

Hawaii Rural Health Association, October, 2007

Building Rural Leadership Capacity: Politics and Policy

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Photo: Mockingbird in Alison's Garden

Policy, Politics, and Advocacy: The Rural Health Challenge



NOSORH: FRIENDS OF STATE RURAL HEALTH ASSOCIATIONS

Policy

- Definitions: A plan or course of action, as of a government, political party, or business, intended to influence and determine decisions, actions, and other matters.
- A high-level overall plan embracing the general goals and acceptable procedures especially of a governmental body

Politics

- Definition: Politics is the process by which groups make decisions. It is the authoritative allocation of values. Although the term is generally applied to behavior within governments, politics is observed in all human group interactions, including corporate, academic, and religious institutions. (Wikipedia)

Advocacy

Definition:

Active support of an idea or cause etc.; especially the act of pleading or arguing for something

- Speaking out on issues of concern. This can mean something as formal as sitting down and talking to your legislator; as intensive as engaging in efforts to change a change in laws or policies; or as simple as telling your neighbor about the impact of a law.

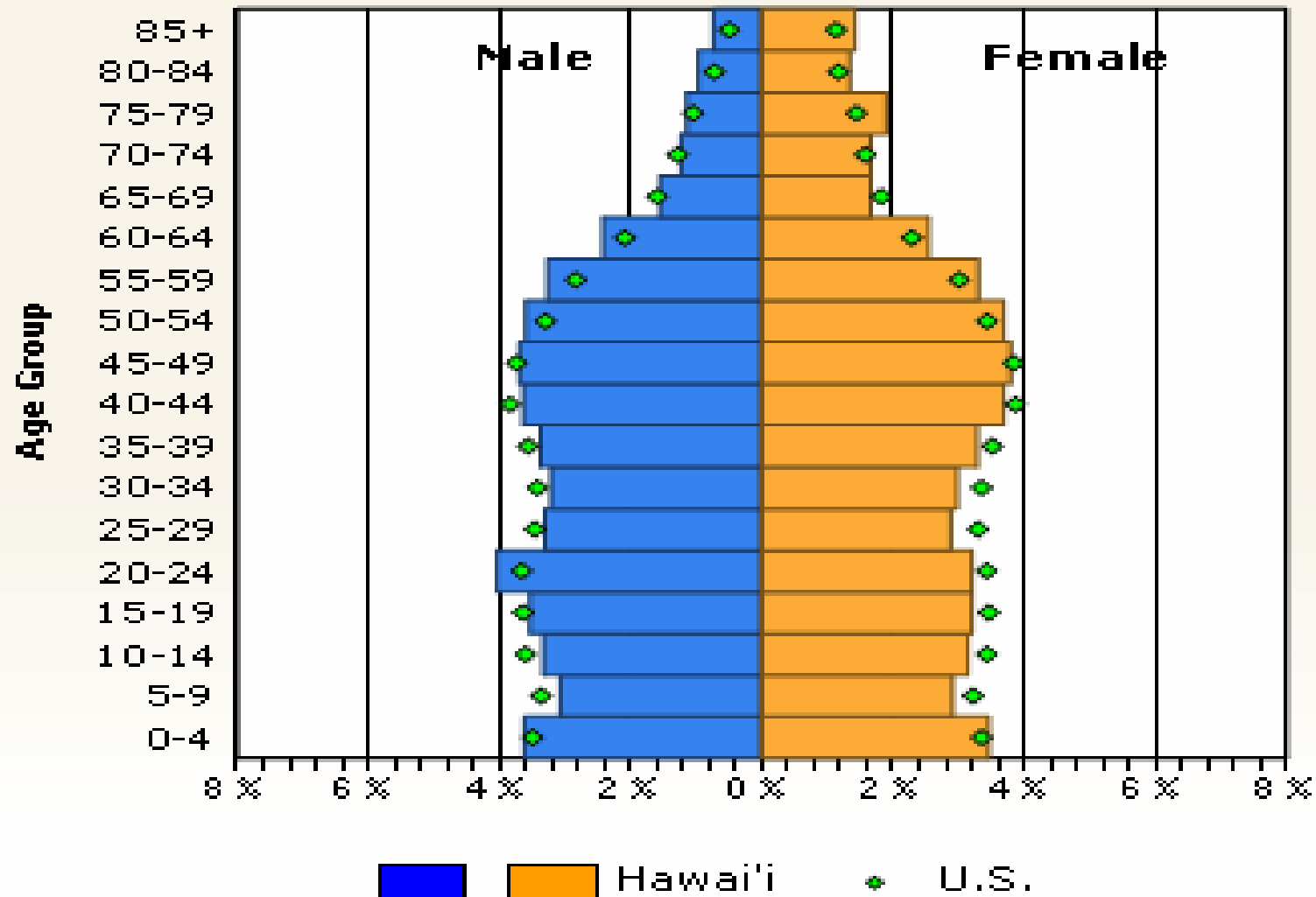
Lobbying—HI Definition (HRS 97-1)

- **LOBBYING** means communicating directly or through an agent, or soliciting others to communicate, with any official in the legislative or executive branch, for the purpose of attempting to influence legislative or administrative action or a ballot issue.
- **LOBBYIST** means any individual who for pay or other consideration engages in lobbying in excess of five hours in any month of any reporting period described in section 97-3 or spends more than \$750 lobbying during any reporting period described in section 97-3.

Issues We Care About

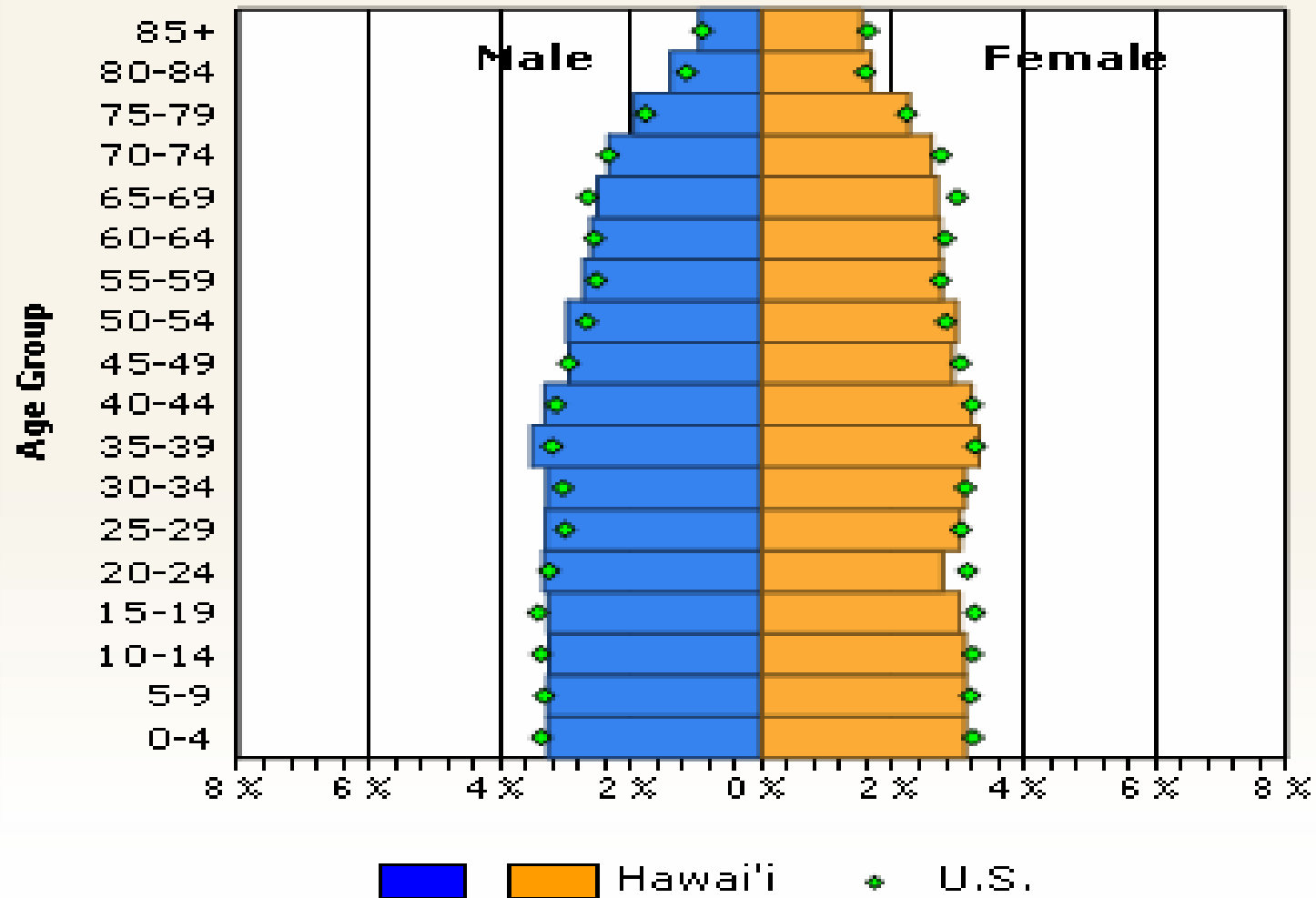
- People are living longer lives – improving the quality of life for our elders through better access to creative, re-designed long-term care services; tele-home health services, and assistance for staying at home. Elders like their own homes!
- Access to health care you can count on being the best!

Population Distribution, Hawai'i vs. U.S., 2005



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division.

Population Distribution, Hawai'i vs. U.S., 2030



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division.

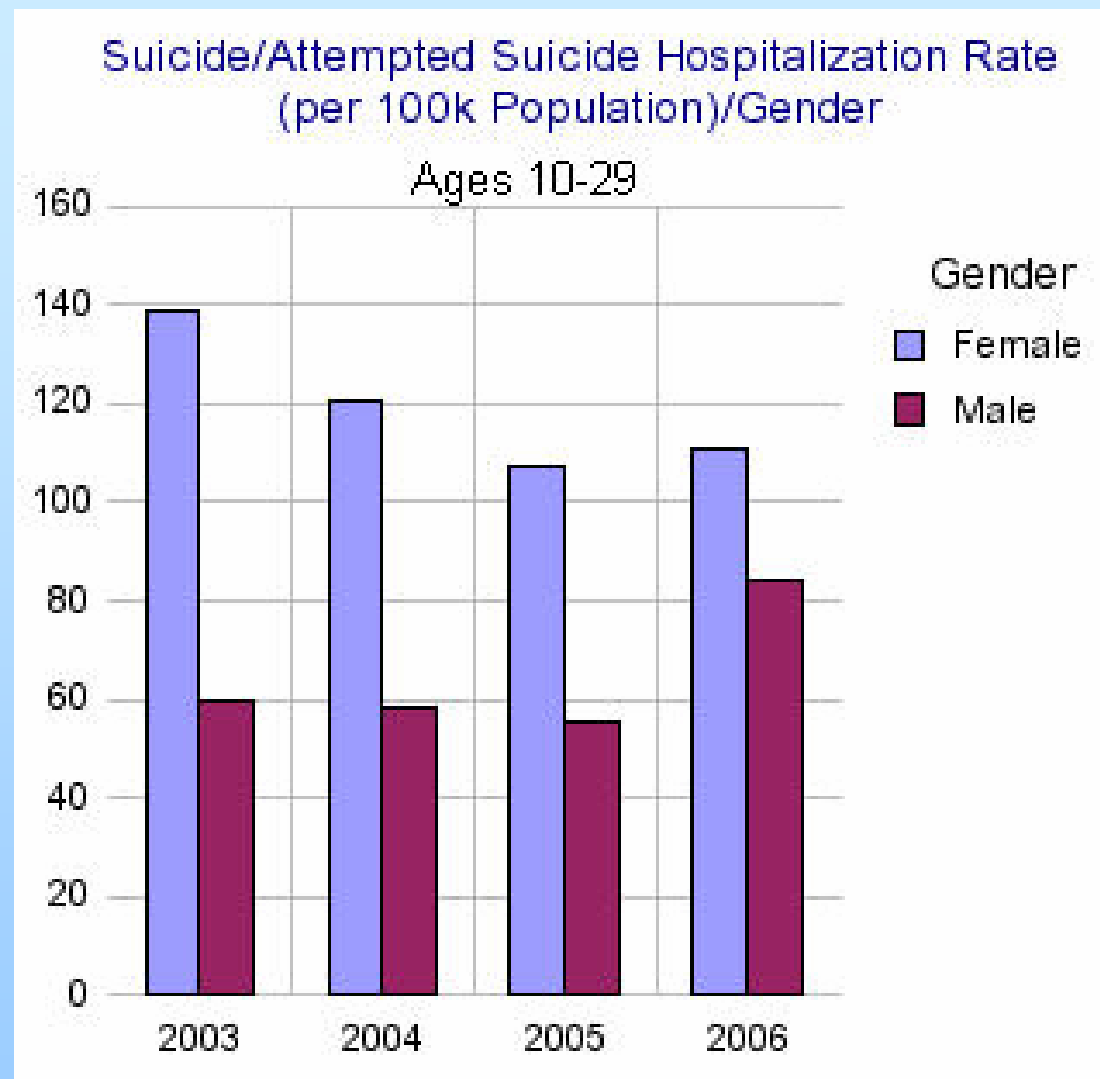
Issues (continued)

- Shortage of health care workforce to care for growing number of elders
- Low health care reimbursement rates related to practice in rural communities
- Spiraling cost of medical malpractice insurance

These issues are acknowledged by HI legislature as critical to the state's population.

Issues (continued)

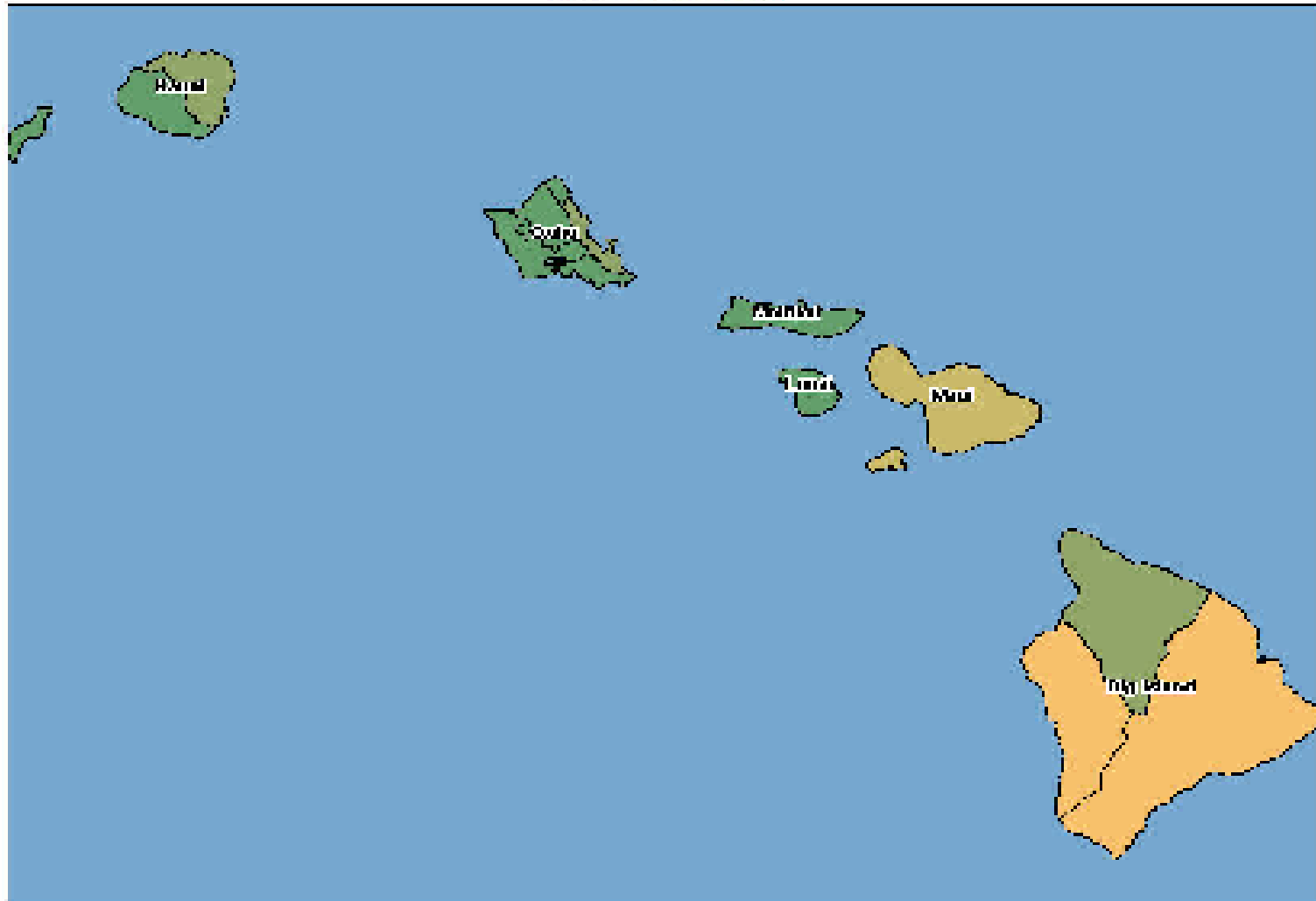
- Hawaii youth suicide attempts
- Hawaii motor vehicle fatalities due to alcohol consumption



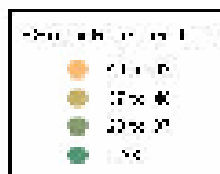
Suicide: Third leading cause of death in Hawaii among young adults

Source: Hawaii Health Information Corporation

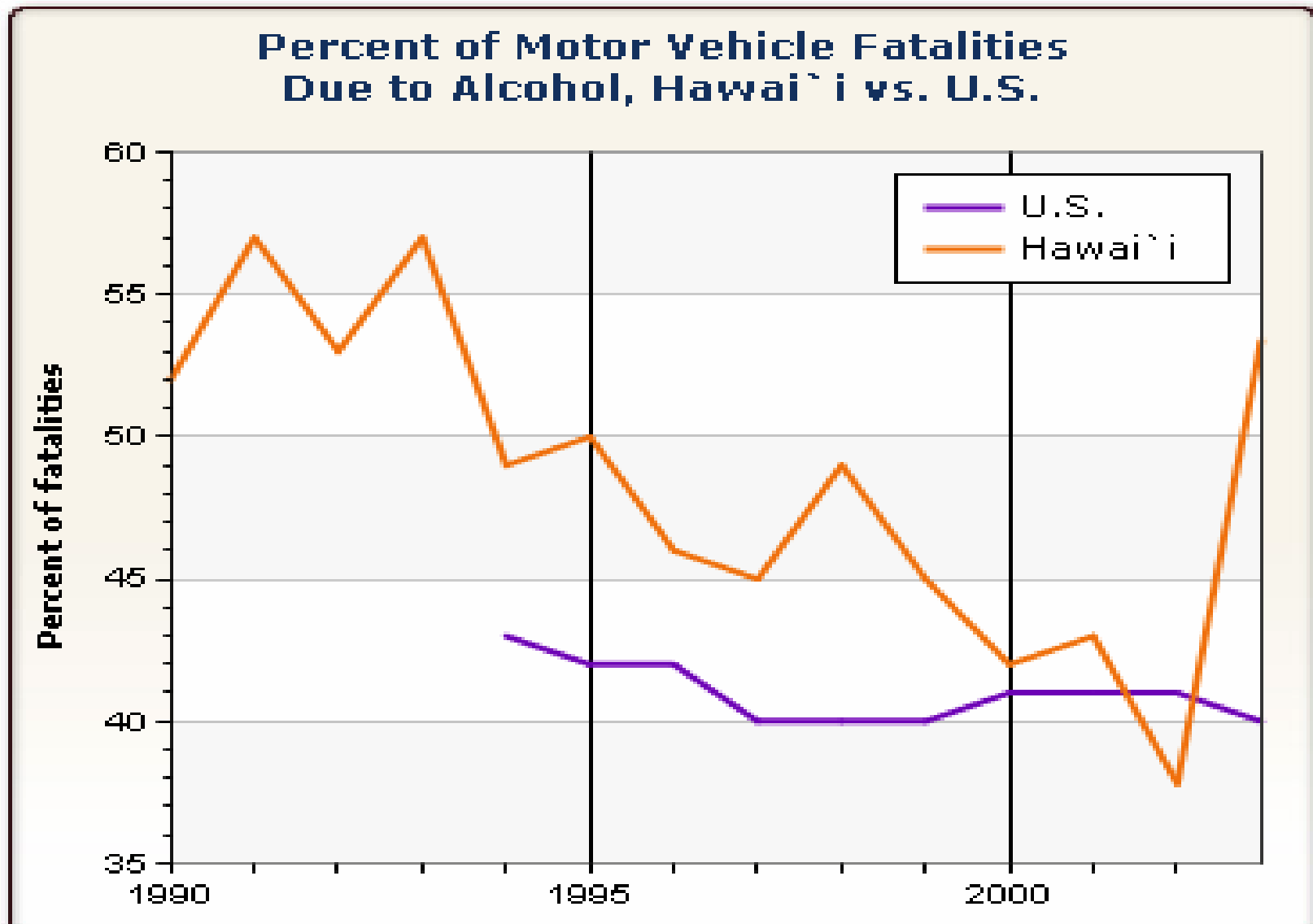
Suicide/Attempted Suicide Hospitalization Rate (per 100k Population)



Year: 2019



30 days. Heavy drinking is defined as having two or more drinks per day for men and one or more drink per day for women everyday for the past 30 days. U.S. figures are the medians of the states' means. No data for 1994, 1996, 1998, 2000.



Adopting A Plan of Action

- Great resources: The Community Tool Box <http://ctb.ku.edu/en/>
- The Community Tool Box is the world's largest resource for free information on essential skills for building healthy communities. It offers over 7,000 pages of practical guidance in creating change and improvement.

Resources (continued)

- Grassroots Advocacy Training Exchange (GATE) <http://www.grassroots-advocacy.com/>
- An interactive resource designed to help you and your organization define or change the state and federal policies that affect your life and livelihood.

How Change Is Made

- Legislative Branch
- Executive Branch
- Judicial Branch
- The Media
- The Lobbies
- The People

The Legislative Branch

- Counting votes!!
 - Hawaii State Senate – 25 members; 13 votes needed to pass legislation!
 - Hawaii State House – 51 members; 26 votes needed to pass legislation!
 - U.S. Senate—100 members
 - U.S. House – 435 members

Getting Involved!

- All politics is local!
 - Campaign involvement across political party structures
 - Donate to campaigns even if not involved
 - Attend some political gatherings where elected officials gather
 - Get to know legislative staff
 - Get to know Governor's staff

Use the Media

- Get to know news reporters
- Send press releases about your organization's events and your issues
- The more media coverage your organization gets, the more elected officials will listen

Know the Lobbies

- Develop partnerships with lobbyists
- Educate lobbyists about your cause
- Invite lobbyists to speak at your meetings
 - they love to speak about lobbying methods

The People

- Voter driven initiatives: Initiative and Referendum Institute:
<http://www.iandrinstitute.org/ballotwatch.htm>
- Not allowed under Hawaii Constitution
- 23 states allow voter initiatives and referenda

Adopting An Annual Strategy

- Hawaii Legislature
 - Starts January 16 through April/May for 60 legislative days
 - Meet legislators in fall to initiate legislation and/or to gain their support for your issues
- Don't forget to send thanks

Exercising Leadership

“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.” (Margaret Mead)

"A leader is best when people barely know he (she) exists, when his work is done, his aim fulfilled, they will say: we did it ourselves." --**Lao Tzu**

Leadership (continued)

- Inspiring others to get involved
- Passion comes from the heart – people sense if it is genuine
- Being a model – work hard; keep practicing and getting better at what you do
- Question authority
- Take risks
- A leader is a dealer in hope. (*Napoleon Bonaparte*)

An Advocate's Journey!

Starting Out Young and Innocent





Engaging friends you can trust

Reaching out to the curious bystanders to get them involved





Facing Your Fears!



Advocating for those too young to
advocate for themselves!



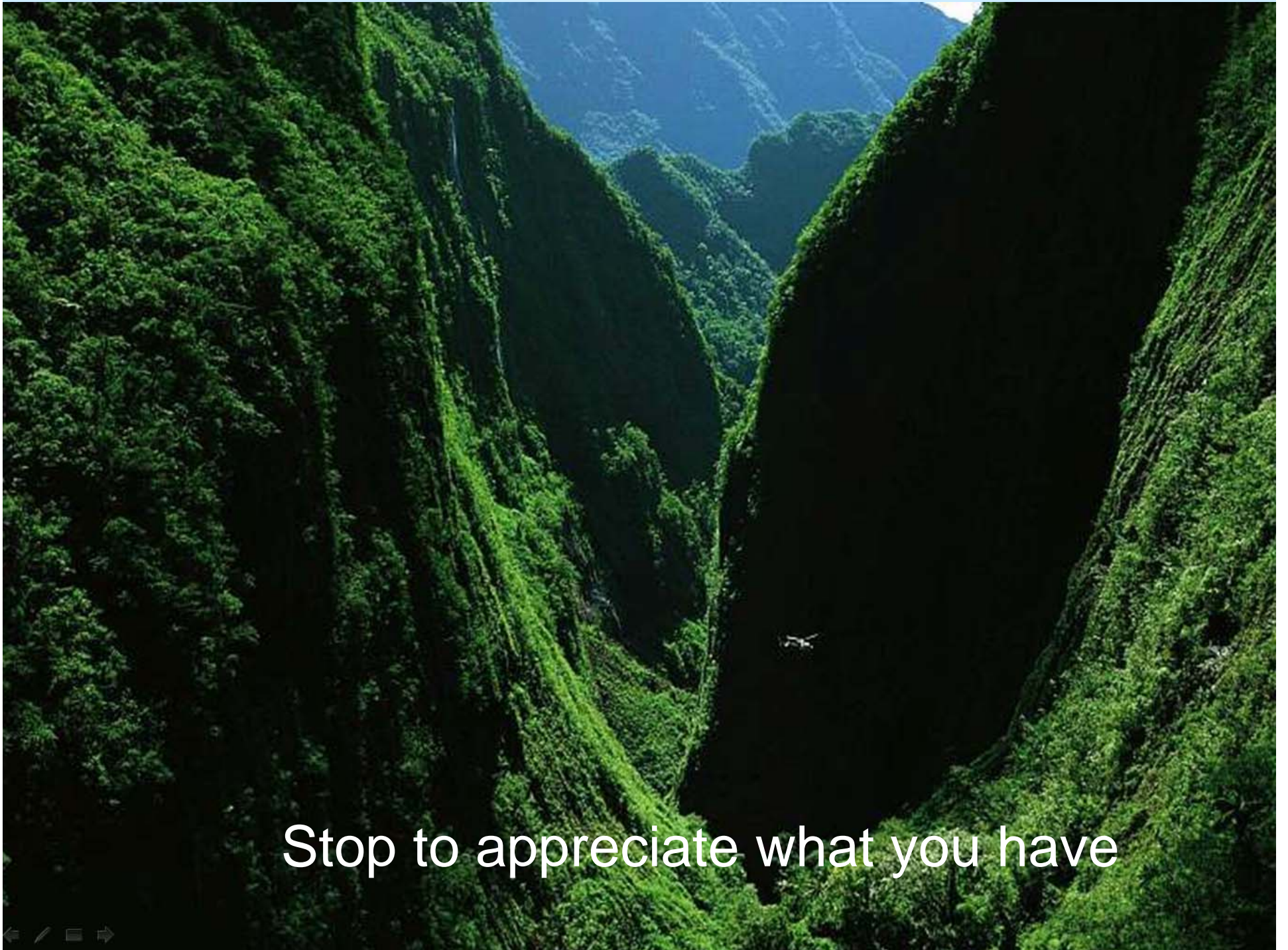
Be Ready when disaster strikes



Have fun exercising leadership and making changes



Make Every Moment Count!



Stop to appreciate what you have



Learn about and understand the beauty
of other rural cultures



REJOICE IN OUR SIMILARITIES



**Admire our
differences
as we work together**

Because...

**Together we can
Make a difference!**

**PRESENTING THE NOSORH QUILT
AN EXERCISE IN TEAMWORK ACROSS
THE COUNTRY BY RURAL HEALTH ADVOCATES**





**This presentation is dedicated to the
Memory of Queen Liliuokalani**

one more thing...

Rallying people to the cause

is like herding cats

a short video