

2017

March 21, 2017

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**WASHINGTON STATE: HEALTH  
INSURANCE COVERAGE FOR AMERICAN  
INDIANS AND ALASKA NATIVES: THE  
IMPACT OF THE AFFORDABLE CARE ACT  
2012-2015.**

Tracking the Impact of the Medicaid Coverage for American Indian and Alaska Natives

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## Abstract

In this brief I examine the evidence of the impact of the Affordable Care Act on American Indians and Alaska Natives in Washington State to determine if the ACA resulted in expected enrollment gains in Health Insurance coverage and the related reduction in uninsured. A review of findings from the American Community Survey depicts success in increasing the number insured, thus lowering the number uninsured for both sexes. It also depicts significant variation for American Indians and Alaska Natives with or without access to IHS-funded health programs. Additionally, males, with 'access to IHS,' fared poorly compared to females in terms of the reduction in the number without health insurance. This variation by 'access to IHS' and by sex suggests a need for a closer examination of these related findings.

In Washington the decrease in the number of uninsured since 2012 was essentially the same as the national level at 30%. Nationally the overall decline in uninsured was 29% for all American Indians and Alaska Natives.

Health Insurance coverage increased by 17% overall and both those with and without access to IHS mirrored (were the same) that overall increase of 17%.

## Methodology

The American Community Survey provides estimates of the number of insured, uninsured for American Indians and Alaska Natives (alone and in combination). The one-year survey provides estimates with low error rates at the national level of analysis. This analysis provides cross tabulations by sex and by access to IHS-funded health programs for the years 2012 and 2015. The analysis is built on the comparison between the two years to the two variables of sex and access to IHS.

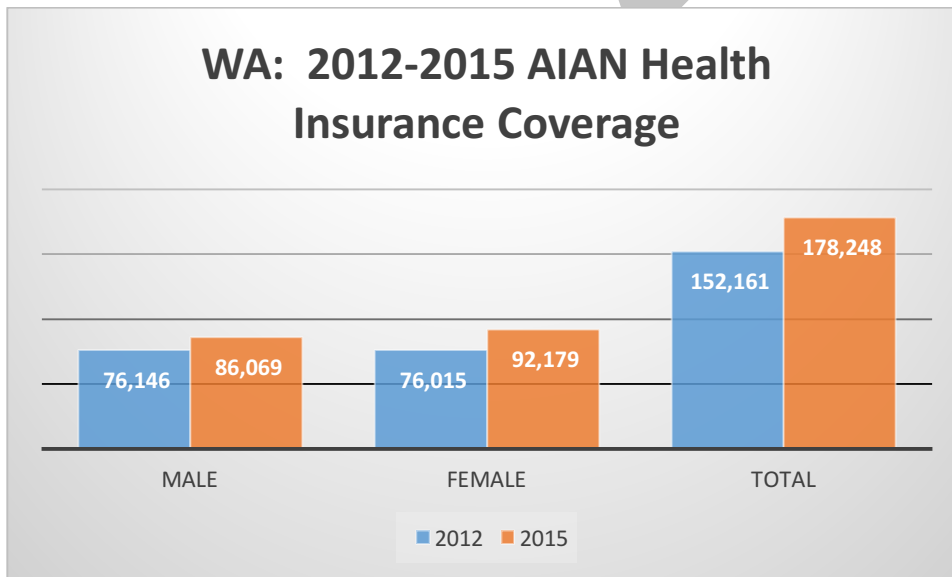
## Findings

## Health Insurance Coverage

Health Insurance Coverage of all American Indians and Alaska Natives with and without access to IHS

2012-2015 Health Coverage American Indians and Alaska Natives				
	2012	2015	Increase 12-15	% increase
<b>Male</b>	76,146	86,069	9,923	13%
<b>Female</b>	76,015	92,179	16,164	21%
<b>Total</b>	152,161	178,248	26,087	17%
<b>% Male</b>	50%	48%	38%	
<b>% Female</b>	50%	52%	62%	

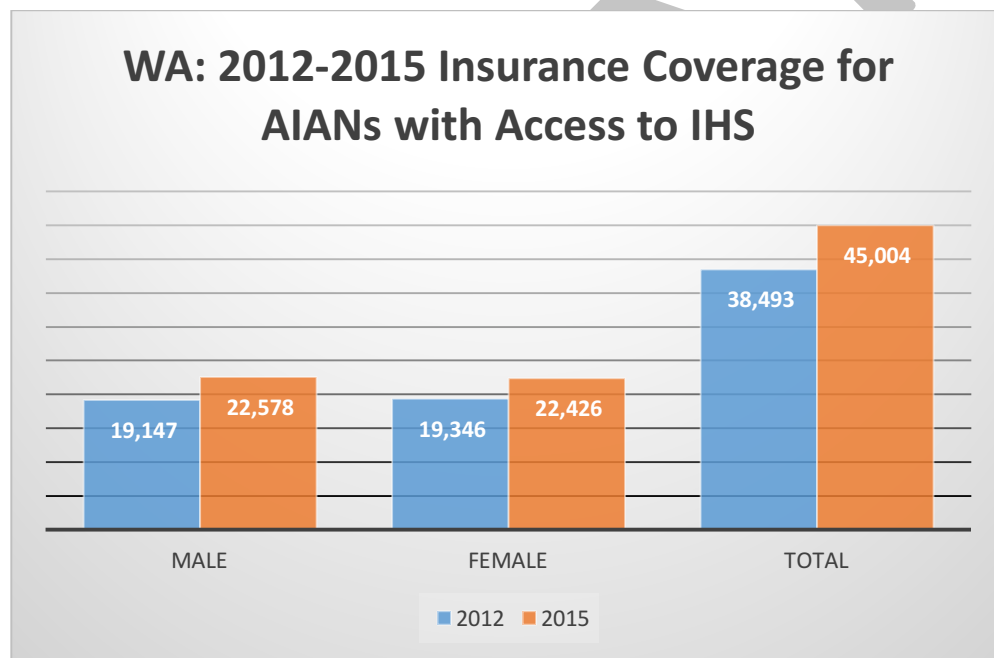
The table above depicts large health insurance enrollment increases in Washington. The number of American Indians and Alaska Natives with health insurance rose from 152,000 in 2012 to 178,000 in 2015. This 26,000 increase from 2012 to 2015 of insured American Indians and Alaska Natives represents a 17% increase. The number of insured males increased by 13%, less than the increase for insured females, who saw a 21% increase. Females made up 62% of the increase in newly insured, males making up just 38% of the increase over 2012. Further research needs to explore why females increased insurance coverage more than males to explain the variation found here.



## Increased Health Insurance for American Indians and Alaska Natives with Access to IHS

The number of insured American Indians and Alaska Natives in Washington with access to IHS increased from 38,000 in 2012 to 45,000 in 2015. This represents a 17% increase in insured patients at IHS-funded health programs. Male insurance coverage increased by 18% while females increased by 16%. Males accounted for 53% of the 2012 to 2015 increase of 6,500 newly insured. Unlike the national level, male and female enrollment is nearly equal (at 50% each).

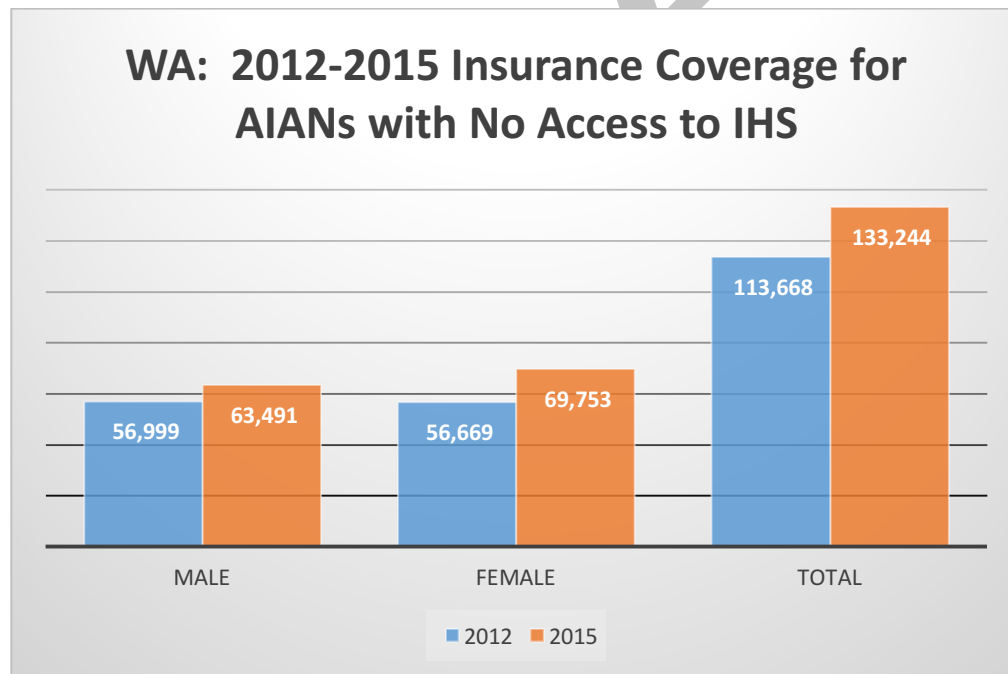
2012-2015 Health Insurance Coverage for American Indians and Alaska Natives with Access to IHS				
	2012	2015	Increase 12-15	% Increase
<b>Male</b>	19,147	22,578	3,431	18%
<b>Female</b>	19,346	22,426	3,080	16%
<b>Total</b>	38,493	45,004	6,511	17%
<b>% Male</b>	50%	50%	53%	
<b>% Female</b>	50%	50%	47%	



## Increased Health Insurance for American Indians and Alaska Natives Without Access to IHS

The ACS estimates that there were 113,600 insured American Indians and Alaska Natives without access to IHS-funded health programs in 2012. By 2015 this increased to 133,200 an increase of 17%. This is the same as the 17% increase for those American Indians and Alaska Natives *with* access to IHS. Males increased by 11% and they represent 33% of the total increase, compared to a 23% increase for females. Females now represent 52% of all insured for those without access to IHS. In contrast to those with access to IHS, females constituted 67% of the increased enrollment (19,500) in health insurance in 2015. That is, coverage for those who feel they have access to IHS coverage is roughly equal for males and females, but for those who say they do not have access, for more are likely to be female.

2012-2015 Health Coverage American Indians and Alaska Natives With no Access to IHS				
	2012	2015	Increase 12-15	% increase
<b>Male</b>	56,999	63,491	6,492	11%
<b>Female</b>	56,669	69,753	13,084	23%
<b>Total</b>	113,668	133,244	19,576	17%
<b>% Male</b>	50%	48%	33%	
<b>% Female</b>	50%	52%	67%	

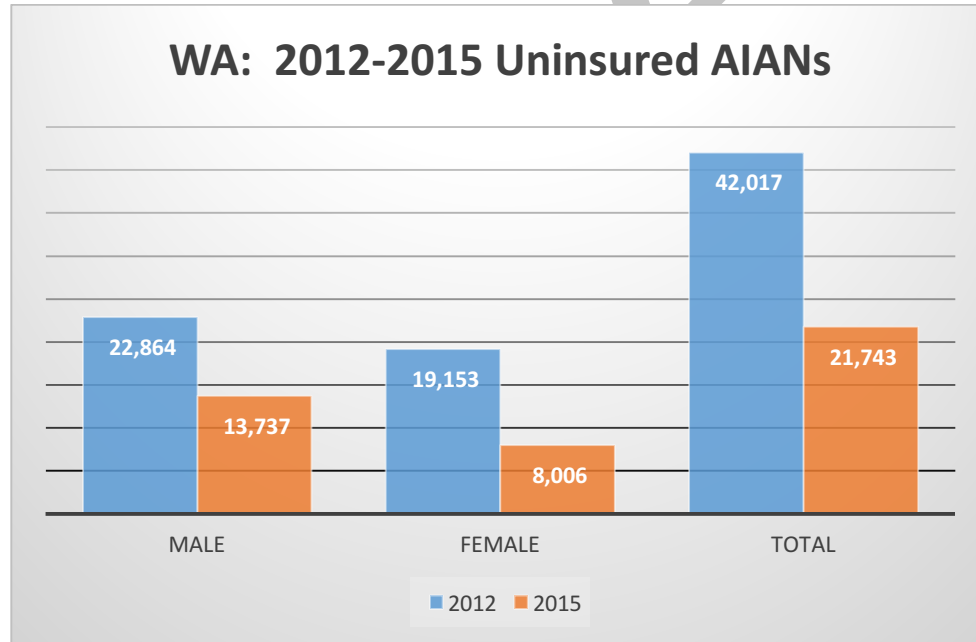


## American Indians and Alaska Natives Without Health Insurance

### Uninsured American Indians and Alaska Natives with and without access to IHS

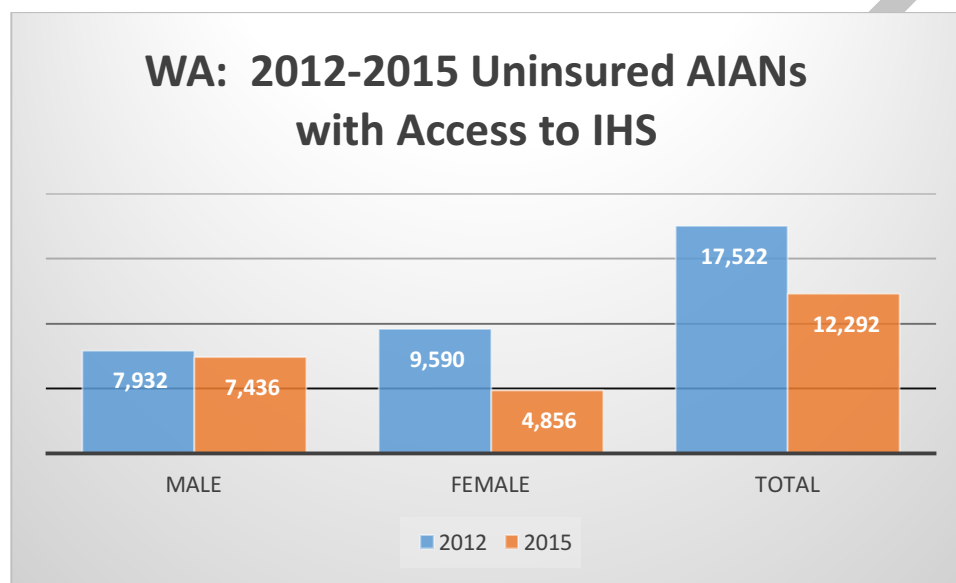
2012-2015 Uninsured American Indians and Alaska Natives				
	2012	2015	Decrease 12-15	% decrease
<b>Male</b>	22,864	13,737	(9,127)	-40%
<b>Female</b>	19,153	8,006	(11,147)	-58%
<b>Total</b>	42,017	21,743	(20,274)	-48%
<b>% Male</b>	54%	63%	45%	
<b>% Female</b>	46%	37%	55%	

42,000 American Indians and Alaska Natives were uninsured in 2012. By 2015 this number had dropped below 22,000 uninsured, a 48% decrease. This compares to a 27% decrease nationally in the number uninsured. Males represented 45% of the decrease in uninsured compared to 56% of all uninsured American Indians and Alaska Natives nationally. Men are far more likely to be uninsured than women and represent 63% of the remaining uninsured, up from 54% in 2012.



## Uninsured American Indians and Alaska Natives with Access to IHS

2012-2015 Uninsured American Indians and Alaska Natives with Access to IHS				
	2012	2015	Decrease 12-15	% decrease
<b>Male</b>	7,932	7,436	(496)	-6%
<b>Female</b>	9,590	4,856	(4,734)	-49%
<b>Total</b>	17,522	12,292	(5,230)	-30%
<b>% Male</b>	45%	60%	9%	
<b>% Female</b>	55%	40%	91%	

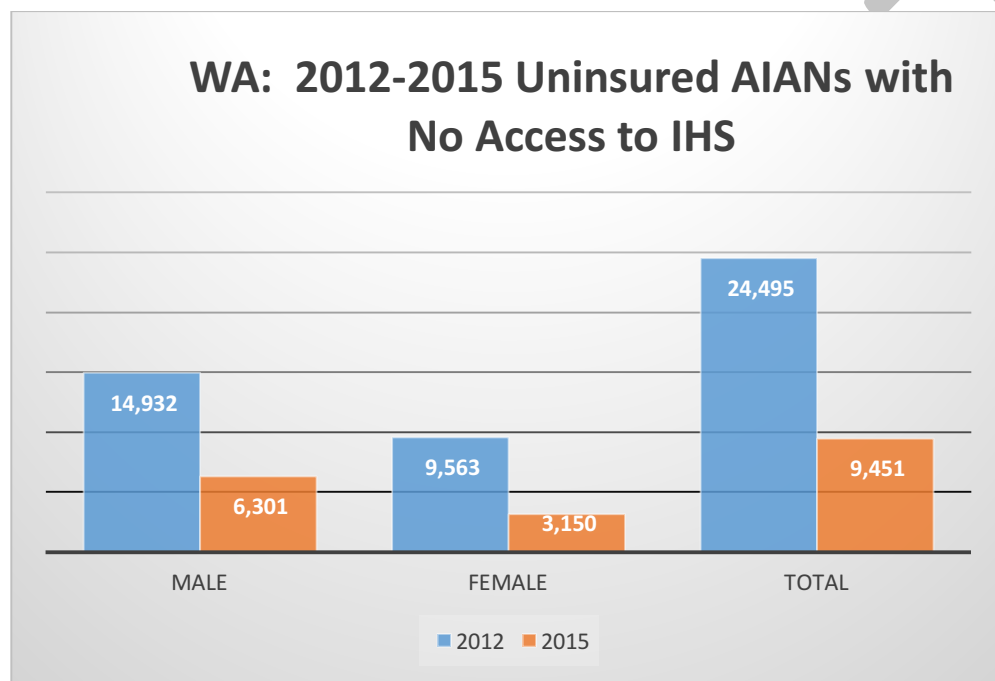


The number of uninsured patients with access to IHS-funded health programs declined by 5,200 or 30% from 2012 to 2015. Females made up 91% of the total decline as the number of females uninsured dropped by 4,700 from nearly 9,600 in 2012 to just under 5,000 in 2015 a reduction of 49%. Male uninsured also declined, by 500, but just a 6% decline from 2012. In 2015, males made up 60% of all uninsured at IHS-funded programs. In 2012 males made up only 45% of the uninsured, that is, although the number of males uninsured declined the percentage of total uninsured who are male increased markedly. This is a surprising and important finding. One needs to keep in mind the likely large error rate in these estimates, but further research should determine the validity of this finding. If valid, the reasons for the variation found here should be explored and outreach designed to reach the male population of IHS programs.



## Uninsured American Indians and Alaska Natives without Access to IHS

2012-2015 Uninsured American Indians and Alaska Natives With No Access to IHS				
	2012	2015	Decrease 12-15	% decrease
<b>Male</b>	14,932	6,301	(8,631)	-58%
<b>Female</b>	9,563	3,150	(6,413)	-67%
<b>Total</b>	24,495	9,451	(15,044)	-61%
<b>% Male</b>	61%	67%	57%	
<b>% Female</b>	39%	33%	43%	



In Washington, the number of uninsured patients ‘without access’ to IHS-funded health programs declined by 15,000 or 61% from 2012 to 2015. This compares with the smaller decrease of 30% for those American Indians and Alaska Natives ‘with access’ to IHS-funded health programs. Males without access to IHS are more likely to be uninsured than females and they make up 67% of the total number uninsured in 2015 compared to 61% in 2012, a 6% increase as females gained insurance at a higher rate than males. Males made up 57% of the total decline since 2012 as the number of males uninsured dropped from 14,900 in 2012 to just 6,300 in 2015, a reduction of by 8,600 or 58%. Female uninsured also declined, by 6,400, representing a 67% decline from 2012.

## Conclusion

The ACA was successful in increasing the enrollment of American Indians and Alaska Natives in health insurance coverage. Unlike the trend nationally, in Washington insurance coverage for females increased at a greater rate than for males from 2012 to 2015. This was particularly true for males with access to IHS funded health programs.

One important finding of this analysis is that those American Indians and Alaska Natives with access to IHS-funded health programs saw much smaller decreases in uninsured, than those without access to IHS. The reason for this variation, similar to the case nationally, is the very fact of having access to health care services at an IHS funded health program diminishes the likelihood that a patient would purchase health insurance or seek out Medicaid coverage.

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Source of Data: 1-year American Community Survey, US Census

Years: 2012 and 2015

No Foreign Born, that is nativity is the United States.

American Indian and Alaska Natives Alone and In-combination with other races.

## Tables Comparing 10 States Including Washington

### Change in Insurance Coverage 2012-2015

### Change in Uninsured 2012-2015

	Total	Men	Women		Total	Men	Women
<b>California</b>	9%	9%	9%	<b>California</b>	-54%	-52%	-57%
<b>Colorado</b>	18%	16%	20%	<b>Colorado</b>	-22%	-29%	-7%
<b>Minnesota</b>	4%	16%	-6%	<b>Minnesota</b>	-42%	-32%	-54%
<b>New Mexico</b>	22%	21%	23%	<b>New Mexico</b>	-38%	-38%	-38%
<b>North Dakota</b>	38%	58%	21%	<b>North Dakota</b>	-12%	-6%	-22%
<b>Nevada</b>	38%	21%	55%	<b>Nevada</b>	-58%	-49%	-67%
<b>Oregon</b>	16%	20%	11%	<b>Oregon</b>	-60%	-69%	-48%
<b>Oklahoma</b>	6%	6%	7%	<b>Oklahoma</b>	-12%	-12%	-12%
<b>Washington</b>	17%	13%	21%	<b>Washington</b>	-48%	-40%	-58%
<b>Wisconsin</b>	7%	6%	8%	<b>Wisconsin</b>	7%	6%	8%

### Ranked by Increase in Insurance Coverage

### Ranked by Decrease in Uninsured

Change in Insurance Coverage 2012-2015				Change in Uninsured 2012-2015			
	Total	Males	Females		Total	Men	Women
<b>North Dakota</b>	38%	58%	21%	<b>Oregon</b>	-60%	-69%	-48%
<b>Nevada</b>	38%	21%	55%	<b>Nevada</b>	-58%	-49%	-67%
<b>New Mexico</b>	22%	21%	23%	<b>California</b>	-54%	-52%	-57%
<b>Colorado</b>	18%	16%	20%	<b>Washington</b>	-48%	-40%	-58%
<b>Washington</b>	17%	13%	21%	<b>Minnesota</b>	-42%	-32%	-54%
<b>Oregon</b>	16%	20%	11%	<b>New Mexico</b>	-38%	-38%	-38%
<b>California</b>	9%	9%	9%	<b>Colorado</b>	-22%	-29%	-7%
<b>Wisconsin</b>	7%	6%	8%	<b>Oklahoma</b>	-12%	-12%	-12%
<b>Oklahoma</b>	6%	6%	7%	<b>North Dakota</b>	-12%	-6%	-22%
<b>Minnesota</b>	4%	16%	-6%	<b>Wisconsin</b>	7%	6%	8%

**Ranked by Increase in Insurance Coverage, Males**

**Ranked by Decrease in Uninsured Males**

Change in Insurance Coverage 2012-2015				Change in Uninsured 2012-2015			
	Total	Males	Females		Total	Men	Women
<b>North Dakota</b>	38%	58%	21%	<b>Oregon</b>	-60%	-69%	-48%
<b>Nevada</b>	38%	21%	55%	<b>California</b>	-54%	-52%	-57%
<b>New Mexico</b>	22%	21%	23%	<b>Nevada</b>	-58%	-49%	-67%
<b>Colorado</b>	16%	20%	11%	<b>Washington</b>	-48%	-40%	-58%
<b>Washington</b>	4%	16%	-6%	<b>New Mexico</b>	-38%	-38%	-38%
<b>Oregon</b>	18%	16%	20%	<b>Minnesota</b>	-42%	-32%	-54%
<b>California</b>	17%	13%	21%	<b>Colorado</b>	-22%	-29%	-7%
<b>Wisconsin</b>	9%	9%	9%	<b>Oklahoma</b>	-12%	-12%	-12%
<b>Oklahoma</b>	6%	6%	7%	<b>North Dakota</b>	-12%	-6%	-22%
<b>Minnesota</b>	7%	6%	8%	<b>Wisconsin</b>	7%	6%	8%

**Ranked by Increase in Insurance Coverage, Females**

**Ranked by Decrease in Uninsured Females**

Change in Insurance Coverage 2012-2015				Change in Uninsured 2012-2015			
	Total	Males	Females		Total	Men	Women
<b>Nevada</b>	38%	21%	55%	<b>Nevada</b>	-58%	-49%	-67%
<b>New Mexico</b>	22%	21%	23%	<b>Washington</b>	-48%	-40%	-58%
<b>California</b>	17%	13%	21%	<b>California</b>	-54%	-52%	-57%
<b>North Dakota</b>	38%	58%	21%	<b>Minnesota</b>	-42%	-32%	-54%
<b>Oregon</b>	18%	16%	20%	<b>Oregon</b>	-60%	-69%	-48%
<b>Colorado</b>	16%	20%	11%	<b>New Mexico</b>	-38%	-38%	-38%
<b>Wisconsin</b>	9%	9%	9%	<b>North Dakota</b>	-12%	-6%	-22%
<b>Minnesota</b>	7%	6%	8%	<b>Oklahoma</b>	-12%	-12%	-12%
<b>Oklahoma</b>	6%	6%	7%	<b>Colorado</b>	-22%	-29%	-7%
<b>Washington</b>	4%	16%	-6%	<b>Wisconsin</b>	7%	6%	8%