

# The Great Immigration Turnaround

New Facts and Old Rhetoric

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# Overview

Where is immigration growing fastest?

Divided opinion and fears about immigration

The turnaround between Old and New outlooks on immigration

Examining the Four Myths

Rediscovering intergenerational connection

*Divided Opinion*  
**Old and New Stories  
About Immigration**

# Are Immigrants a Burden or a Benefit?

Percent of Calif. White Voters Who Believe Immigrants are a Burden

	1998	2004	Change
Liberals	40	29	-11
Conservatives	54	64	+10
Gap (L-C)	-14	-35	+21

# Four Myths About Immigration — Recognizing the New Trends

1. The number of immigrants is accelerating out of control
2. Immigrants are all newcomers
3. Immigrants are like Peter Pan, never changing over time no matter how long in America
4. Immigrants are an unwanted burden, especially given our fiscal crisis

1. Is immigration accelerating  
out of control?

# Record High Immigration —but slowing drastically

Total foreign-born = 39.9 million

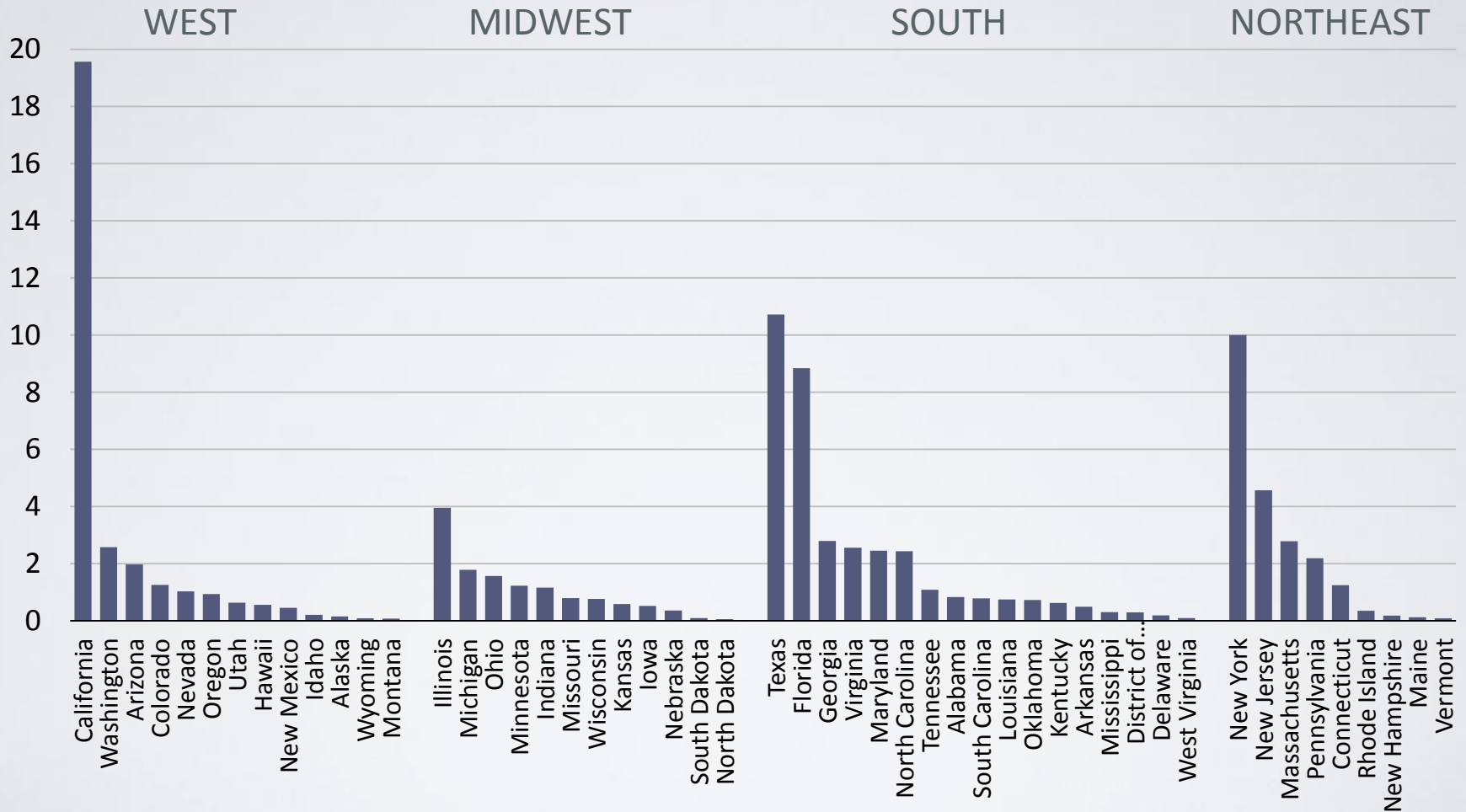
1990s      57.4% growth (11.3 million)

2000s      28.8% growth ( 8.8 million)

NOT evenly spread across the nation

# Share of National Arrivals

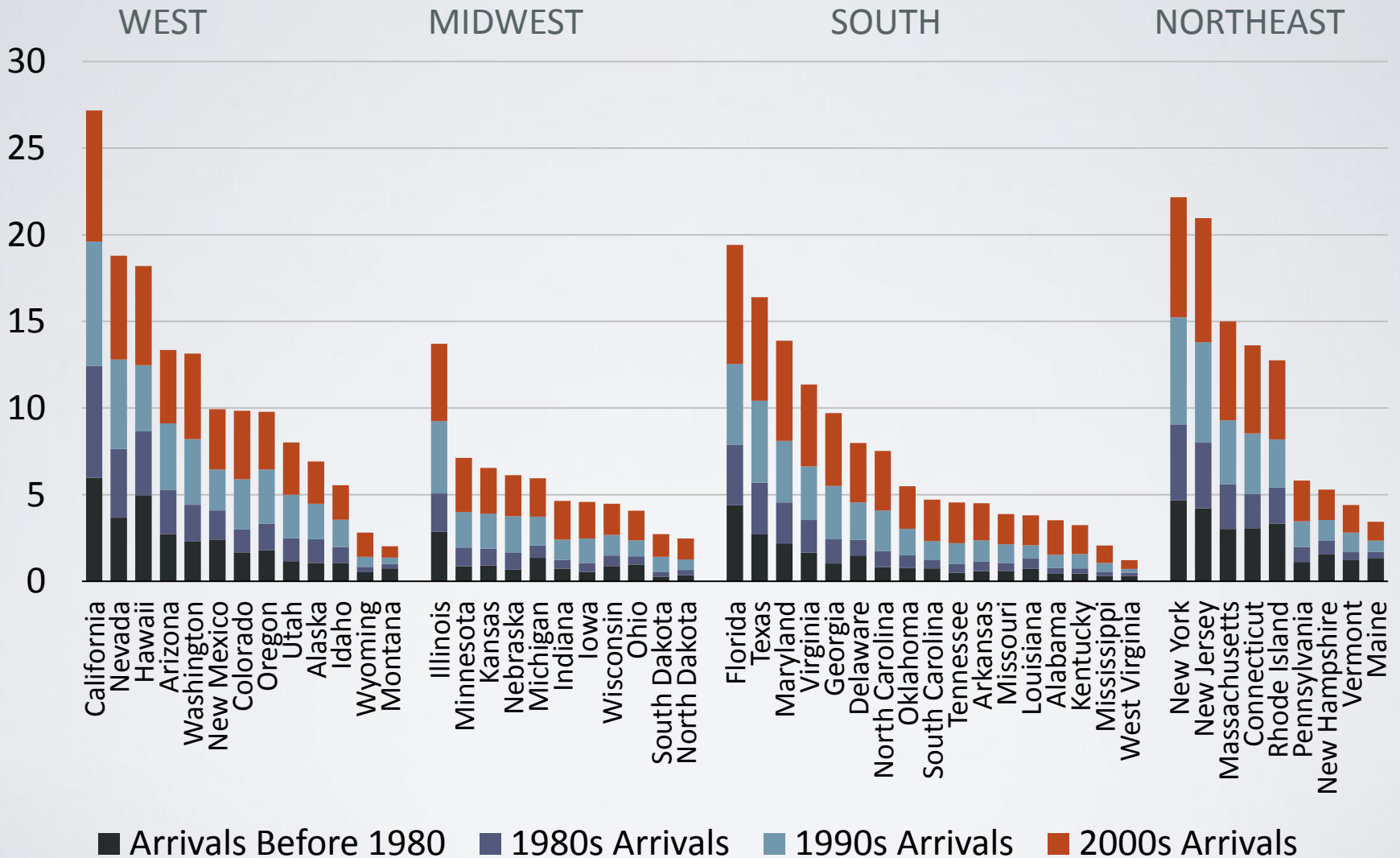
During Last 5 Years, 2010





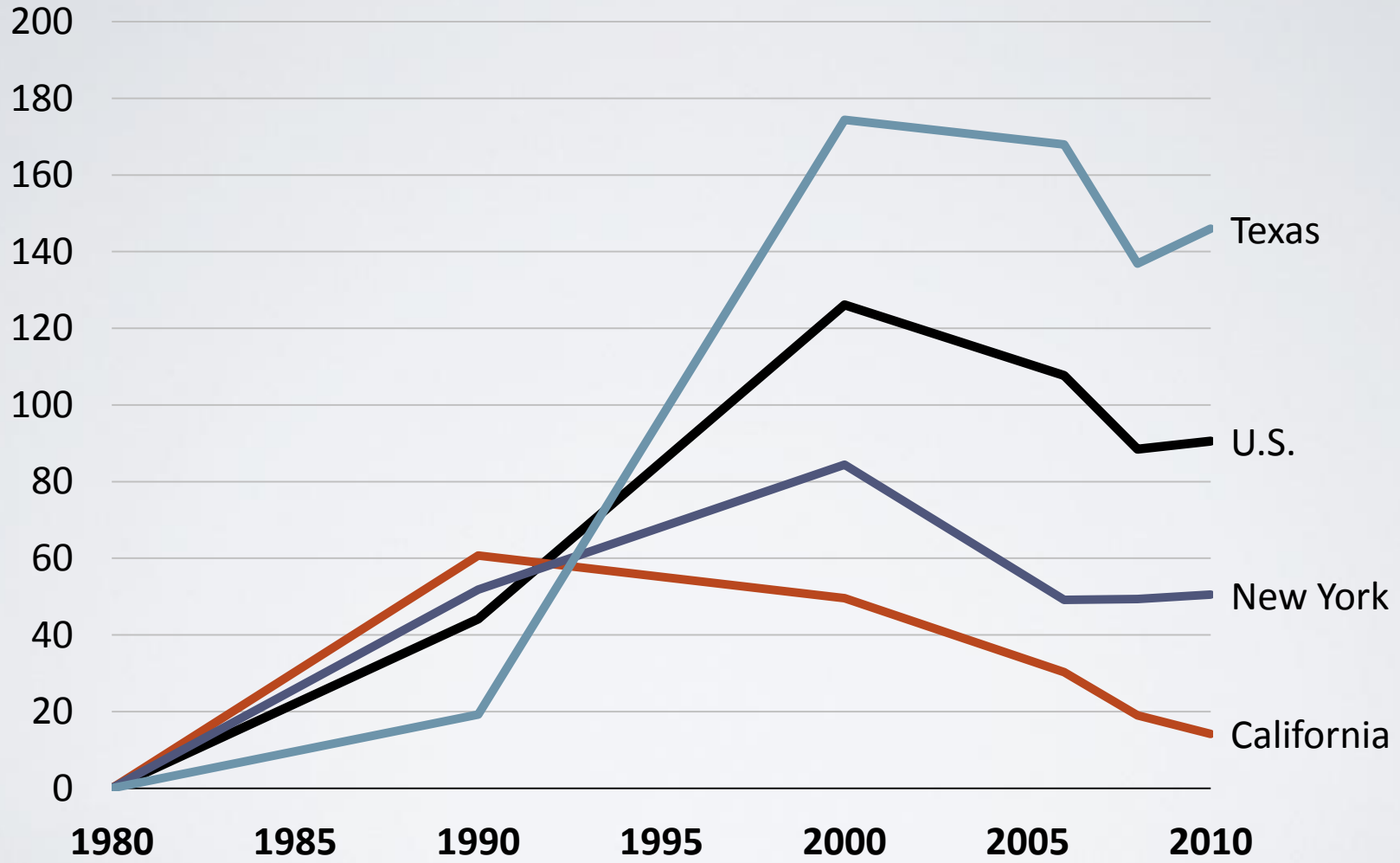
# Foreign Born % of State Population in 2010

## By Decade of Arrival



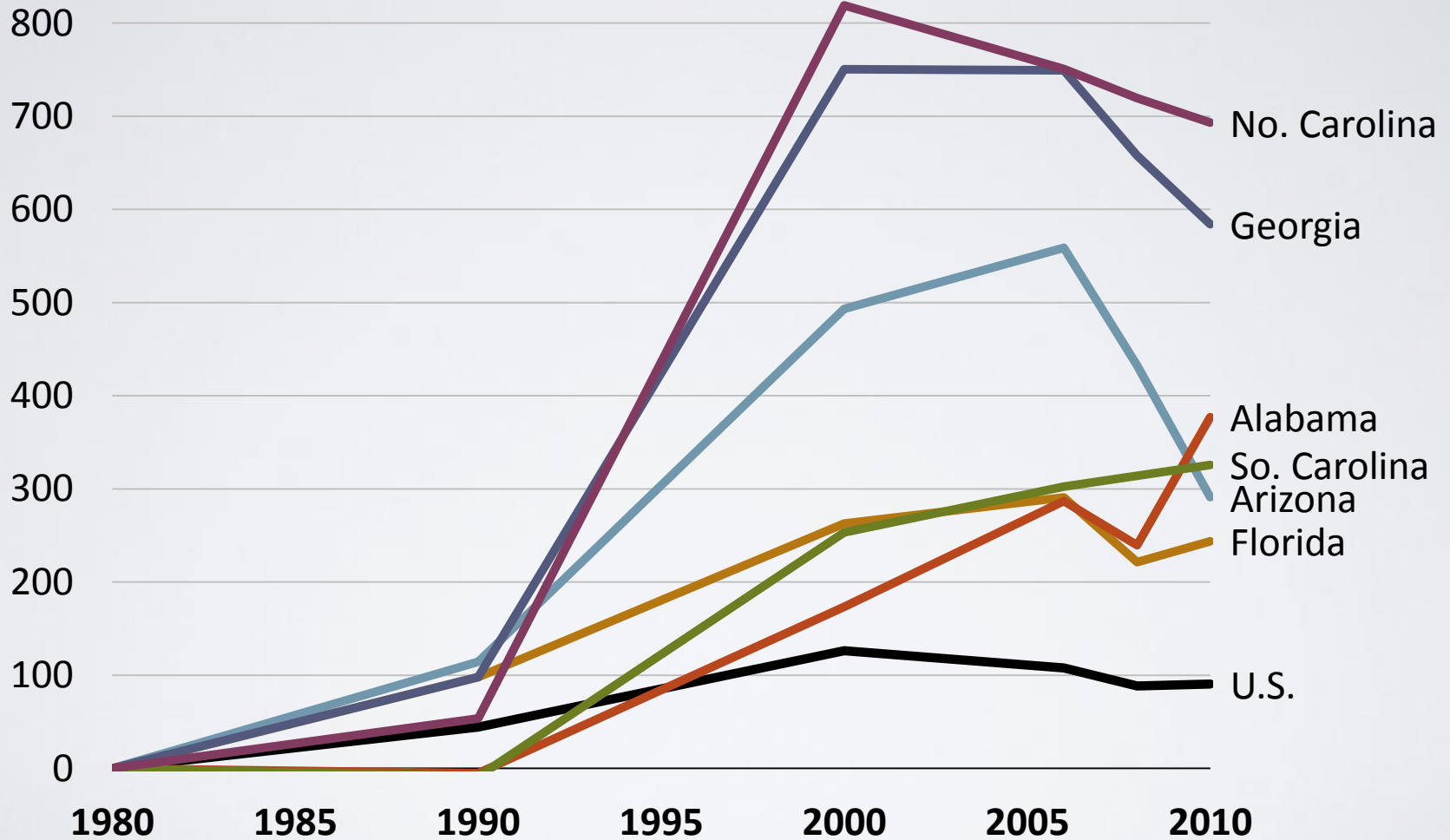
# Growth of Immigrants in Old Gateways

Percentage Increase in Annual Arrivals Since 1980



# Growth of Immigrants—New Destinations

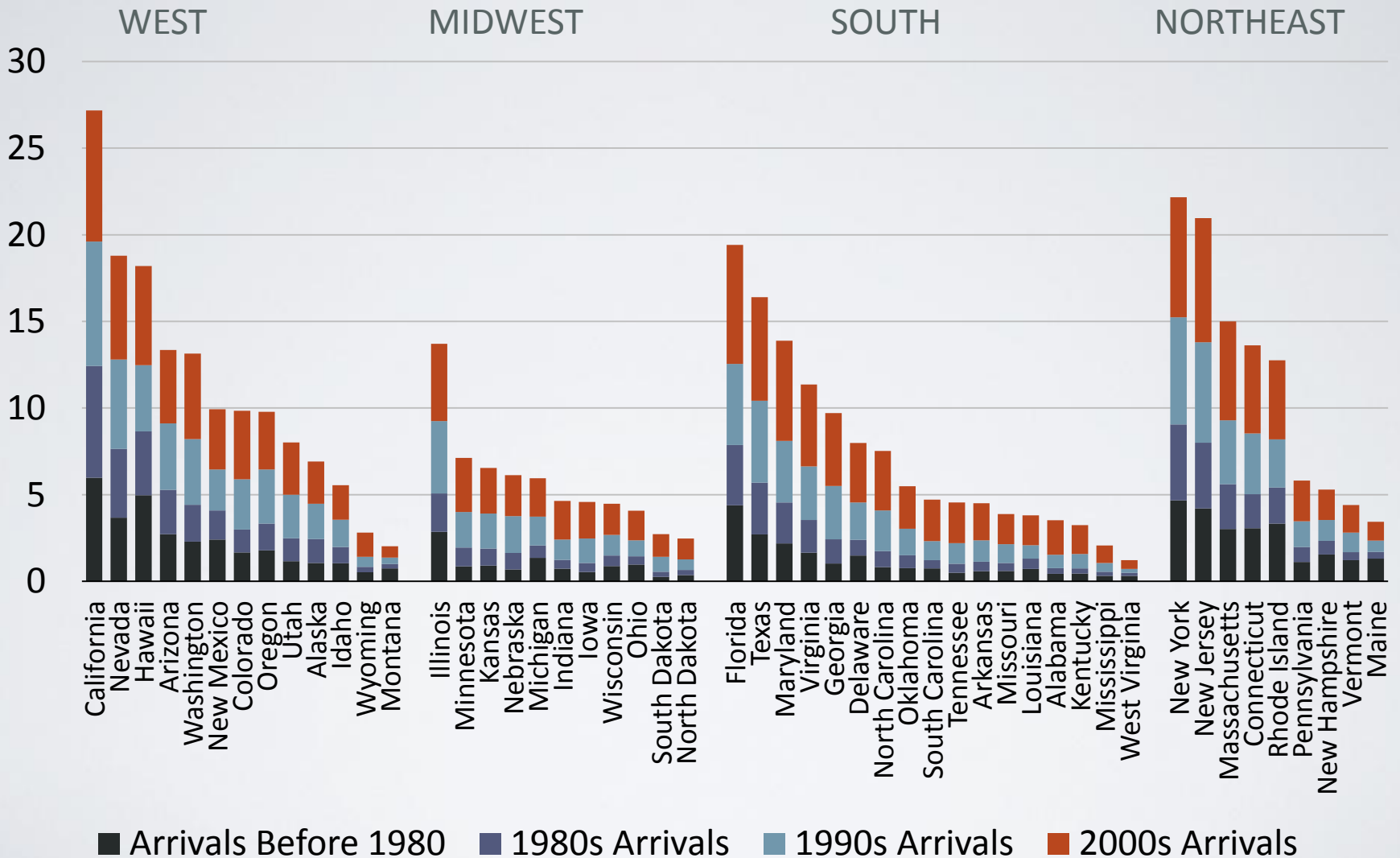
Percentage Increase in Annual Arrivals Since 1980



2. Are all immigrants newcomers?

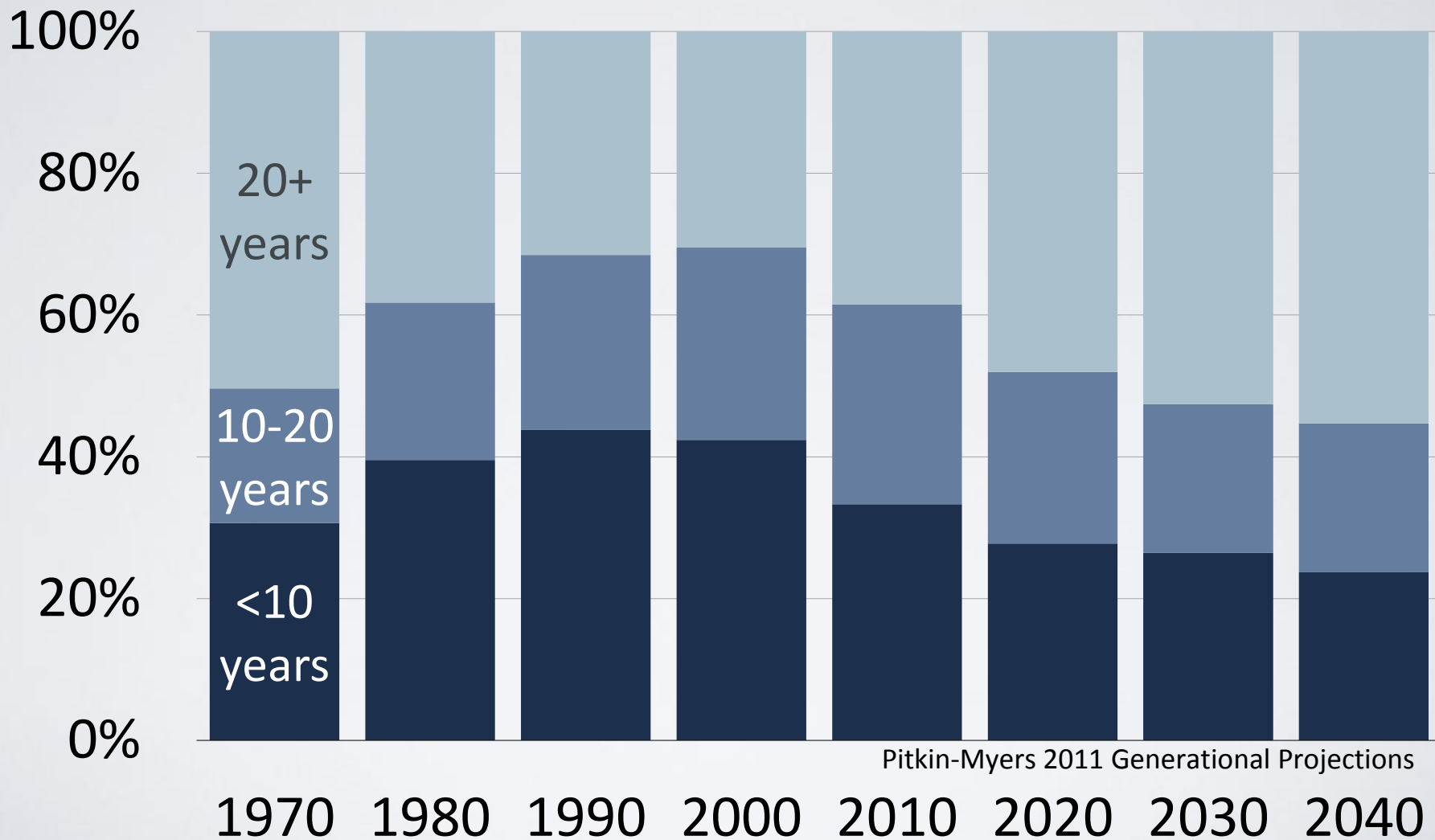
# Foreign Born % of State Population in 2010

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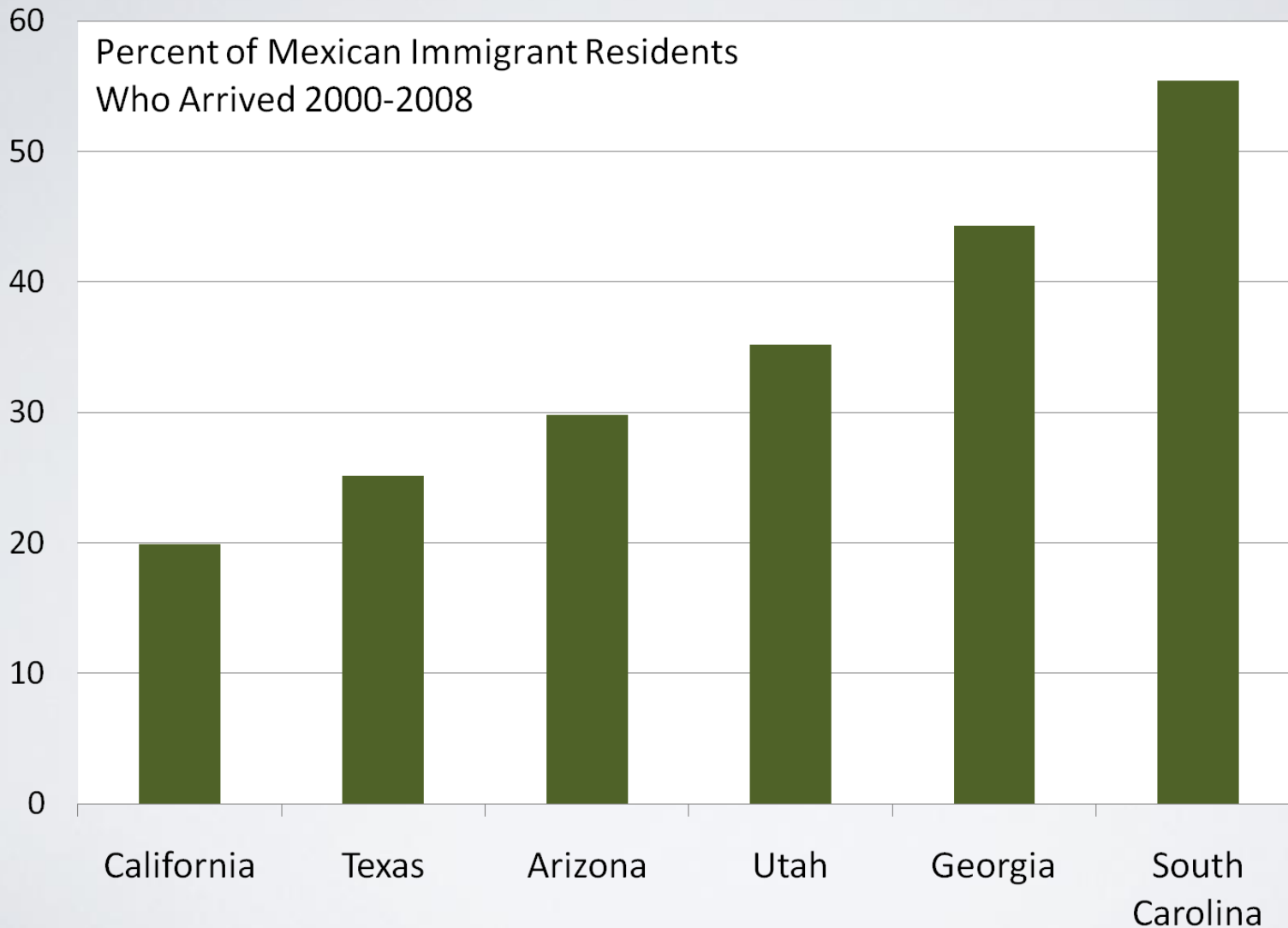
# Foreign Born Population by Duration Since Entry to U.S

1970-2010, and Projected to 2040



Pitkin-Myers 2011 Generational Projections

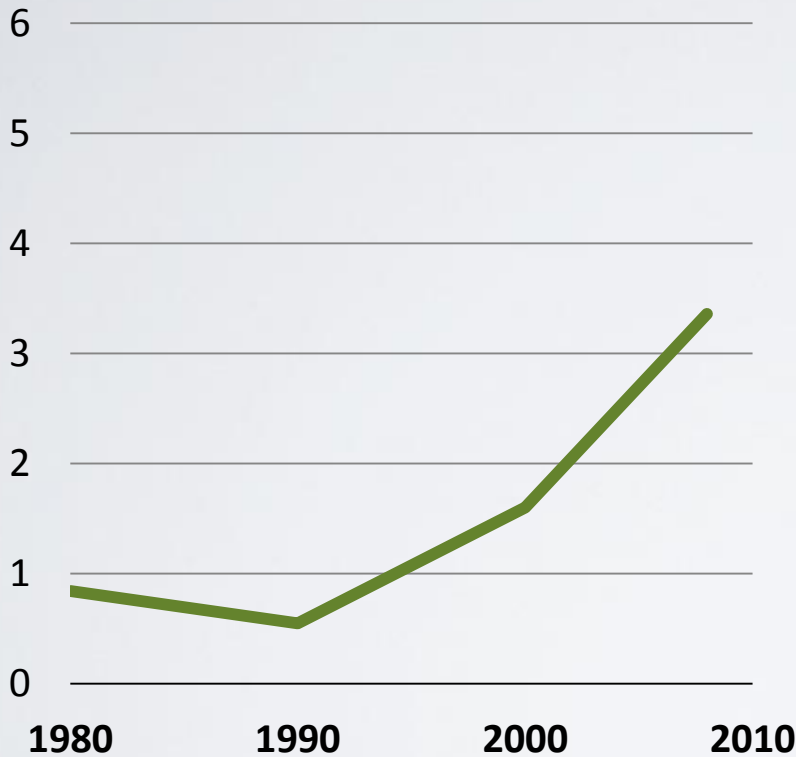
# Percent Newcomers of Latino Immigrants



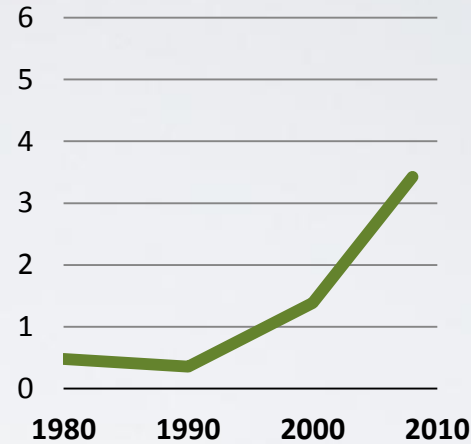
# Helping Hands

Ratio of Long-Settled to New

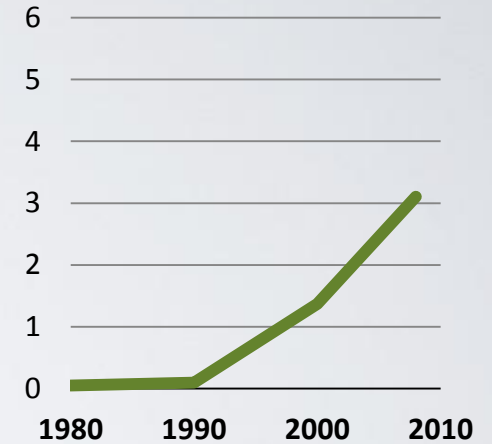
## California



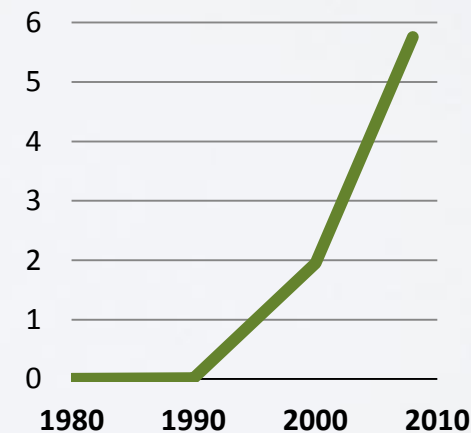
## Mexico



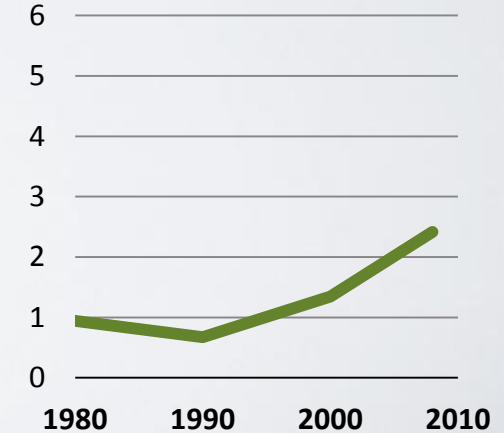
## Korea



## Vietnam



## China





# Retaining Homegrown State Residents

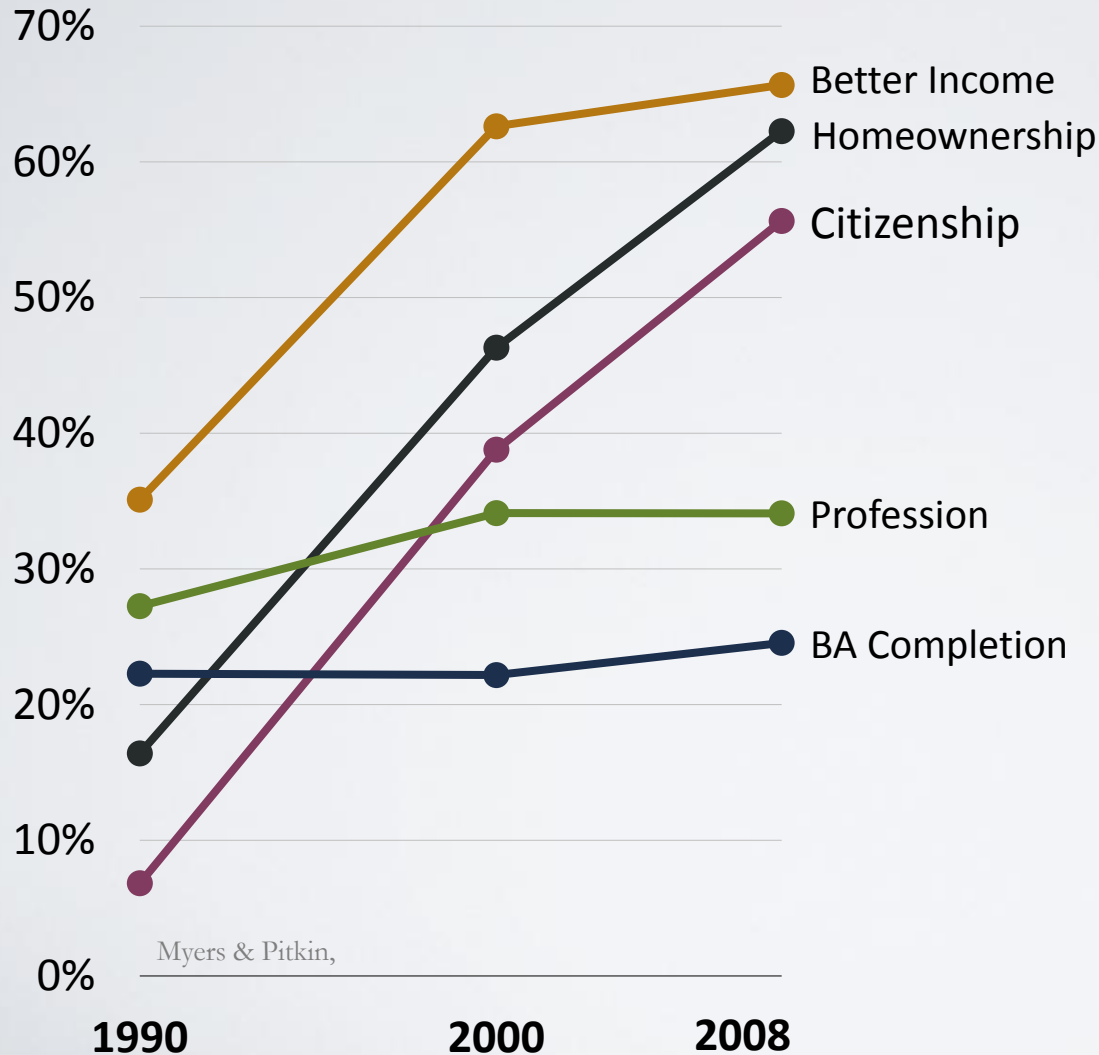
## The 10 Most Attractive States

1	Texas	75.1
2	North Carolina	70.7
3	Georgia	69.0
4	Wisconsin	67.2
5	California	66.9
6	Tennessee	66.0
7	Michigan	65.8
8	Minnesota	65.4
9	Utah	64.9
10	South Carolina	64.6

3. *Are immigrants like Peter Pan?*

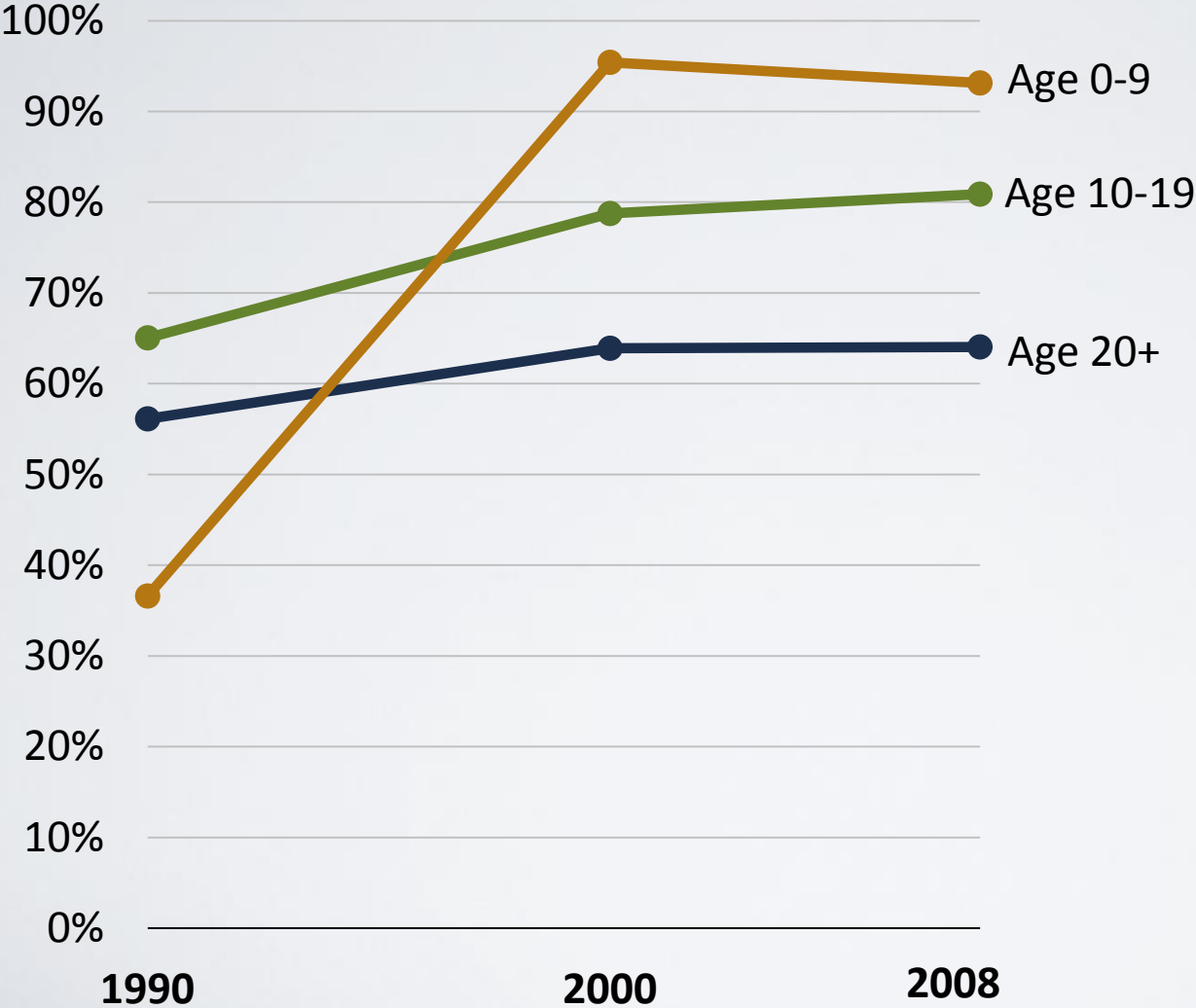
# Rising Immigrant Status with Longer Residence

Attainment for 1985-1989 Immigrant Arrival Cohort



# English Proficiency

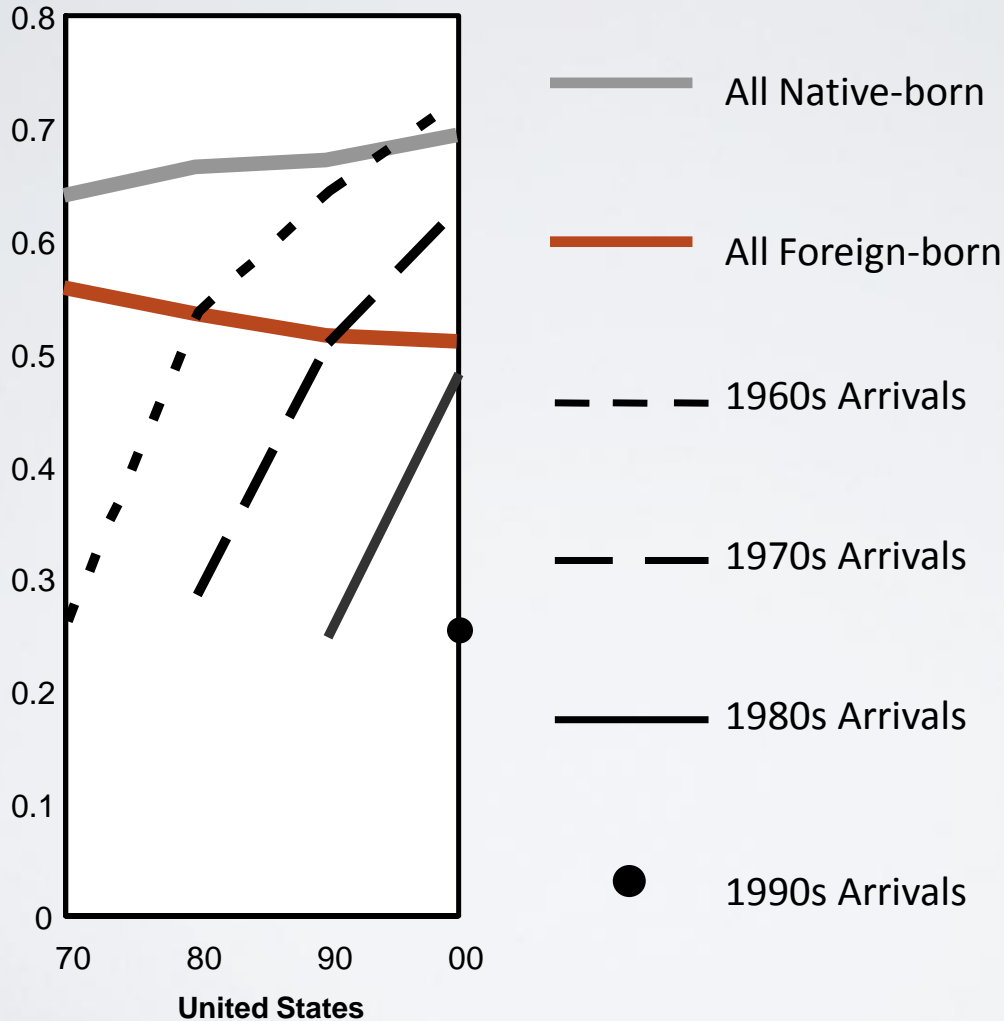
By Age at Arrival in the 1985-89 Immigrant Wave



Source: U.S. Census, 1990, 2000; American Community Survey, 2008.

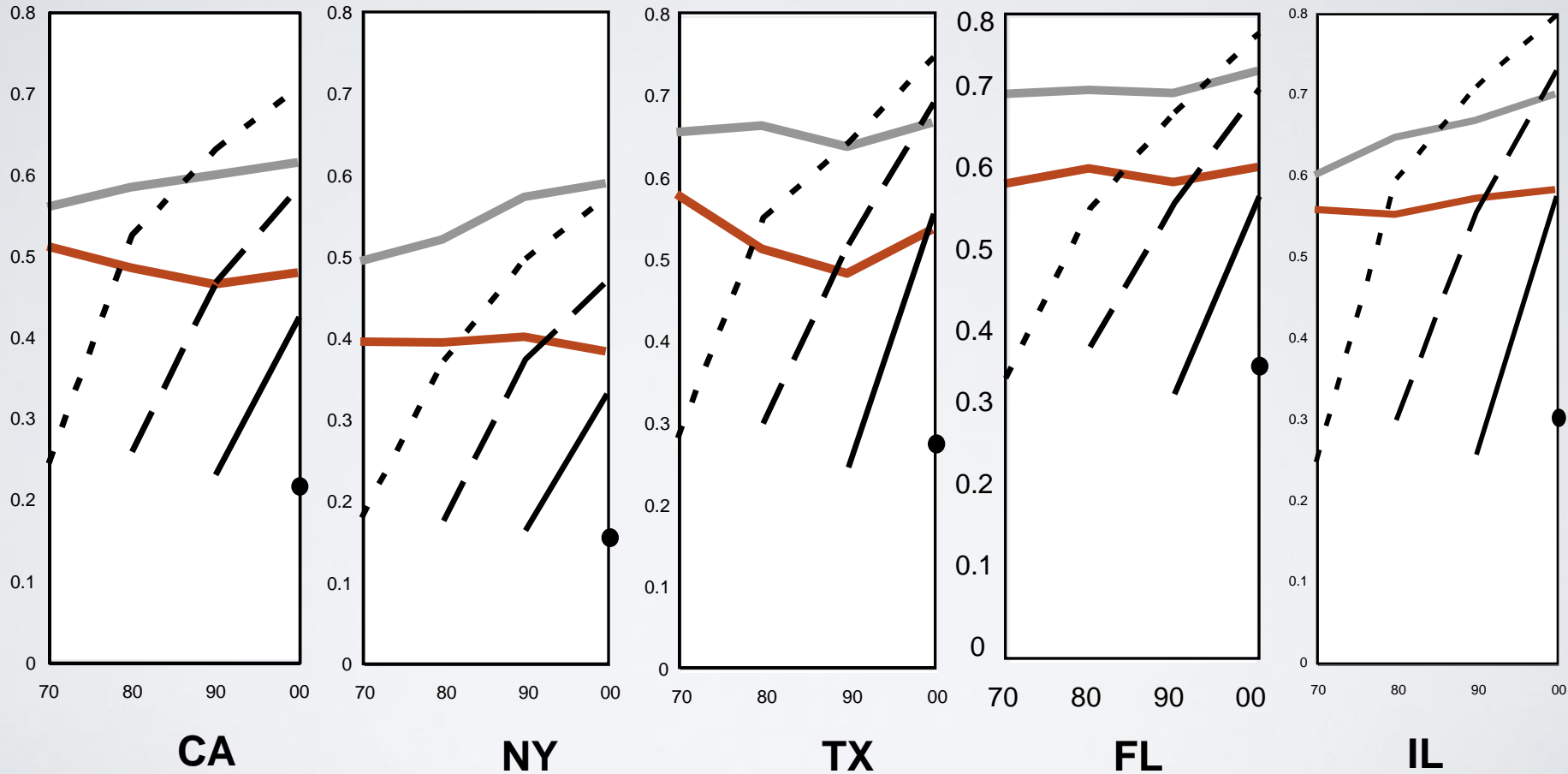
# Soaring Immigrant Homeownership

For Each Immigrant Wave Arriving Before 1970, 80, 90, 2000

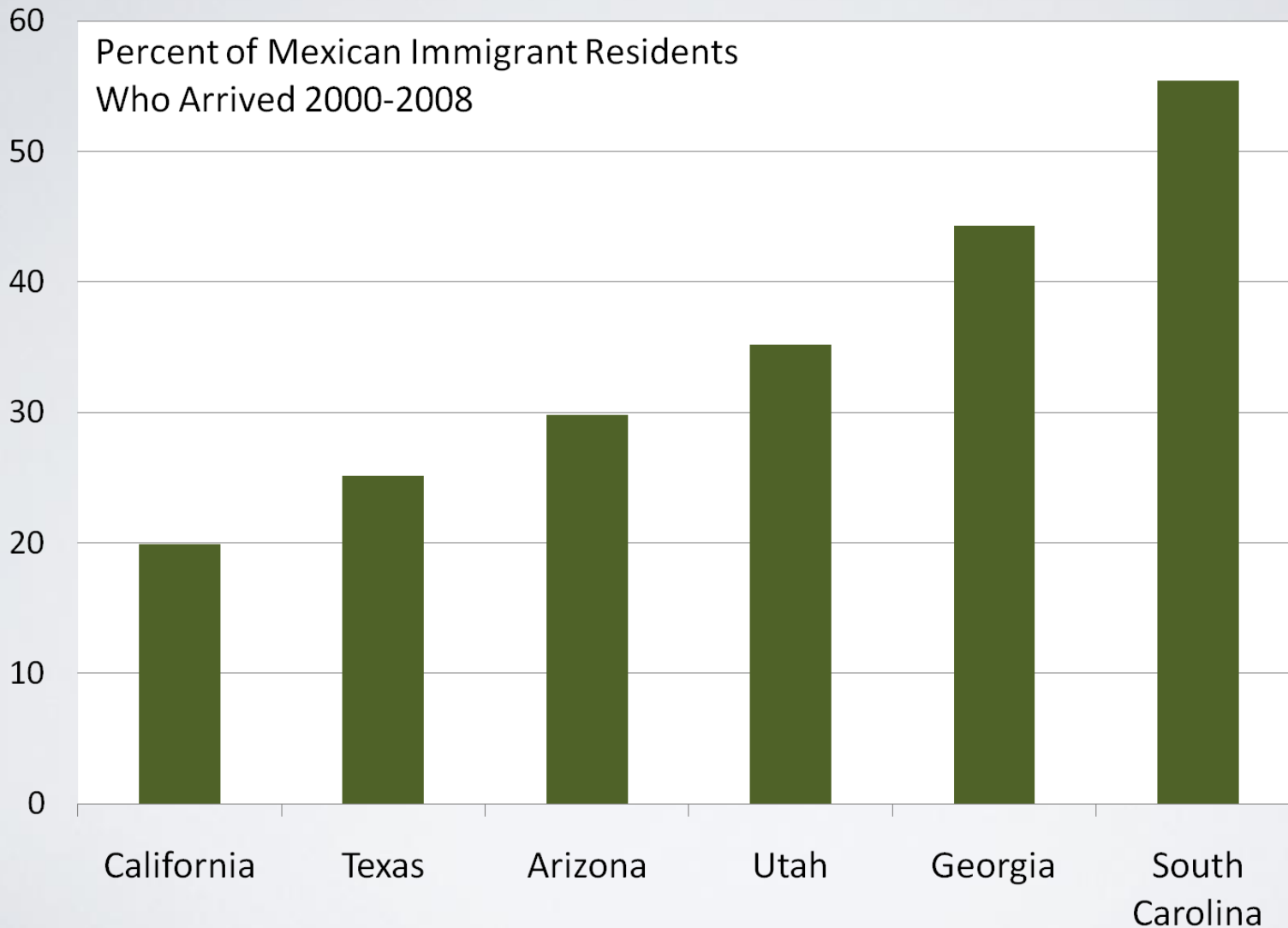


# Change in Homeownership

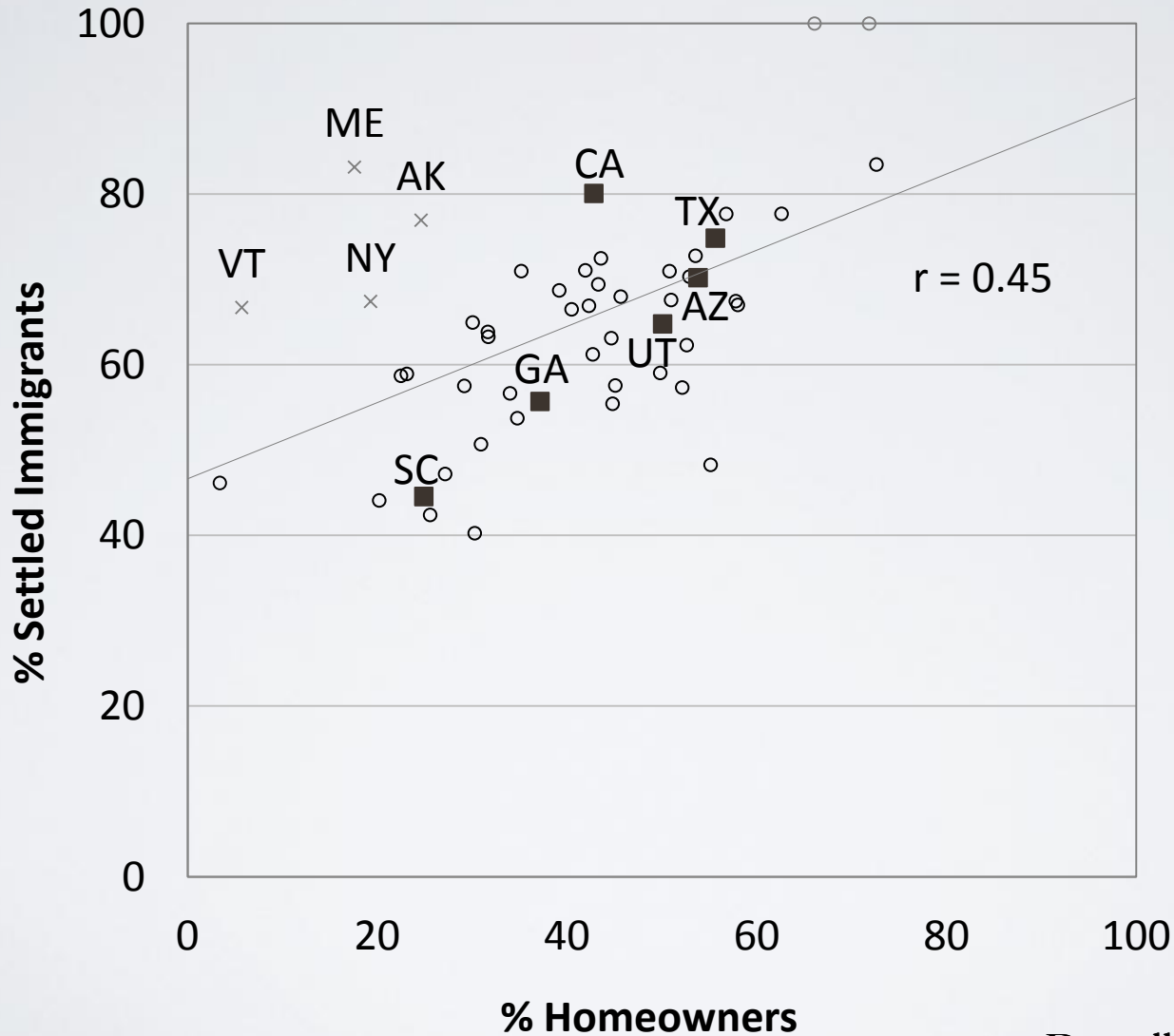
For Successive Waves of Immigrants Arriving Before 1970, 80, 90, or 2000



# Percent Newcomers of Latino Immigrants



# Home Ownership Rate of Latino Immigrants is Higher in States with Higher Shares of Settled Immigrants





Samuel Huntington's  
Great Peter Pan Error

# Huntington's Thesis

*From Who Are We: The Challenges to America's National Identity*

Fear of cultural bifurcation

Due to growing use of Spanish

California is epicenter

New immigrants arriving faster than  
assimilation

# Huntington's Thesis

*From Who Are We: The Challenges to America's National Identity*

- For assimilation, Huntington prefers use of English instead of Spanish
- He views rising Spanish use as anti-assimilation and a cultural threat to America

# Percent of California Population that is Latino

	2000	2030	Ratio
Total	32.6	46.8	1.44
Age Group 25-34	39.3	51.3	1.31

# Percent of California Population that is Latino

**Rising Latino Share Equals**  
**Rising Spanish Dominance???**

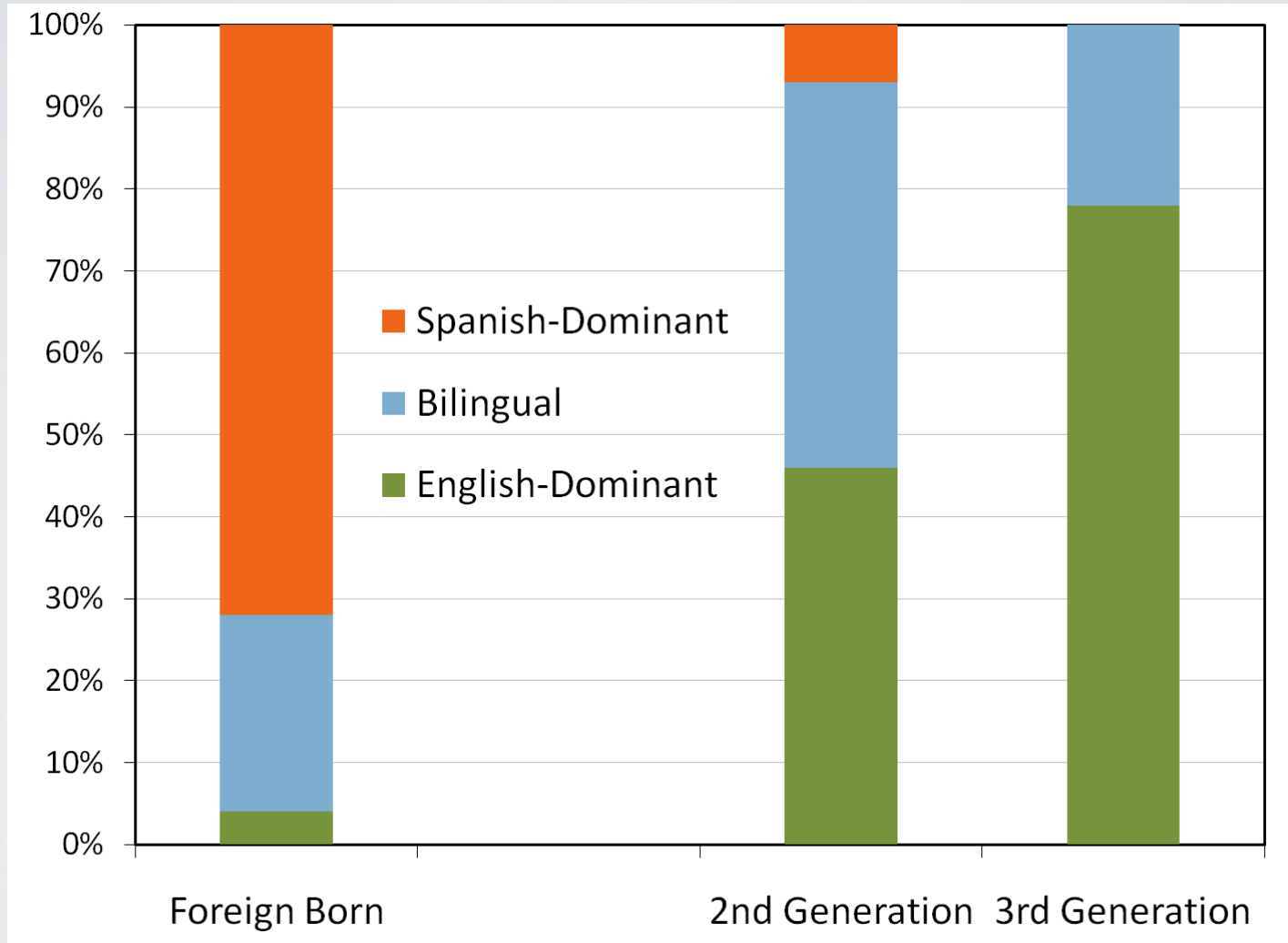
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# We can improve on the naïve expectation if we have two pieces of information:

1. A profile of language preference by length of US residence, *not just Latino ethnic membership*
2. A projection of population by length of residence, *not just Latino ethnic membership*

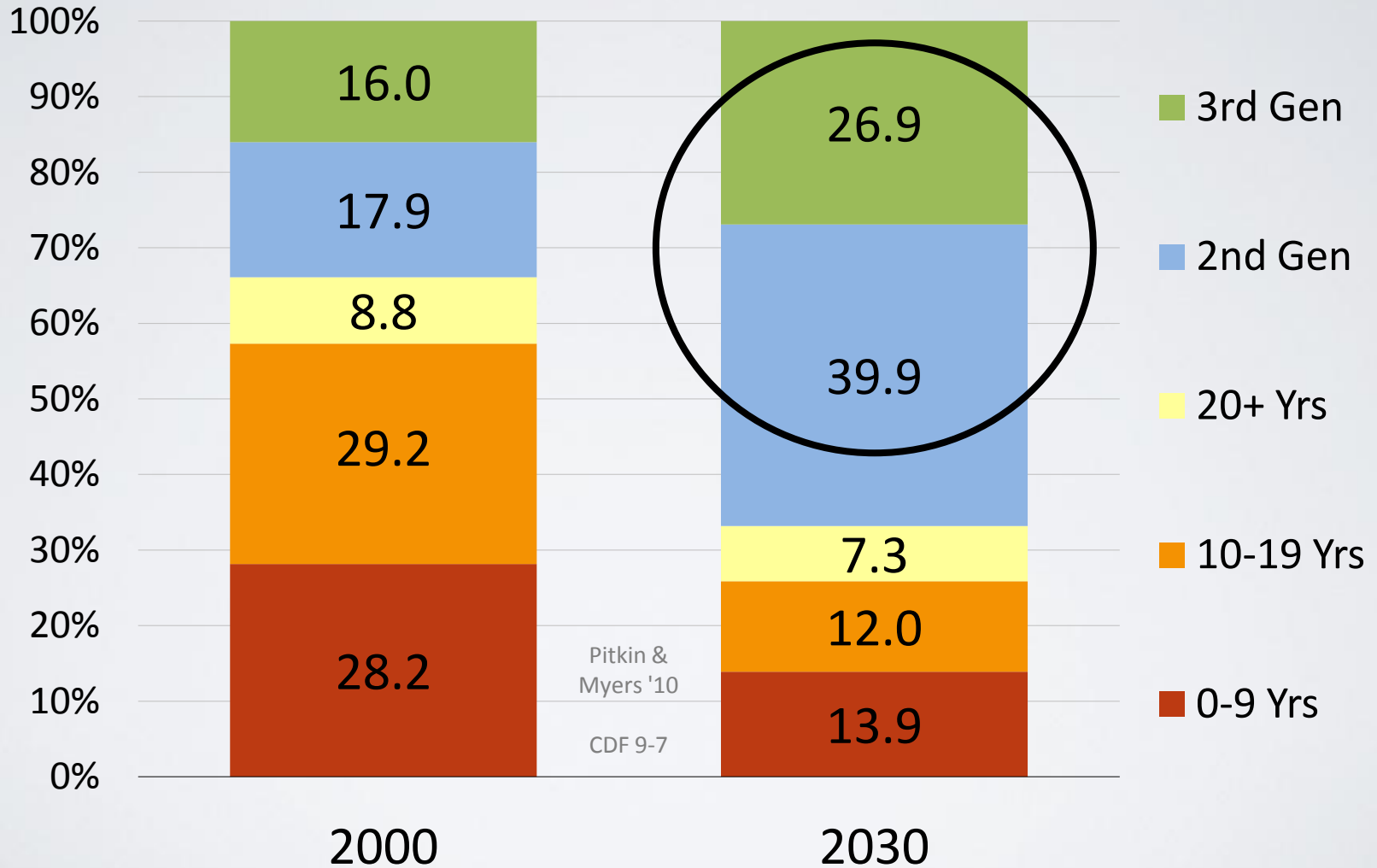
# Percent Spanish Users by Immigrant Generation

For Latinos in the U.S., 2002



# Population Composition by Years in U.S. & Generation

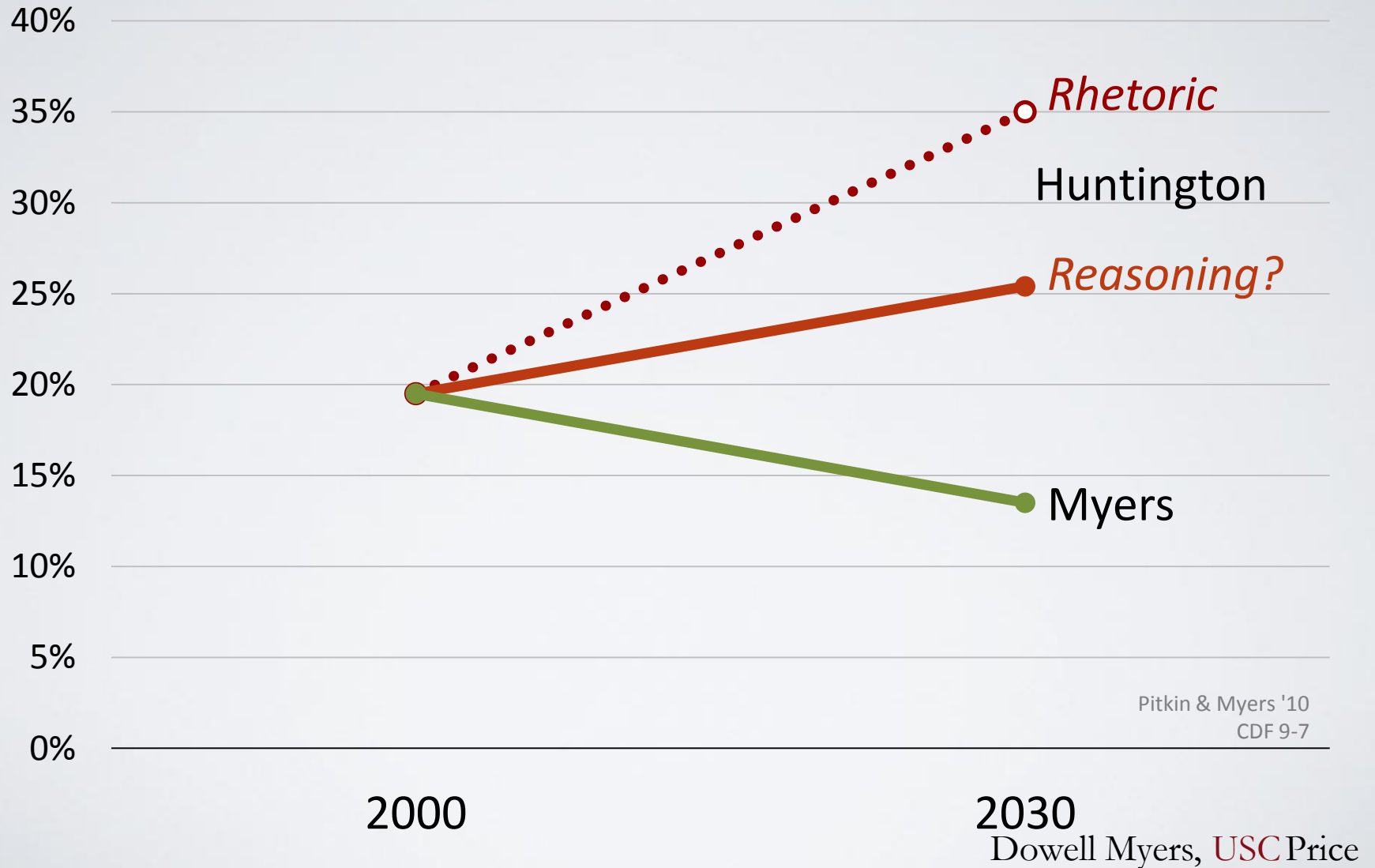
For Latinos Age 25-34 in California





# Percent Spanish Users Among Total

Age 25-34

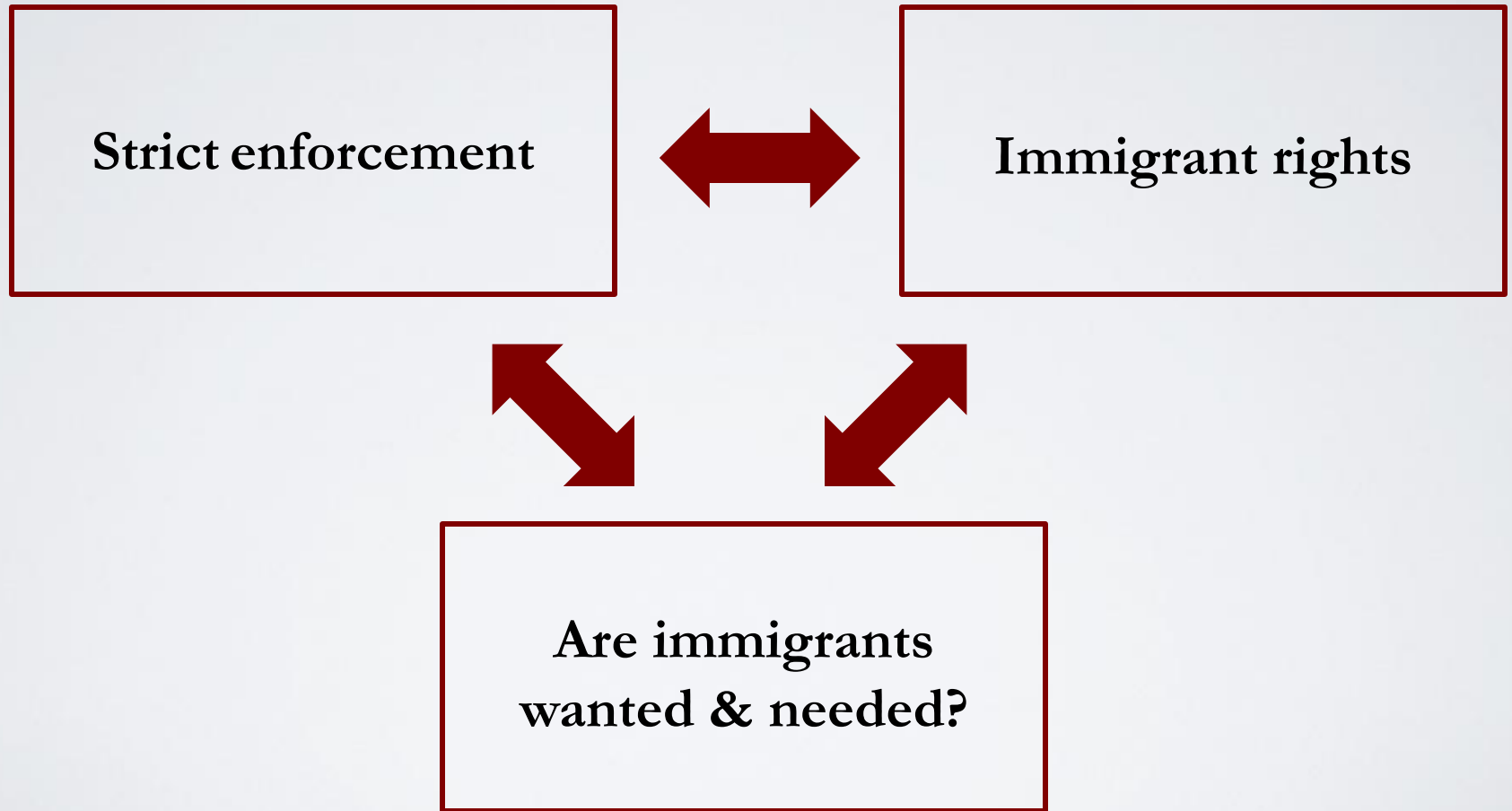


How Likely is Samuel Huntington's  
Vision of the Future America Divided  
along Language Lines?

not

4. *Are immigrants needed?*

# Opposing Forces on Immigration



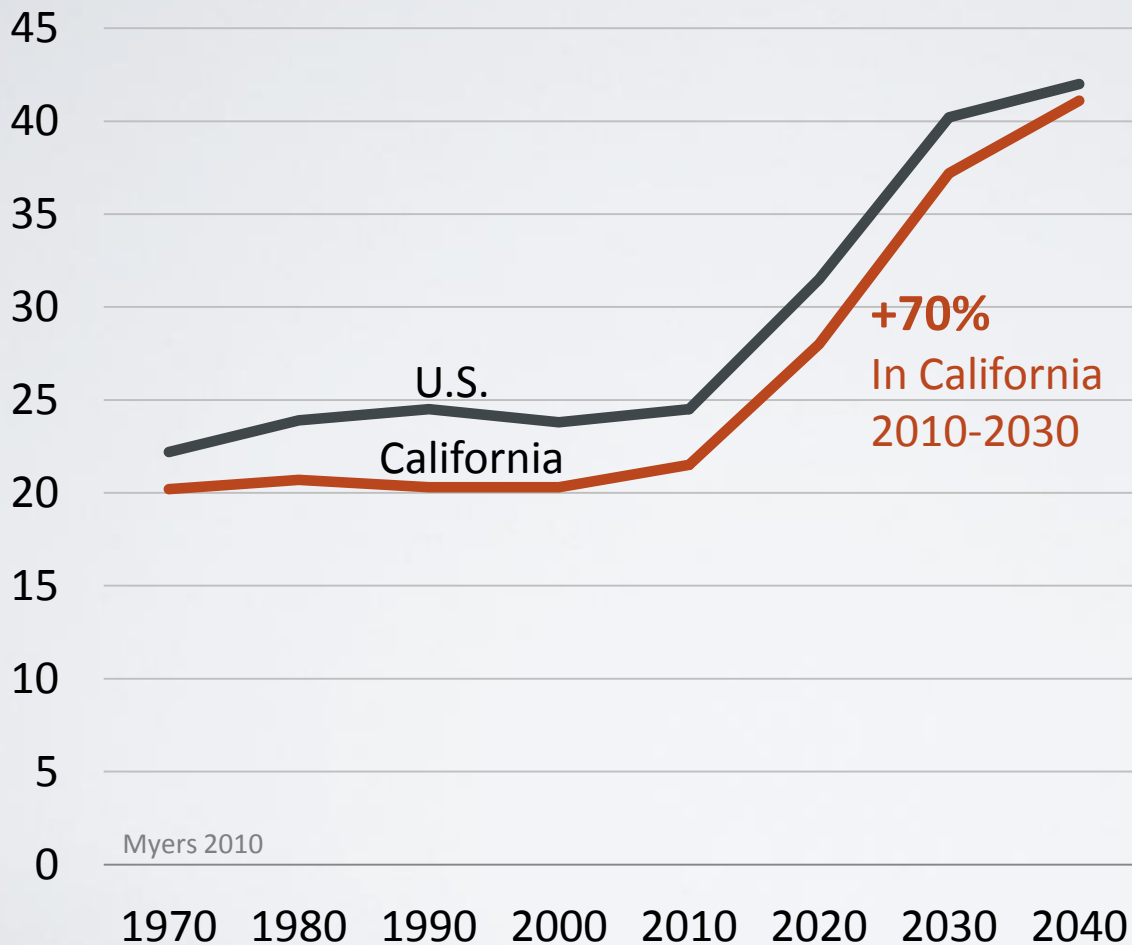
# Are Immigrants a Burden or a Benefit?

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# Baby Boomer Tsunami

The Soaring Ratio of Seniors to Working Age  
65+ per 100 ages 25 to 64



Myers 2010

Source: Calif. Department of Finance, Census Bureau, and Authors' calculations, 2010.

Dowell Myers, USC Price

# The Trigger of Many Crises

- Social Security Crisis
- Medicare/Health Insurance Crisis
- Workforce Replacement Crisis
- Taxpayer Replacement Crisis
- The Home Seller Crisis

# Likely Responses...

- Reduced growth in GDP
- Delayed retirement by seniors
- Reduced or delayed senior benefits
- Higher taxes
- Greater reliance on immigrant workers
- **Rediscovery of neglected minority youth**



# Can Immigration Help?

The “Strict Enforcement” Narrative: **Not at all**

Cannot reverse aging

Immigrants get older too

The “Rights” Narrative: **It shouldn't matter**

The “Our Needs” Narrative: **Yes, one-quarter to half**

Next 20 years are the most crucial

Compared to 0 immigration, the current volume reduces the rise in the senior ratio by 29% in 20 years and 47% in 40 years

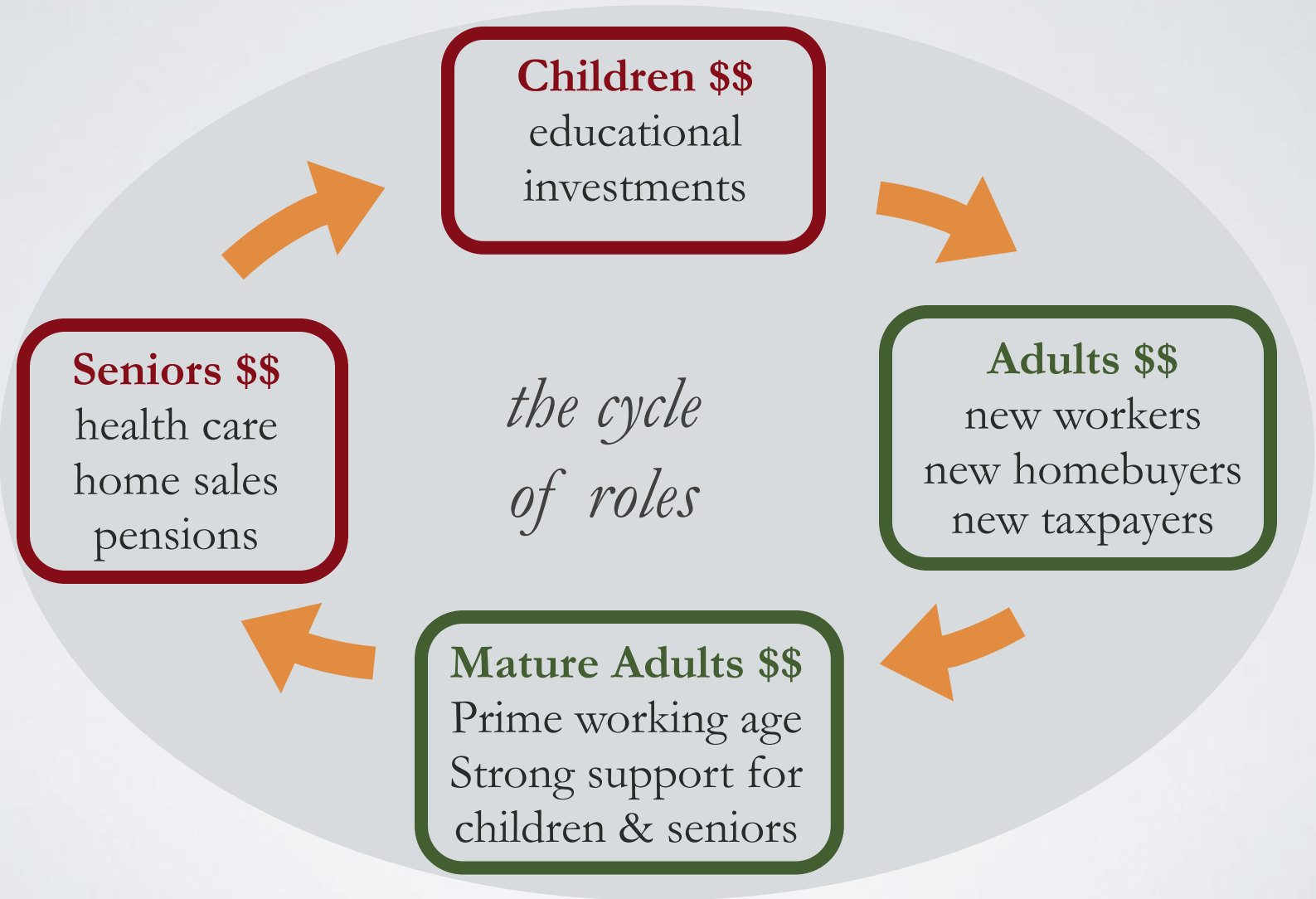
# Conclusions

# Conclusions about the Myths:

## Are Immigrants...

- |                                 |   |
|---------------------------------|---|
| 1. Accelerating out of control? | 1. <b>Level, steady state or even declining</b>   |
| 2. Just all newcomers?          | 2. <b>More long-settled</b>   |
| 3. Frozen like Peter Pan?       | 3. <b>Rising achievements and assimilating</b>  |
| 4. Not needed?                  | 4. <b>Future workers &amp; taxpayers<br/>Essential to balance the rising senior ratio</b> |

# Rediscovering The Generational Partnership



Thank You

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For more information  
search for “popdynamics”

# Publications Referenced in this Presentation

Myers, Dowell, Janna Goldberg, Sarah Mawhorter, and Seong Hee Min, “Immigration and the New Maturity of Los Angeles,” pp. 12-27 in Ali Modarres, ed., *Los Angeles 2010: State of the City*, Pat Brown Institute, California State University, Los Angeles, 2010.

Myers, Dowell and John Pitkin, “Assimilation Today: New Evidence Shows the Latest Immigrants to America are Following in Our History’s Footsteps,” Center for American Progress, Washington, D.C., September 2010.

Myers, Dowell, “Benefits for California and Its Growing Number of Seniors of Expanded Access to Higher Education,” written testimony before the Joint Committee on the Master Plan for Higher Education, California State Legislature, February 2, 2010.

Myers, Dowell, John Pitkin, and Ricardo Ramirez, “The New Homegrown Majority in California: Recognizing the New Reality of Growing Commitment to the Golden State,” Special Report, Population Dynamics Research Group, April 2009.

Myers, Dowell and SungHo Ryu, “Aging Baby Boomers and the Generational Housing Bubble: Foresight and Mitigation of an Epic Transition,” *Journal of the American Planning Association* 74, 1 (Winter 2008): 17-33. (Winner of 2008 Award for Best Article in the Journal.)

Myers, Dowell, *Immigrants and Boomers: Forging a New Social Contract for the Future of America*. New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 2007.

Myers, Dowell and Cathy Yang Liu. “The Emerging Dominance of Immigrants in the US Housing Market 1970-2000,” *Urban Policy and Research* 23, 3 (2005): 347-65.

NOTE: most publications are available at <http://www.usc.edu/schools/sppd/research/popdynamics/>