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Memorandum

TO: Senator Donald Olson
FROM: Susan Haymes, Legislative Analyst; Patricia Young, Manager; and Roger Withington, Legislative Analyst
DATE: March 15, 2012
RE: Homelessness, Domestic Violence, and Alcohol and Drug Abuse Prevalence, Alaska and Other States
LRS Report 12.240

You asked for information on homelessness, domestic violence, and drug and alcohol abuse, and for comparisons of Alaska to other states in the prevalence of each. You also asked for related information, such as mortality rates and costs associated with these issues, if readily available.

Homelessness

The primary measure of the total homeless population in the United States is the annual point-in-time counts by local Continuum of Care organizations conducted on a single night in January of all sheltered and unsheltered homeless persons.¹ The counts are submitted to the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) as a part of each Continuum's application for federal homeless assistance funding. The HUD publishes these data each year in its Annual Homeless Assessment report to Congress.² We provide HUD's most recent point-in-time estimates of homeless population by state from January 2010, as well as a table showing changes in point-in-time estimates of homeless population, by state, from 2007-2010 as Attachment A.

In 2010, Alaska and Louisiana ranked ninth among states in concentration of homeless people, with 0.28 percent of the total population estimated to be homeless. The following table shows the percentages of homeless individuals in the states with the highest concentrations. Vermont ranked last among states with a homeless rate of 0.04 percent and Kansas next to last with 0.07 percent. Please note that these counts are estimates, and reflect data collected for individuals at a given time.

Table 1: States with Highest Concentration of Homeless People, 2010

Rank	State	Number of Homeless	Percent of Total Population
1	Nevada	14,594	0.54
2	Oregon	19,492	0.45
3	Hawaii	5,834	0.43
4	California	132,931	0.36
5	Washington	22,878	0.34
6	New York	65,606	0.32
7	Colorado	15,482	0.30
7	Florida	57,551	0.30
9	Alaska	1,863	0.28
9	Louisiana	12,482	0.28

Notes: Rank is based on the number of homeless persons as a percentage of the state's total population.

Source: The 2010 Annual Homeless Assessment Report to Congress, U.S. Dept. of Housing and Urban Development.

¹ The Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) provides federal financial support for a variety of programs to meet the needs of homeless families and individuals. In 1994, HUD began requiring each community to come together to submit a single comprehensive Continuum of Care (CoC) application rather than allowing applications from individual providers. The intent of a more structured application process was to stimulate community-wide planning for the homeless. The contacts for CoC in Alaska are Carrie Longoria, Municipality of Anchorage, Department of Health and Human Services, 907.343.4876 for the Anchorage area, and Kris Duncan, Homeless Assistance Program, Alaska Housing Finance Corporation (AHFC), 907.330.8276, for the rest of the state.

² The report can be accessed at www.hudhre.info/documents/2010HomelessAssessmentReport.pdf.

Domestic Violence

Under Alaska statutes, domestic violence includes a host of different crimes attempted or committed by a household member or intimate partner against another household member. Because both nationally and in Alaska, crimes are indexed separately, definitively assessing the prevalence and extent of domestic violence is problematic. Furthermore, because it occurs in private and victims are often reluctant to report incidents to anyone because of shame and fear of reprisal, experts accept as established fact that domestic violence is one of the most chronically underreported crimes.³ For example, researchers with the National Institute of Justice and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) conclude that only approximately one-quarter of all physical assaults, one-fifth of all rapes, and one-half of all stalking perpetrated against females by intimate partners are reported to the police.⁴

Nevertheless, the Alaska Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault (CDVSA) collects information provided voluntarily from individuals seeking services from shelters, safe houses, and other victim service programs. According to their records for Fiscal Year 2011, there were 4,688 adults who received services from a victim service provider and reported having been a primary victim of domestic violence in at least one incident at any time in the past.

On a national level, the CDC conducts a survey of intimate partner and sexual violence incidents annually. The data are expressed as estimates of the prevalence of sexual violence, stalking, and intimate partner violence at any time in the past. The prevalence estimates are based on relatively limited samples. Additionally, states differ on the type of relationship that qualifies under domestic violence laws. For these reasons, the CDC *strongly cautions* readers against comparing estimates across states or by sex. We present the compiled estimates for 2010, by state, in Table 2. As you might suspect, the estimated prevalence of intimate partner and sexual violence in Alaska is high, particularly for women.

While domestic violence results in physical injury and sometimes death, it is often accompanied by emotionally abusive and controlling behavior that has long term consequences with ripple effects that can reverberate across generations and through lifetimes. The following are some of the consequences of domestic violence as documented by the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence (NCADV) in "Domestic Violence Facts," published July 2007:

- Witnessing violence between one's parents or caretakers is the strongest risk factor of transmitting violent behavior from one generation to the next.
- Boys who witness domestic violence are twice as likely to abuse their own partners and children when they become adults.
- Between 30 and 60 percent of perpetrators of intimate partner violence also abuse children in the household.
- In 70 to 80 percent of intimate partner homicides, (no matter which partner is killed), the man physically abused the woman before the murder.
- Less than 20 percent of victims reporting an injury from intimate partner violence sought medical treatment following the injury.
- The cost of intimate partner violence exceeds \$5.8 billion each year, and \$4.1 billion of that is for direct medical and mental health services.
- Victims of intimate partner violence lost almost 8 million days of paid work—the equivalent of more than 32,000 full-time jobs and almost 5.6 million days of household productivity as a result of this type of violence.

³ U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics, *Criminal Victimization*, 2003.

⁴ Patricia Tjaden and Nancy Thoennes, "Extent, Nature and Consequences of Intimate Partner Violence: Findings from the National Violence Against Women Survey," National Institute of Justice and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2000.

Table 2: Lifetime Prevalence of Rape, Physical Violence, and/or Stalking by an Intimate Partner by State of Residence, 2010

State	Women		State	Men	
	Lifetime Prevalence Estimate	Estimated Number of Victims		Lifetime Prevalence Estimate	Estimated Number of Victims
United States Total	35.6	42,420,000	United States Total	28.5	32,280,000
District of Columbia	*	*	Vermont	*	*
Oklahoma	49.1	697,000	West Virginia	41.2	286,000
Nevada	48.1	465,000	Oklahoma	40.7	550,000
Alaska	44.2	109,000	Missouri	40.4	886,000
North Carolina	43.9	1615,000	Georgia	39.9	1,401,000
Washington	42.6	1,094,000	New Hampshire	37.8	191,000
Maryland	42.1	957,000	Delaware	36.8	119,000
Michigan	41.8	1,638,000	Wyoming	35.8	75,000
South Carolina	41.5	752,000	Arkansas	35.6	375,000
Indiana	40.4	1,001,000	Texas	35.1	3,104,000
New Hampshire	40.4	214,000	Connecticut	33.9	442,000
Mississippi	40.1	460,000	Oregon	33.6	487,000
Tennessee	40.0	997,000	New York	33.5	2,423,000
Montana	39.2	149,000	Idaho	33.3	187,000
Nebraska	38.5	263,000	Montana	32.6	122,000
Illinois	37.7	1882,000	Tennessee	32.5	750,000
Pennsylvania	37.7	1927,000	Kentucky	31.0	495,000
Kentucky	37.5	638,000	Nevada	30.9	307,000
Arkansas	37.3	420,000	South Dakota	30.2	92,000
Oregon	37.3	561,000	Ohio	30.0	1,274,000
Utah	36.9	355,000	New Jersey	29.3	944,000
Maine	36.6	199,000	New Mexico	29.1	214,000
Arizona	36.5	891,000	Colorado	28.6	545,000
Missouri	36.1	854,000	Louisiana	28.4	457,000
Wyoming	35.8	73,000	Washington	28.3	716,000
Hawaii	35.7	179,000	Pennsylvania	27.5	1,298,000
Ohio	35.6	1,629,000	California	27.3	3,737,000
Georgia	35.1	1,310,000	Maryland	27.2	563,000
Delaware	34.9	124,000	Arizona	27.1	657,000
Texas	34.5	3116,000	Alabama	26.9	459,000
New Mexico	34.4	263,000	Indiana	26.8	631,000
Florida	34.2	2,546,000	Maine	26.7	135,000
Minnesota	33.7	684,000	Nebraska	26.1	172,000
South Dakota	33.7	104,000	North Dakota	26.1	66,000
Vermont	33.6	85,000	Mississippi	25.8	268,000
West Virginia	33.6	249,000	Illinois	25.7	1,215,000
Louisiana	33.4	586,000	Alaska	25.0	67,000
California	32.9	4,563,000	Florida	24.6	1,731,000
Connecticut	32.9	462,000	District of Columbia	24.4	55,000
Colorado	32.7	618,000	Minnesota	23.5	465,000
Wisconsin	32.4	714,000	Kansas	23.0	239,000
New York	32.3	2,544,000	Michigan	23.0	850,000
Massachusetts	31.7	851,000	Wisconsin	23.0	492,000
Iowa	31.3	368,000	Virginia	22.1	647,000
Virginia	31.3	971,000	Hawaii	21.8	110,000
Alabama	31.0	582,000	Iowa	19.6	219,000
Rhode Island	29.9	129,000	Utah	19.6	187,000
Idaho	29.3	166,000	North Carolina	19.3	660,000
Kansas	29.0	312,000	Rhode Island	19.3	76,000
New Jersey	26.2	902,000	Massachusetts	19.2	474,000
North Dakota	25.3	64,000	South Carolina	17.4	290,000

NOTES: Prevalence Estimates are based on samples and therefore include error. *Readers are strongly cautioned against comparing estimates across states or by sex.* Estimated numbers of victims are rounded to the nearest thousand.

* Estimate not reported, relative standard error greater than 30%, or number is less than 21.

Most of the violence reported by men was physical violence; 2.1% of men, overall experienced stalking by an intimate partner.

SOURCE: Detailed State Tables 7.4 and 7.5, from the National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey (NISVS) 2010, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, Division of Violence Prevention, updated November 15, 2011.

Drug and Alcohol Abuse

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) conducts the National Survey on Drug Use and Health (NSDUH) which is considered by many as the primary source of information on the prevalence, patterns, and consequences of alcohol, tobacco, and illegal drug use and abuse in the United States.⁵ In 2011, SAMHSA published the results from their most recent survey, which was conducted in 2008 and 2009. The report notes that nationally, 22.4 million persons aged 12 or older in 2008-2009 were classified with dependence on or abuse of illicit drugs or alcohol in the past year.

With respect to alcohol dependence and abuse, during the survey period, 7.4 percent of the U.S. population aged 12 or older was classified with dependence on or abuse of alcohol in the previous year. At the state level, Montana (9.86 percent), South Dakota (9.79 percent), District of Columbia (9.24 percent), Minnesota (9.24 percent), and Colorado (9.03 percent) had the highest prevalence rate among persons aged 12 or older while the rates in Mississippi (6.20 percent), Pennsylvania (6.11 percent), Tennessee (6.09 percent), Utah (6.0 percent), and Kentucky (5.95 percent) were the lowest. Alaska ranks fourteenth with a prevalence rate of 8.11 percent.

With respect to illicit drug dependence and abuse, nationally in 2008-2009, about 2.8 percent of persons aged 12 or older were dependent on or had abused illicit drugs during the previous year. The District of Columbia (4.38 percent), Rhode Island (4.15 percent), Massachusetts (3.48 percent), Nevada (3.45 percent), and Oregon (3.43 percent) had the highest rate of illicit drug dependence or abuse among persons aged 12 or older while Wyoming (2.34 percent), Kansas (2.28 percent), North Dakota (2.23 percent), Nebraska (2.06 percent), and Iowa (1.89 percent) had the lowest rate. Alaska ranked eighteenth with 2.96 percent of persons aged 12 or older dependent on or having abused illicit drugs during the previous year.

We include, as Attachment B, excerpts from the document from which we obtained the above information, *State Estimates of Substance Use and Mental Disorders from the 2008-2009 National Surveys on Drug Use and Health*. These excerpts include a brief narrative summary of the alcohol and illicit dependence and abuse, illustration of the prevalence of alcohol and drug dependence and abuse by state, and the data tables from which the narrative and illustrations are derived.

Although we could not locate the specific mortality cost information you asked for in the time allotted for your project, we did locate a *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report*, published in 2004 by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention that discusses alcohol-attributable deaths and years of potential life lost in the United States during 2001.⁶ We include this report as Attachment C. In summary, the authors note as follows:

... excessive alcohol consumption is the third leading preventable cause of death in the United States and is associated with multiple adverse health consequences, including liver cirrhosis, various cancers, unintentional injuries, and violence.

The authors additionally note that approximately 75,766 alcohol-attributable deaths occurred in 2001. These deaths account for 2.3 million years of potential life lost, or approximately 30 years of life lost on average per alcohol-attributable death.

We hope this is helpful. If you have questions or need additional information, please let us know.

⁵ The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's (SAMHSA) mission is to reduce the impact of substance abuse and mental illness on America's communities. Additional information regarding SAMHSA can be found at <http://www.samhsa.gov/index.aspx>. We obtained information from Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, *State Estimates of Substance Use and Mental Disorders from the 2008-2009 National Surveys on Drug Use and Health*, 2011, <http://www.samhsa.gov/data/NSDUH.aspx>.

⁶ "Alcohol-Attributable Deaths and Years of Potential Life Lost—United States, 2001," *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report*, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, September 24, 2004, <http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm5337a2.htm>.