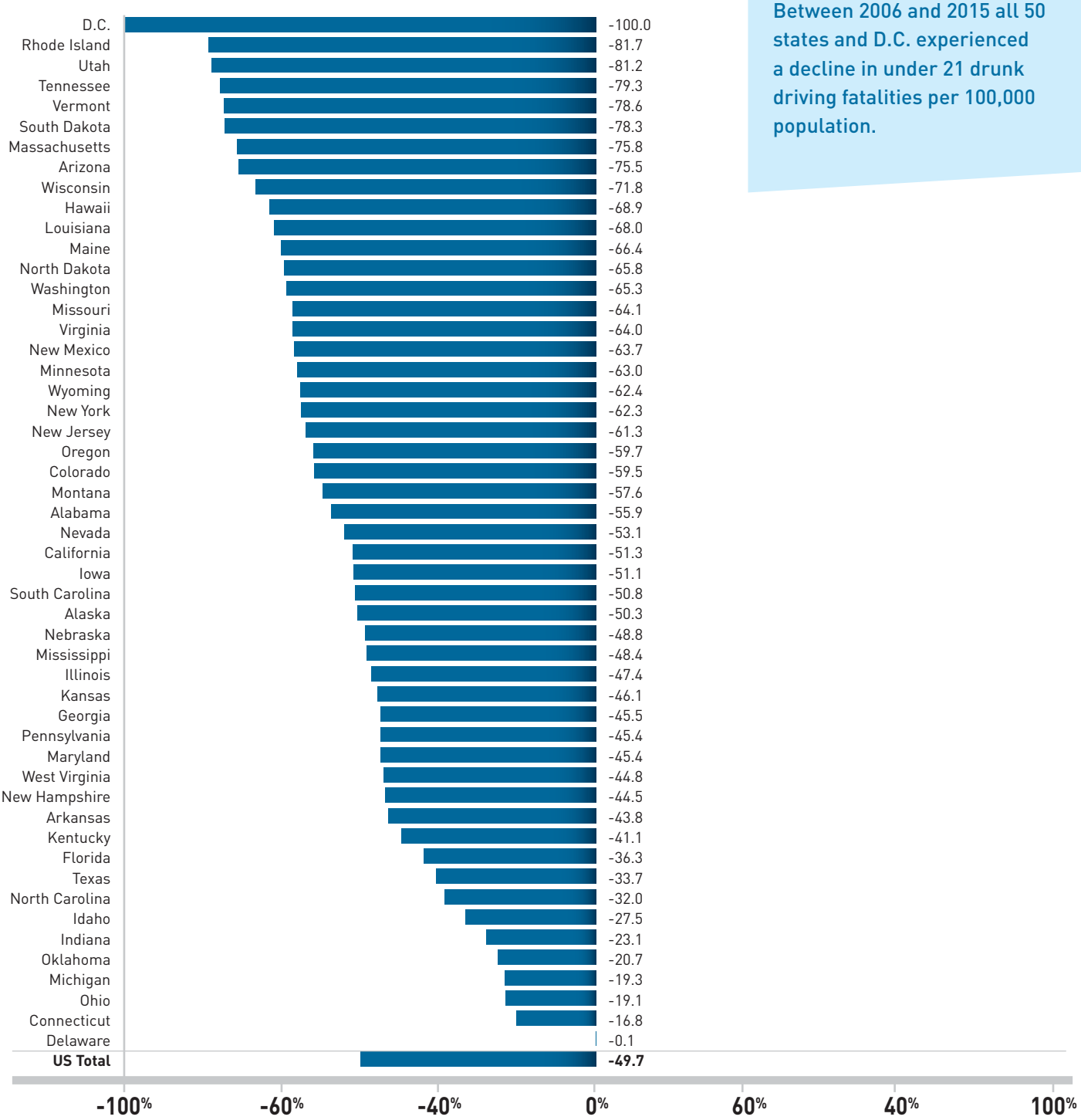



Source: NHTSA, FARS and U.S. Census Bureau, 10/16

# Percent Change in Under 21 Drunk Driving Fatality Rates from 2006 to 2015 by State Rank

FOUNDATION FOR ADVANCING ALCOHOL RESPONSIBILITY

Between 2006 and 2015 all 50 states and D.C. experienced a decline in under 21 drunk driving fatalities per 100,000 population.

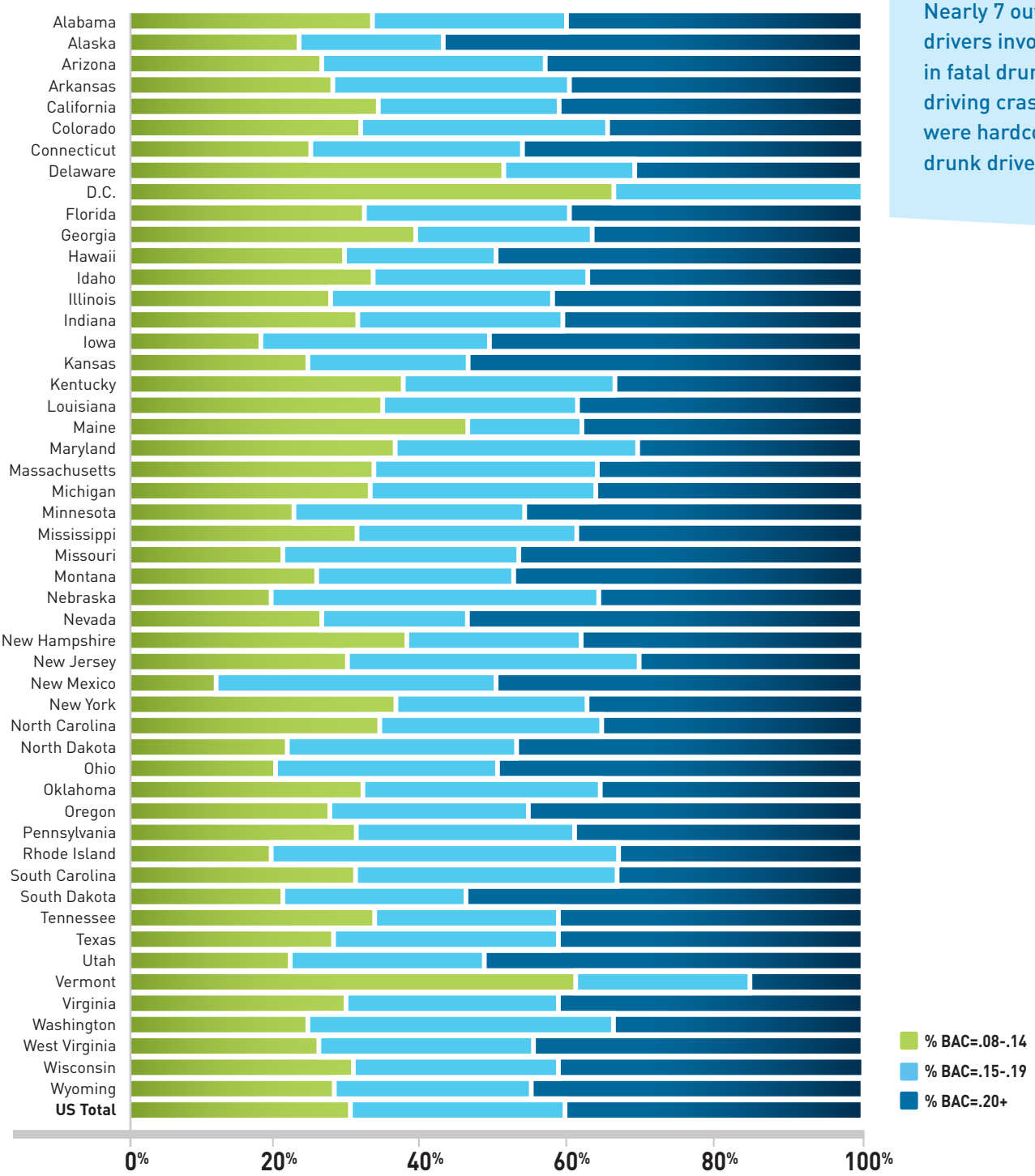



Source: NHTSA, FARS and U.S. Census Bureau, 10/16

# 2015 Fatal Drunk Driving Crashes Among Drivers with a Known BAC

FOUNDATION FOR ADVANCING ALCOHOL RESPONSIBILITY

Nearly 7 out of 10 drivers involved in fatal drunk driving crashes were hardcore drunk drivers.



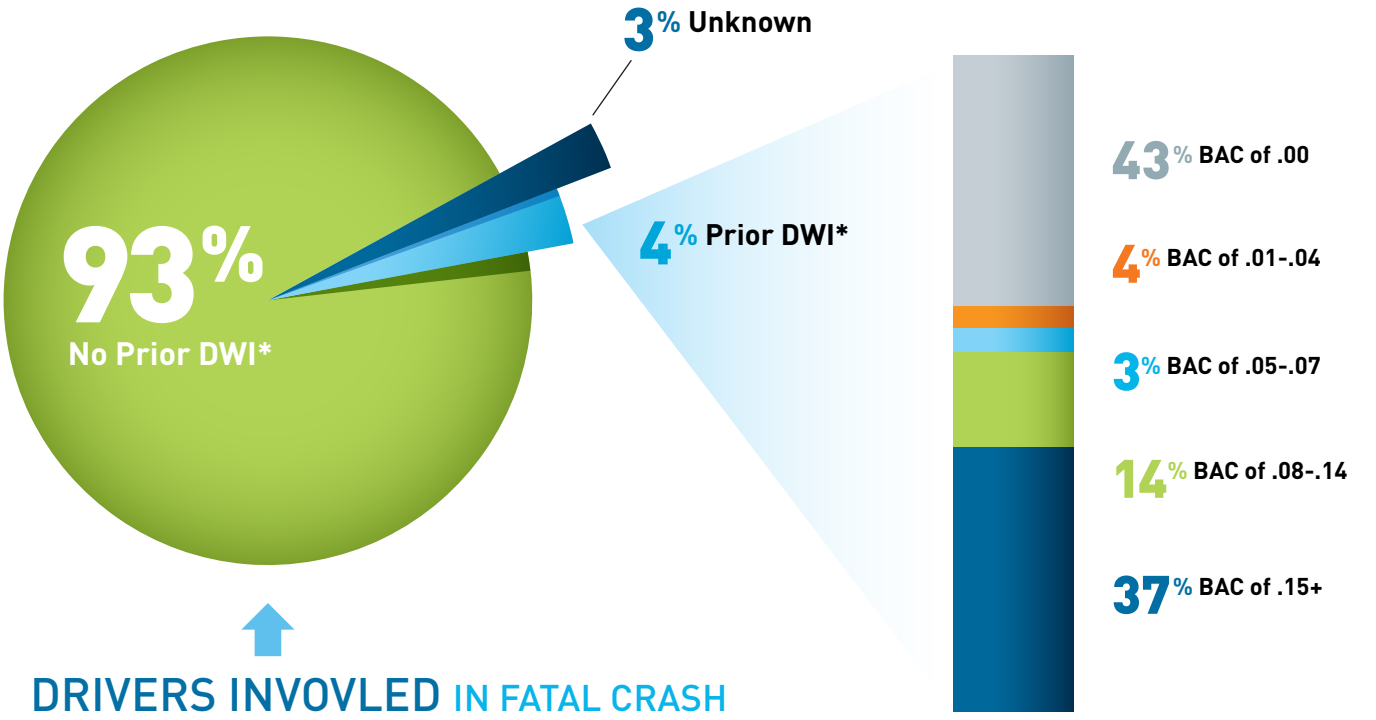

Source: NHTSA, FARS ARF of Drivers with Known BAC, 10/16

# Repeat Offenders Involvement in Fatal Crashes

FOUNDATION FOR ADVANCING ALCOHOL RESPONSIBILITY

Nearly 4 out of 10 drivers involved in a fatal crash with a prior DWI* also had a high BAC at the time of the crash.

## REPEAT OFFENDERS BY BAC LEVEL




## DRIVERS INVOVLED IN FATAL CRASH

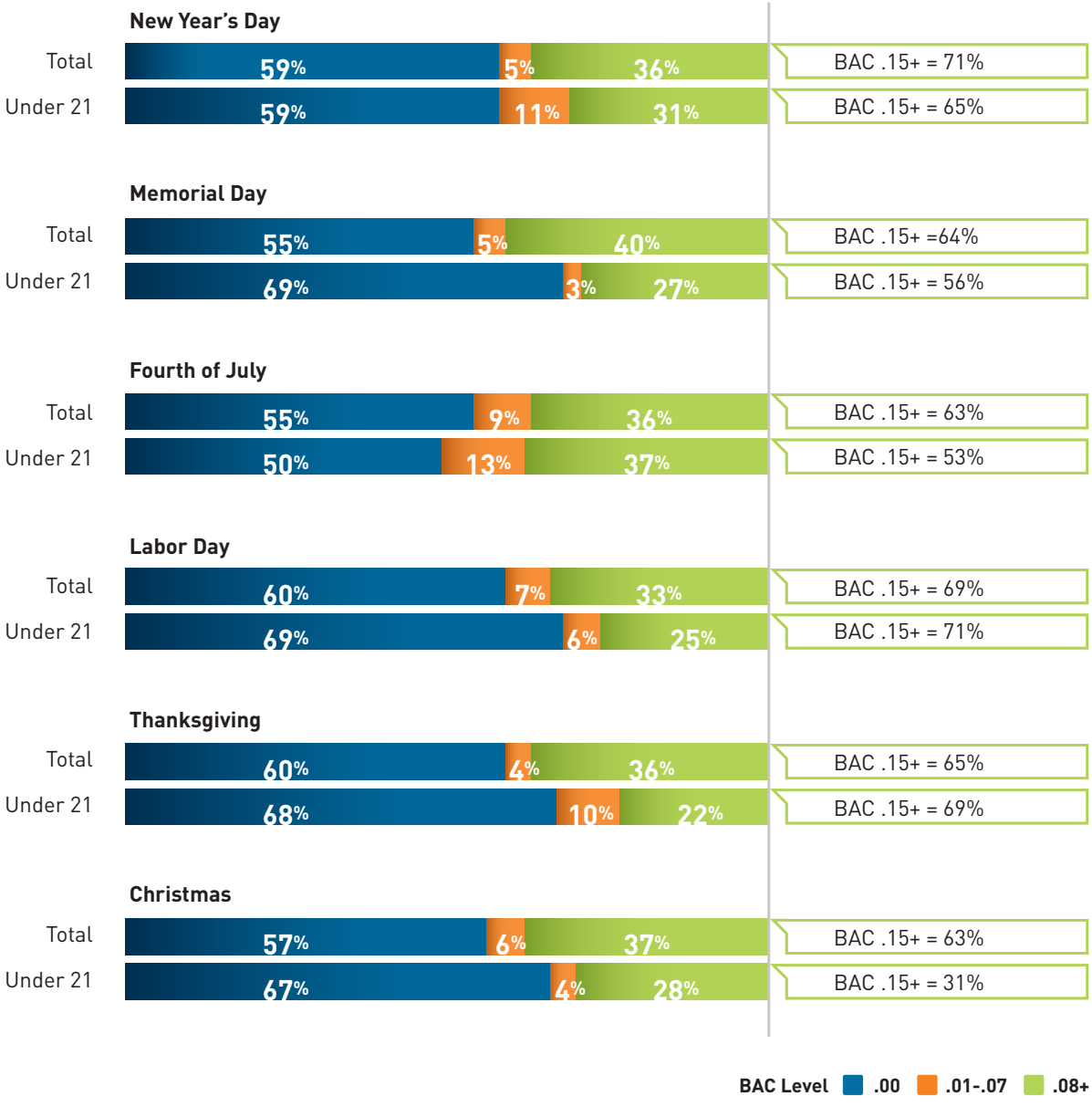
Source: NHTSA, FARS, 10/16

*** Prior convictions only for events occurring within 3 years from date of crash. Total may not equal sum of categories due to rounding.**

# Holiday Traffic Fatalities by BAC Level

FOUNDATION FOR ADVANCING ALCOHOL RESPONSIBILITY

Drunk driving fatalities accounted for 36% of traffic fatalities during the 2015 holidays and drivers with a high BAC were involved in 66% of drunk driving fatalities.




Source: NHTSA, FARS, 10/16
**The number of whole days in the holiday period depends on the day on which the legal holiday falls. Typically, the period is 6 p.m. the night before until 5:59 a.m. the day after the holiday. Total may not equal sum of categories due to rounding.**

The information presented in this report is drawn from several databases maintained by government agencies, including the National Center for Statistics and Analysis (NCSA) of NHTSA, which compiles crash data from the Fatality Analysis Reporting System (FARS), and the U.S. Census Bureau of the U.S. Department of Commerce. This report reflects data from 1982 to the present utilizing NHTSA's multiple imputation method for estimating missing information about BAC levels for persons involved in fatal crashes, thus allowing for improved reporting of alcohol involvement statistics at any BAC level. The U.S. Census Bureau publishes state resident population estimates which were used in this report.

FOUNDATION FOR
ADVANCING ALCOHOL
RESPONSIBILITY

responsibility.org/**blog**

twitter.com/**goFAAR**

facebook.com/**goFAAR**

youtube.com/**goFAAR**

instagram.com/**go_FAAR**

flickr.com/**goFAAR**

pinterest.com/**goFAAR**

responsibility.org/**get-the-facts**

BACARDI U.S.A., INC.

Beam SUNTORY

BROWN-FORMAN

Constellation Brands

DIAGEO

EDRINGTON

HOOD RIVER DISTILLERS INC
EST. 1934

Pernod Ricard USA

2345 Crystal Drive
Suite 710
Arlington, VA 22202
202-637-0077

**RESPONSIBILITY.ORG**