



Do Bans on Driver Cellphone Use make Safer Drivers?

www.iihs.org

SAE Government/Industry Meeting
Washington, DC • January 29, 2010

Adrian Lund, Ph.D., President

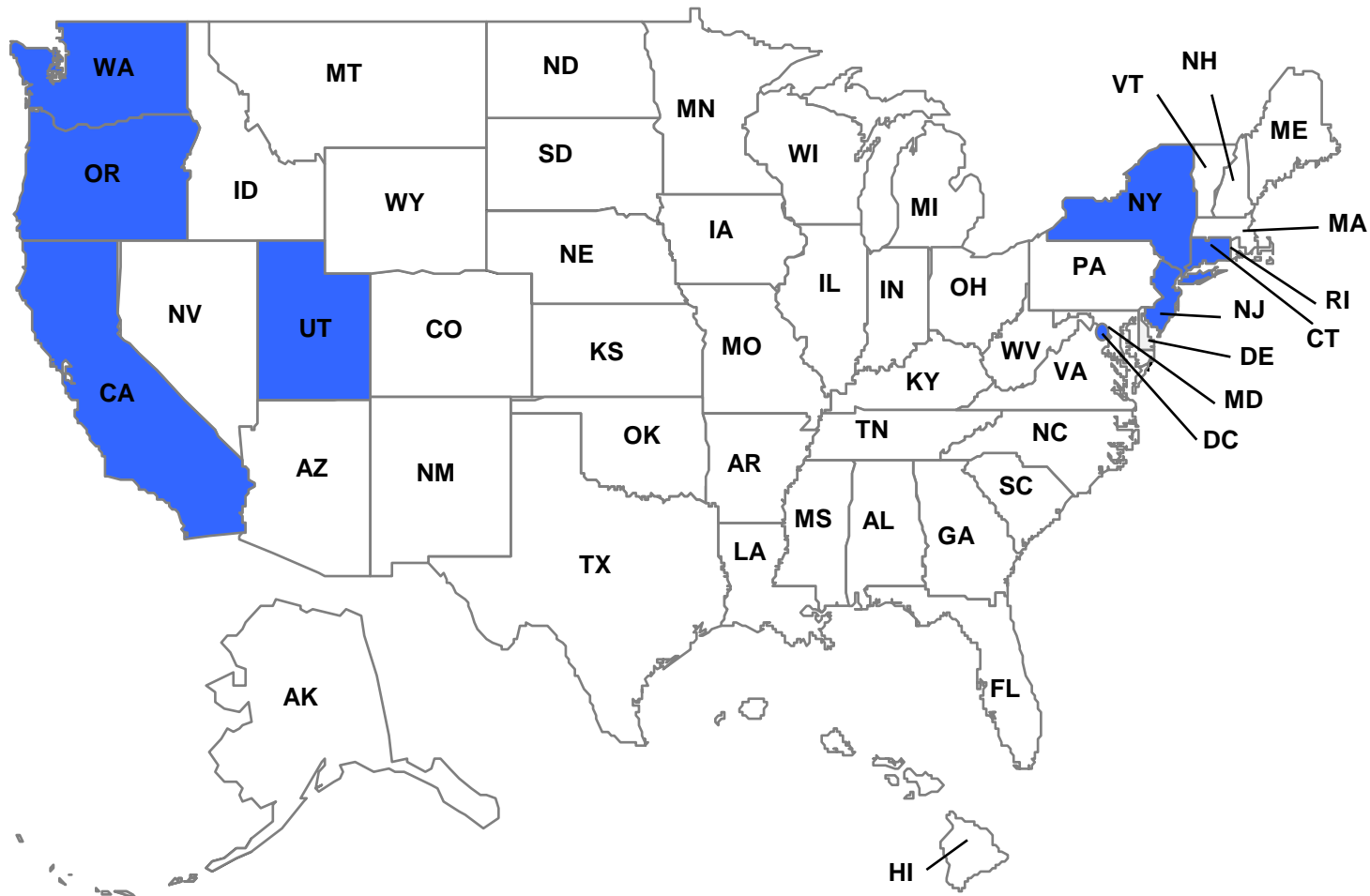
The sad fact is that in the coming weeks in particular, too many drivers will become distracted as they study a GPS, dial a cellphone or type a text message.

Over the past few years, distracted driving has gone from a dangerous practice to a deadly epidemic.

- Ray LaHood
US Transportation Secretary
The Washington Post, November 28, 2009

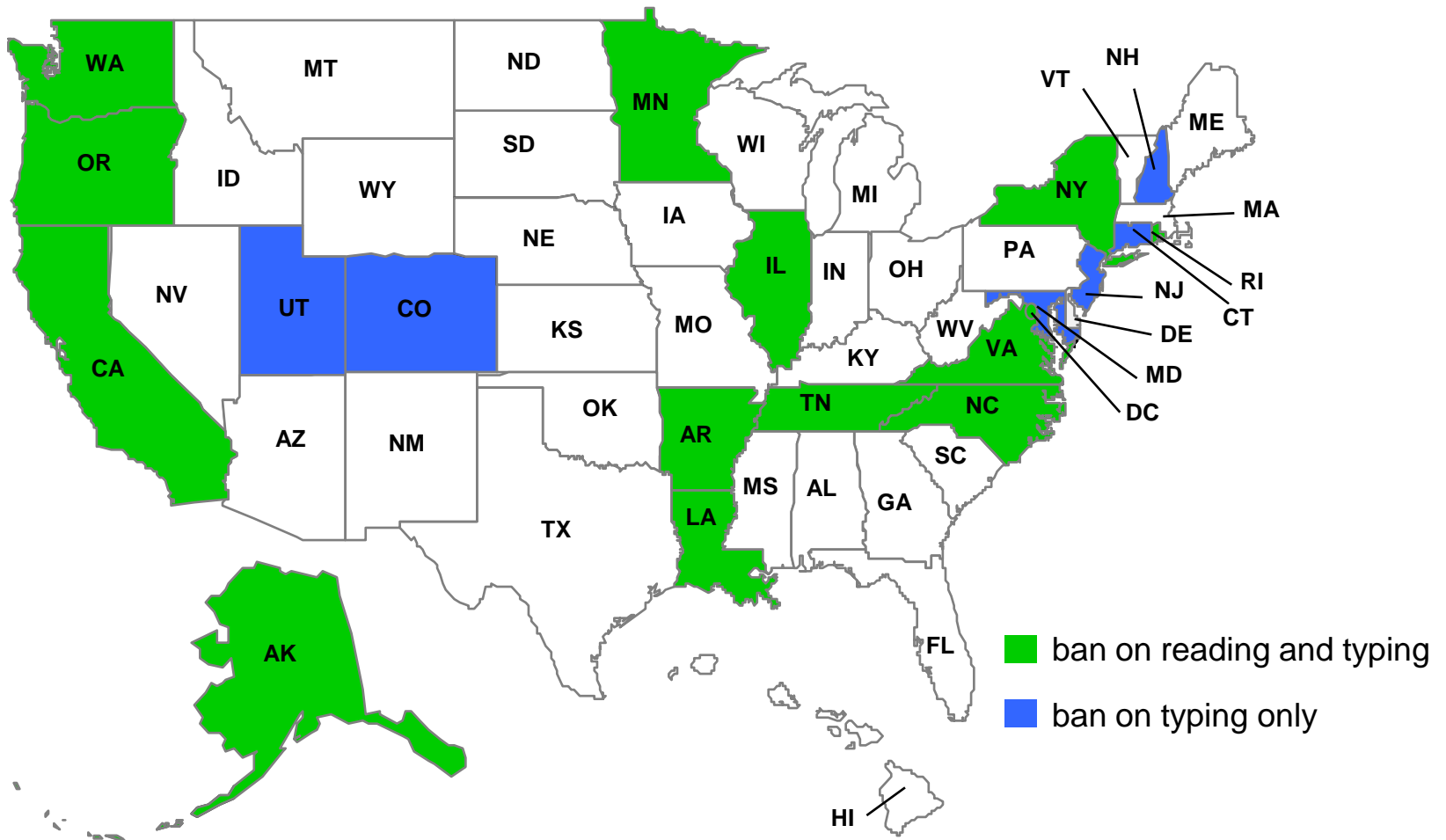
States that ban all drivers from using hand-held phones

January 2010



Bans on texting while driving

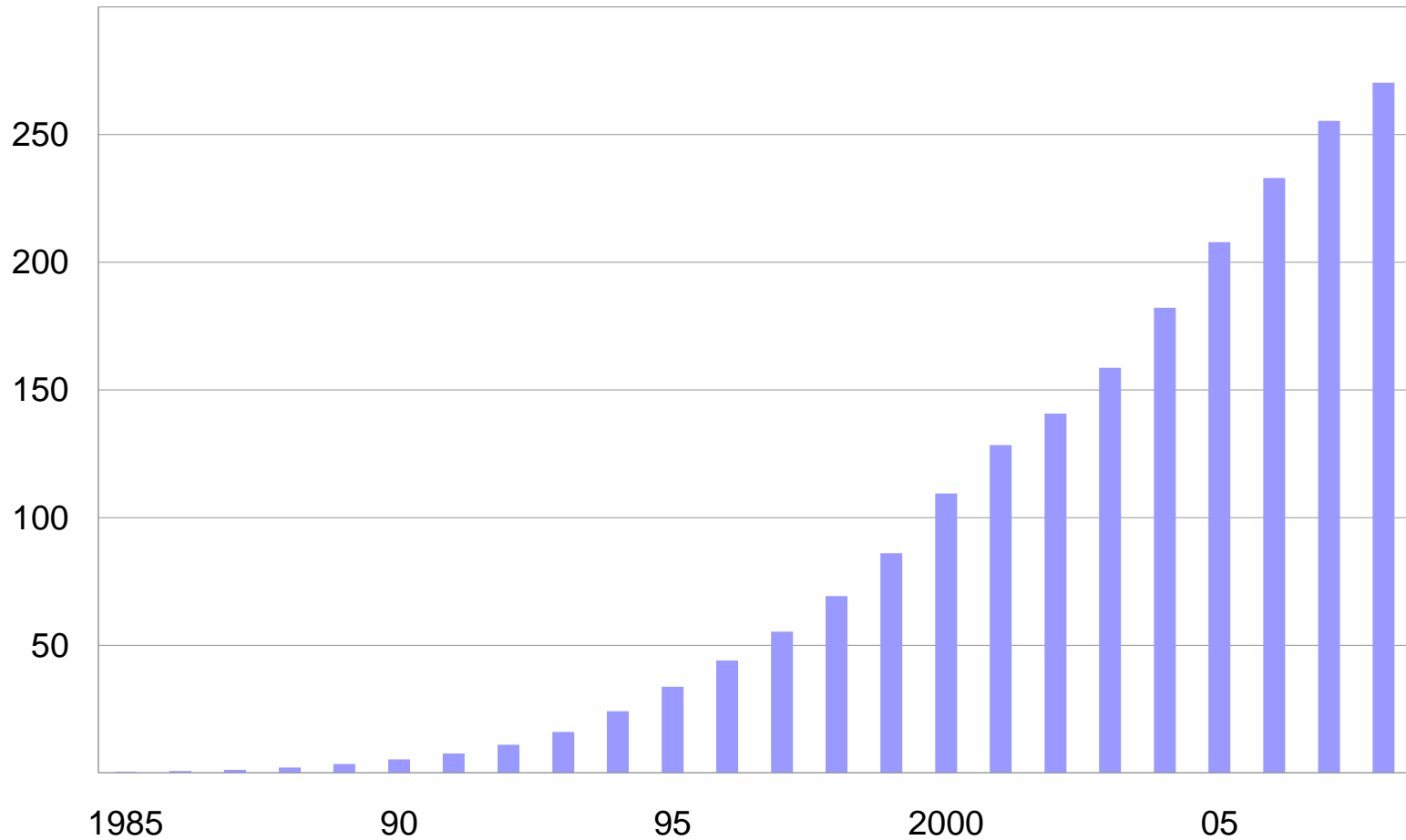
January 2010



Where's the epidemic?

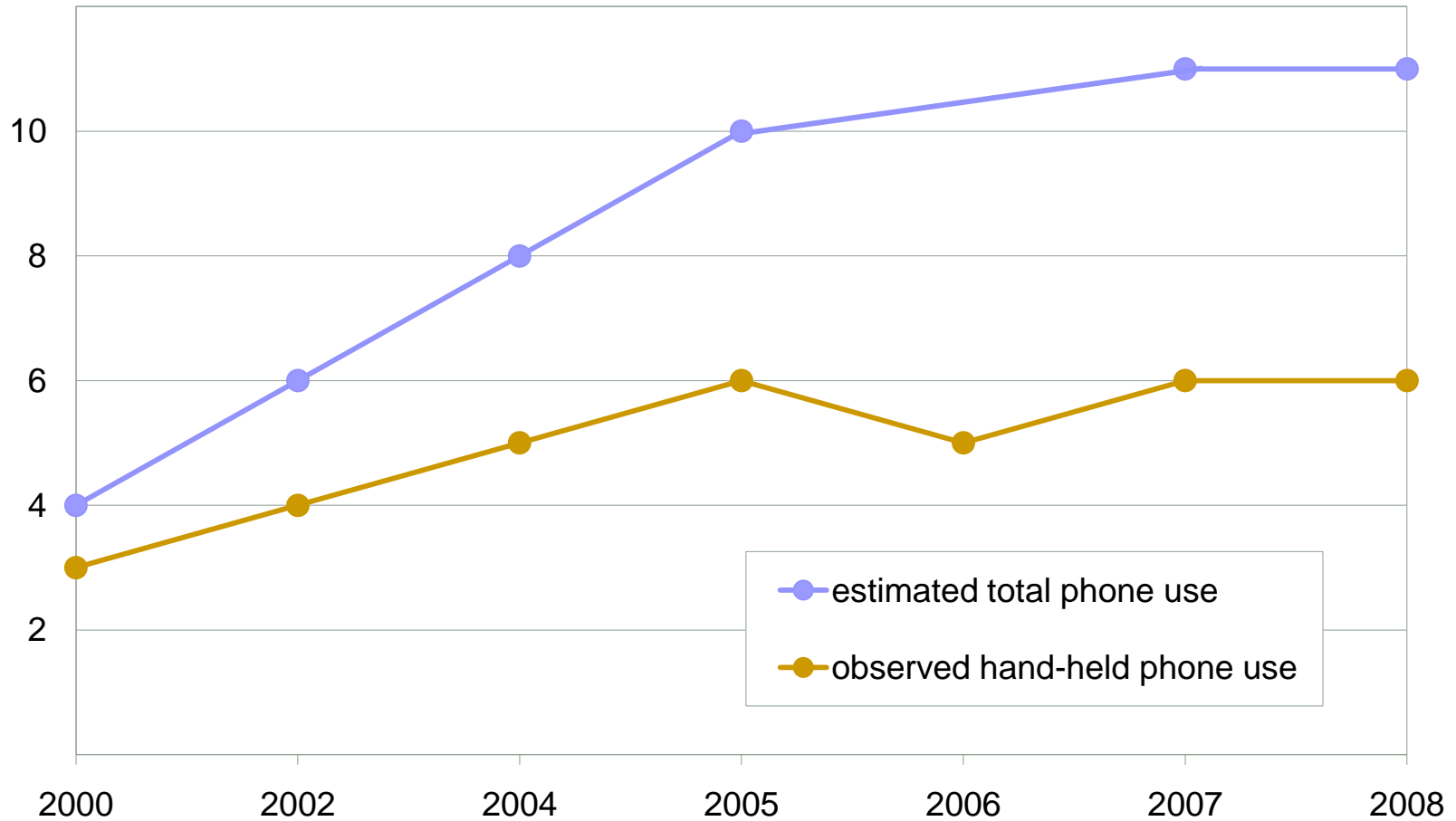
Cellphone subscribers

In millions, 1985-2009



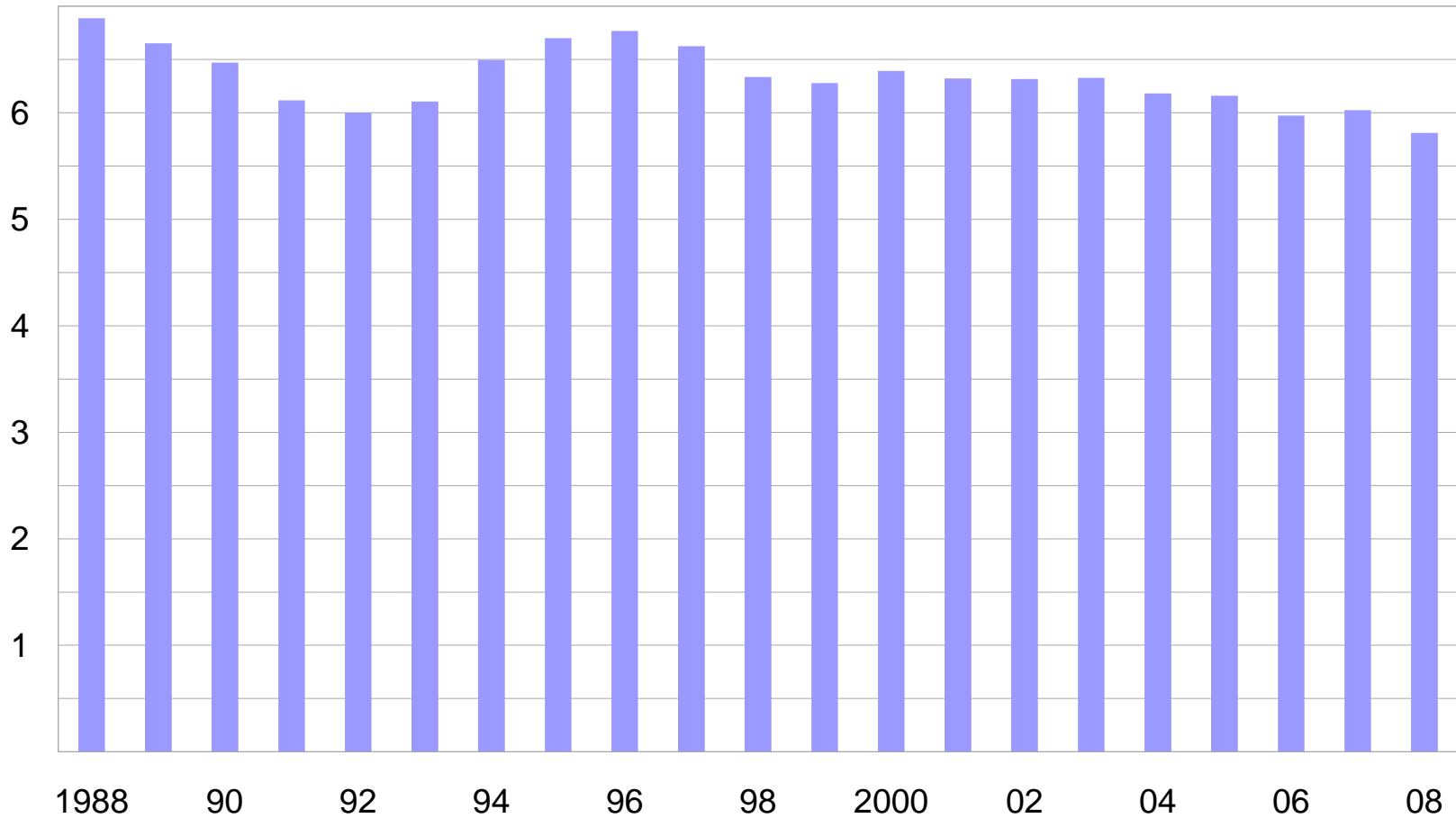
Percent of drivers talking on phones

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, 2000-08



All crashes

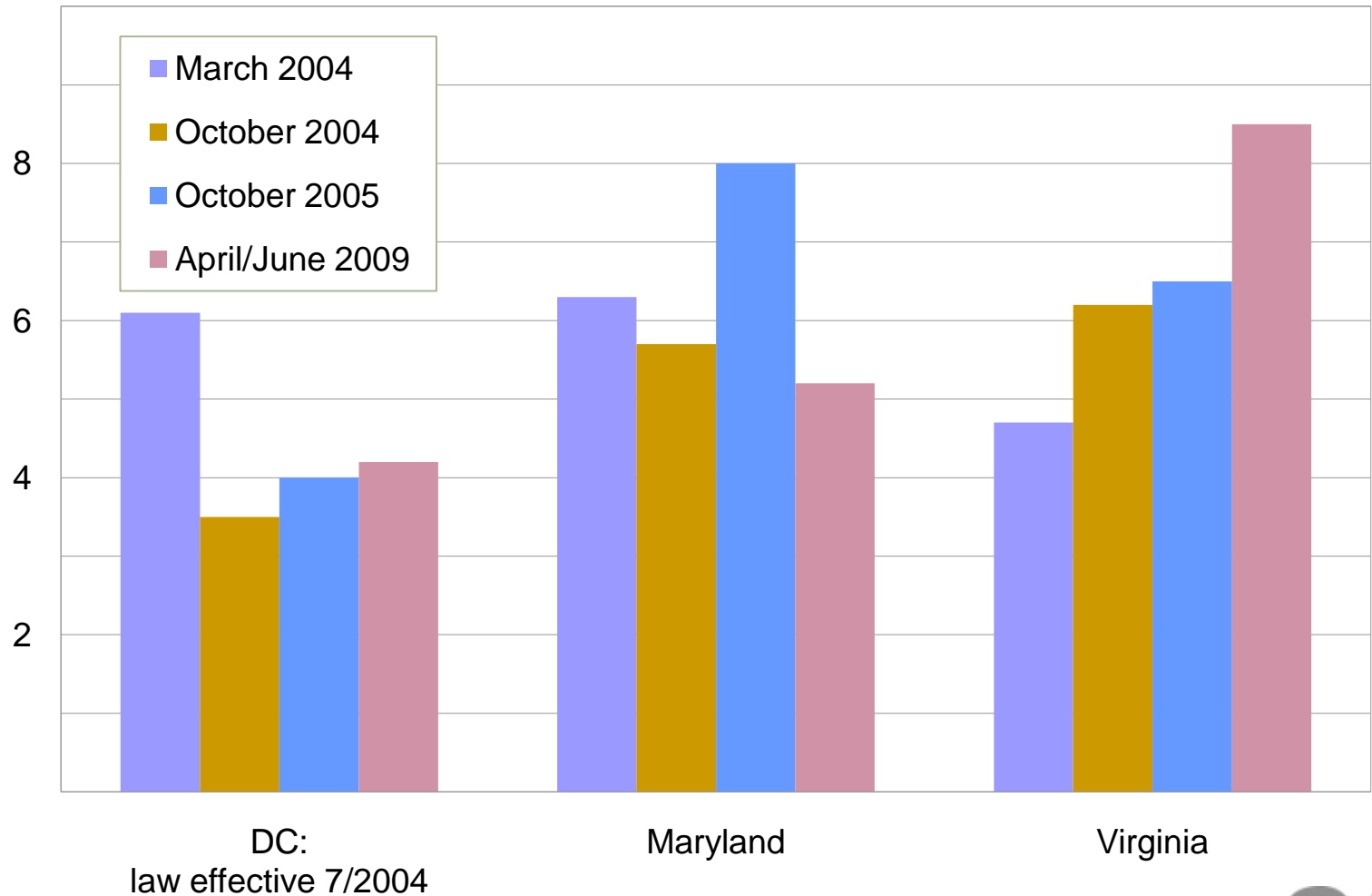
In millions, GES for non-fatal and FARS for fatal, by calendar year



How effective are
cellphone use laws –
the case of hand-held bans?

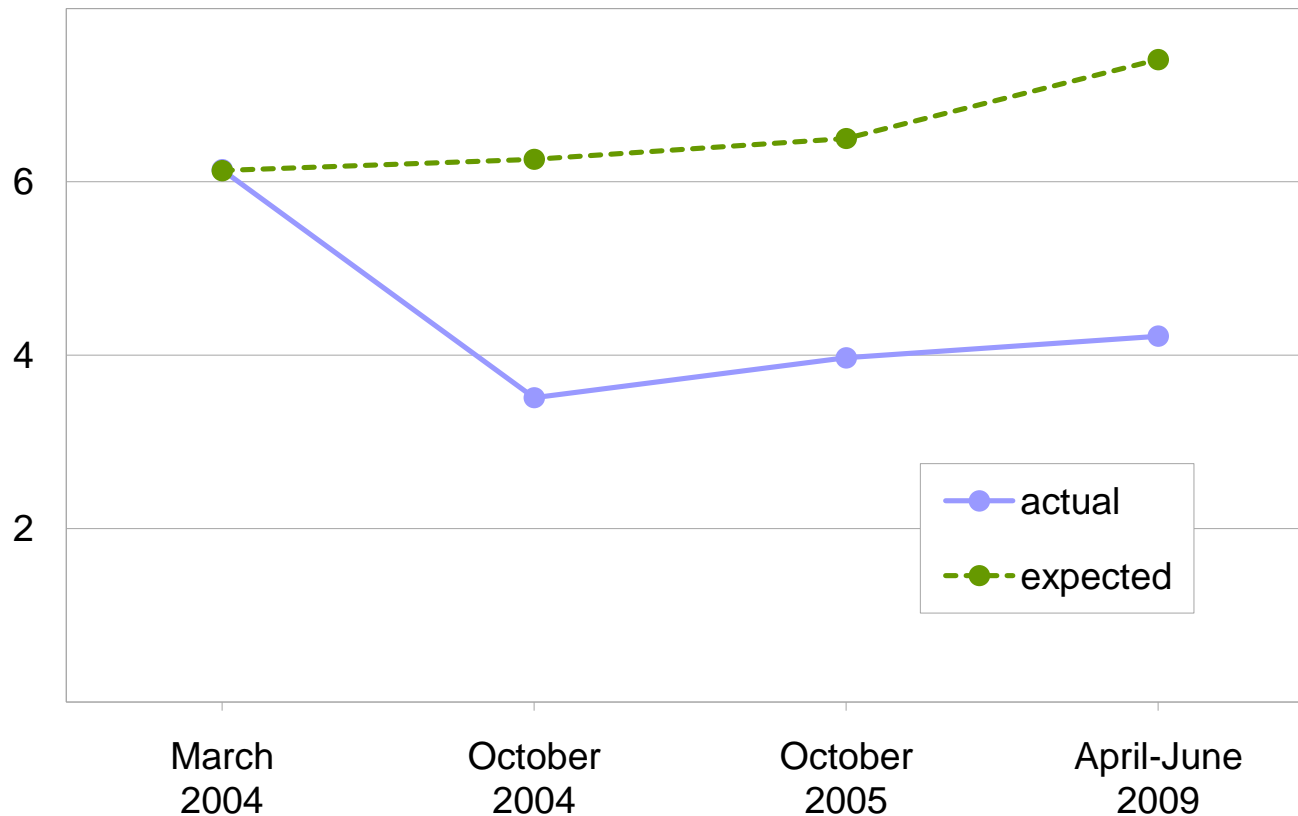
Percent of drivers using hand-held phones

Washington, DC, metro area



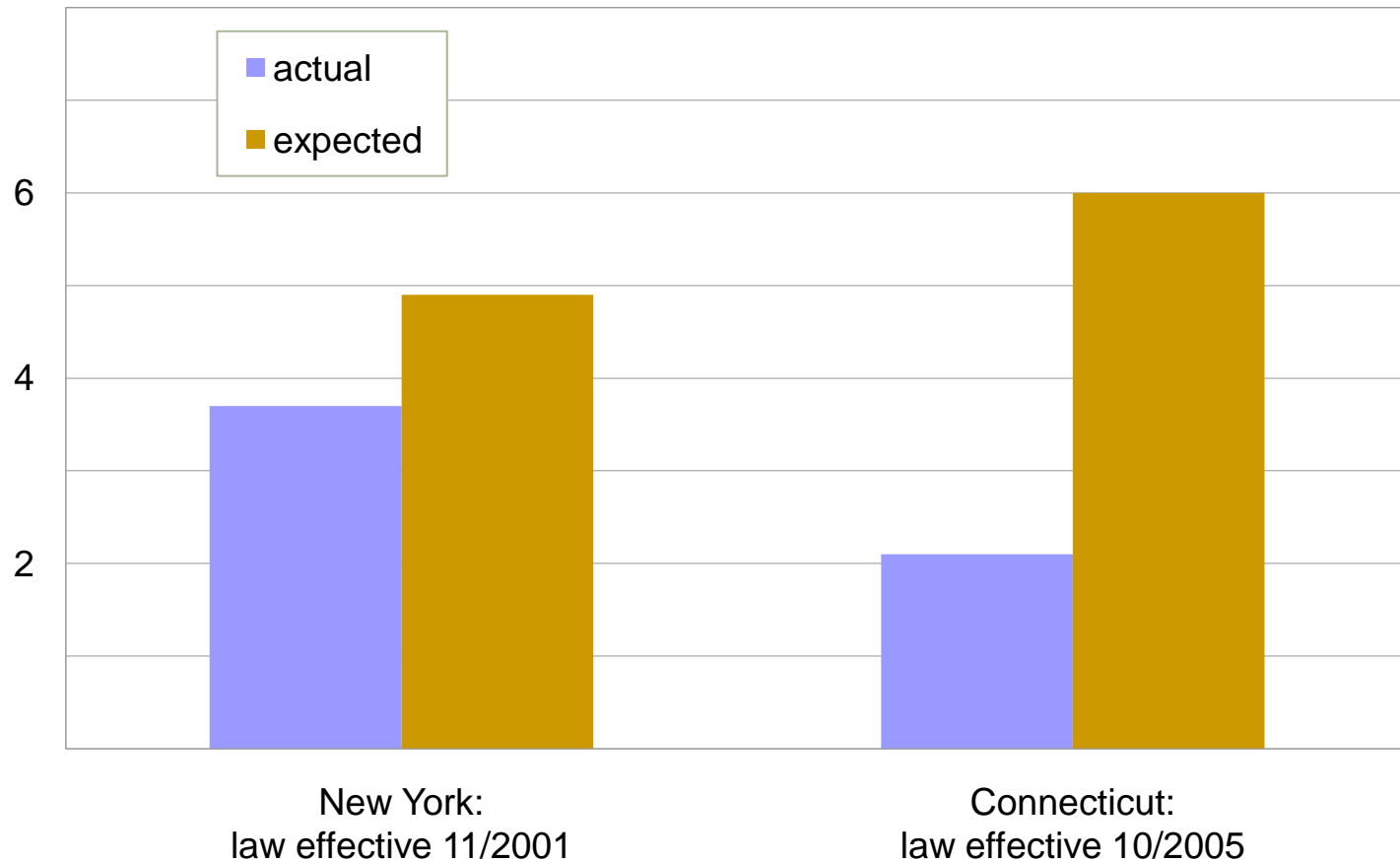
Actual percent of drivers in Washington, DC using hand-held phones vs. use that would have been expected without cellphone law

Law effective July 2004



Actual hand-held phone use vs. use that would have been expected without law

Percent phone use, April 2009

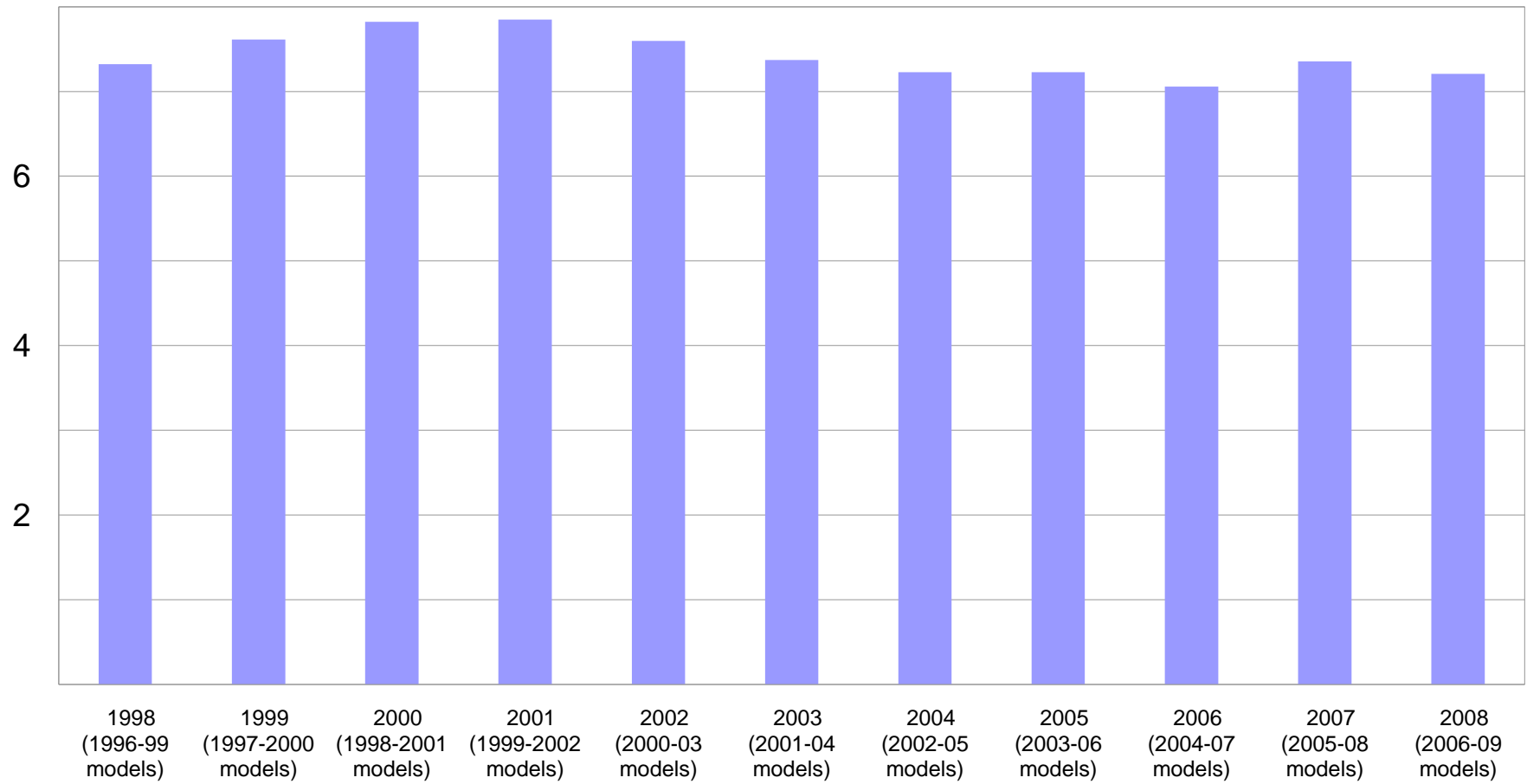


Collision claim frequencies
in states with hand-held
cellphone bans

Collision claim frequencies

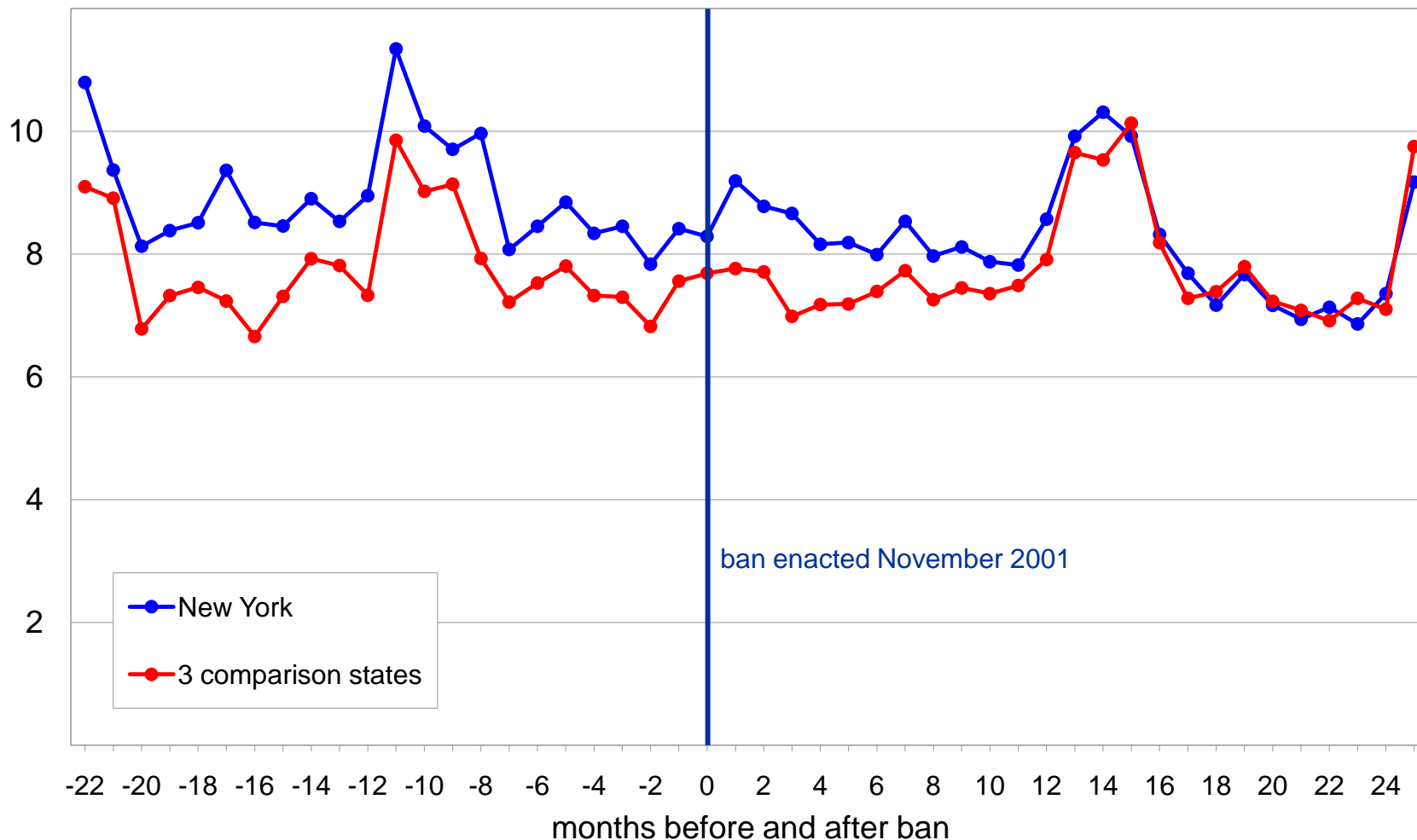
Claims per 100 insured vehicle years

By calendar year, based on 4 most recent model years



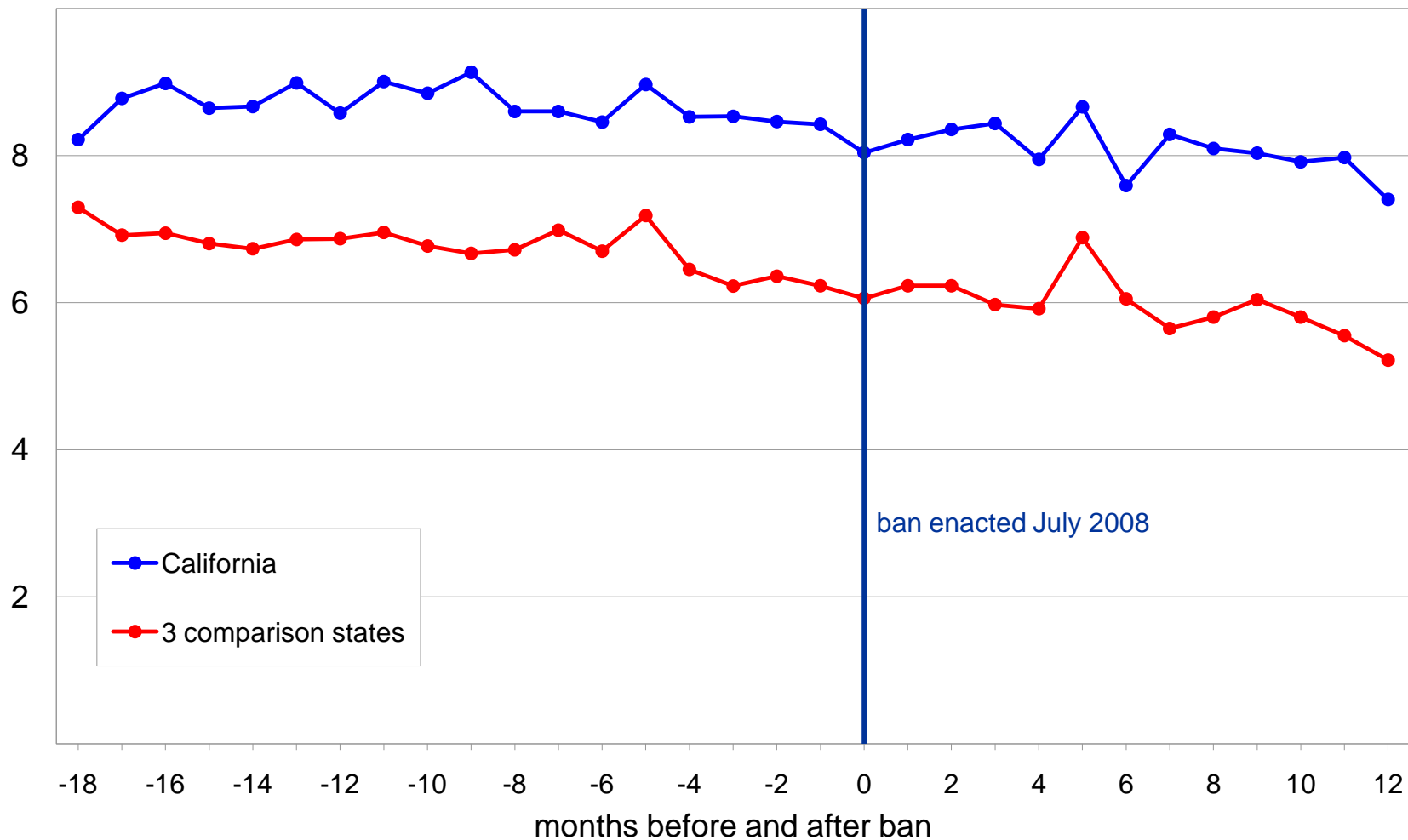
Collision claim frequencies for new vehicles by month

New York vs. Connecticut, Massachusetts, and Pennsylvania



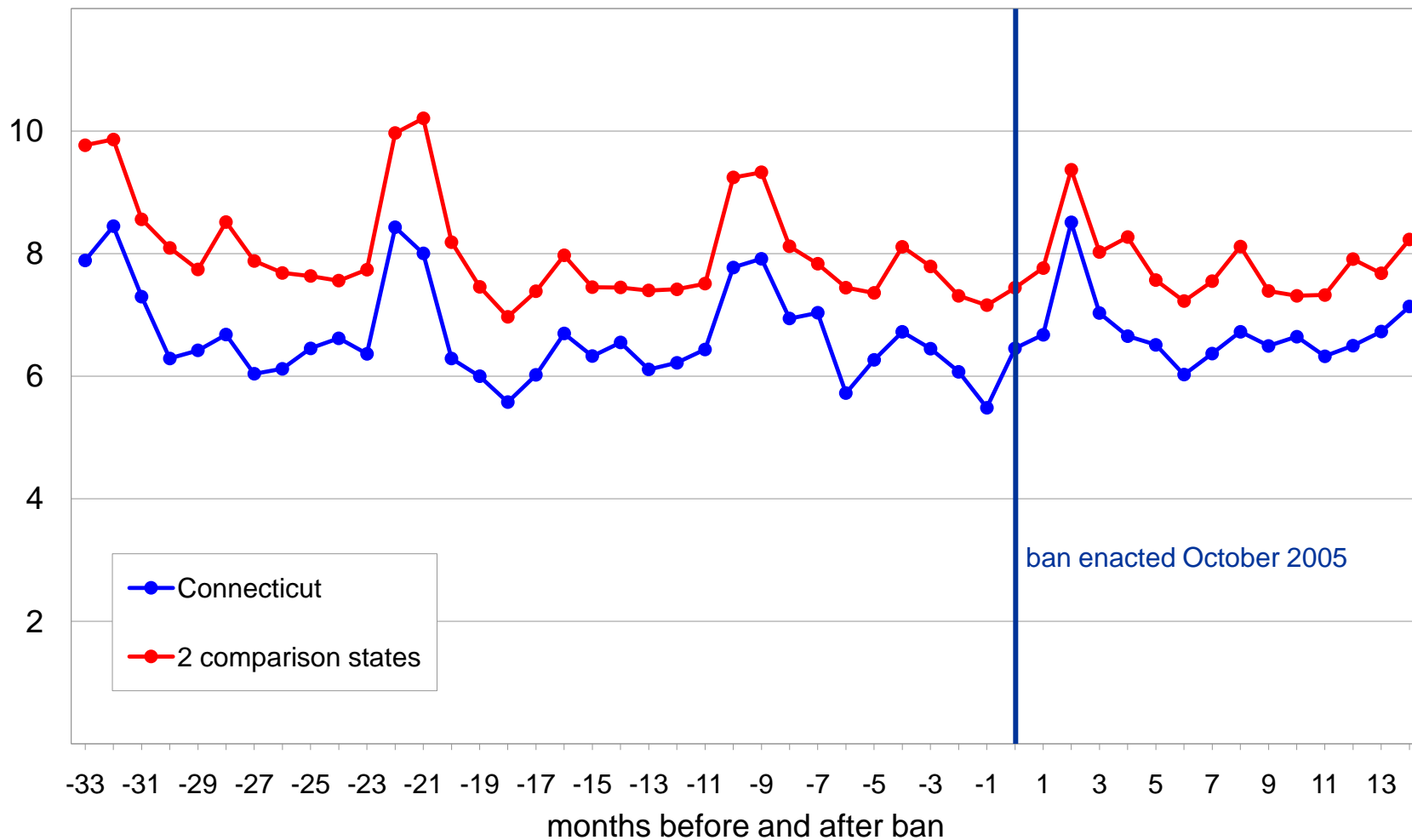
Collision claim frequencies for new vehicles by month

California vs. Arizona, Nevada, and Oregon



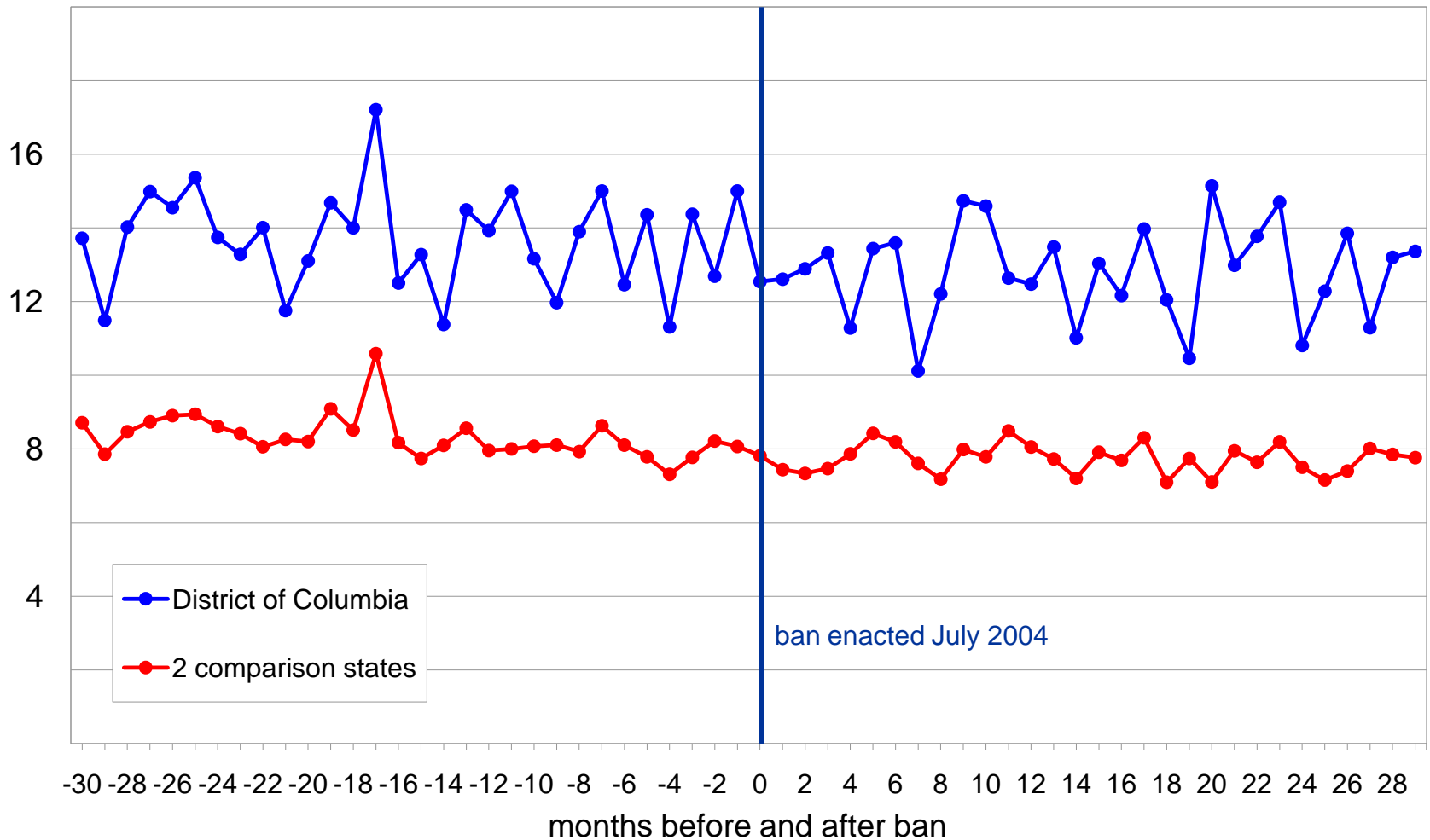
Collision claim frequencies for new vehicles by month

Connecticut vs. Massachusetts and New York



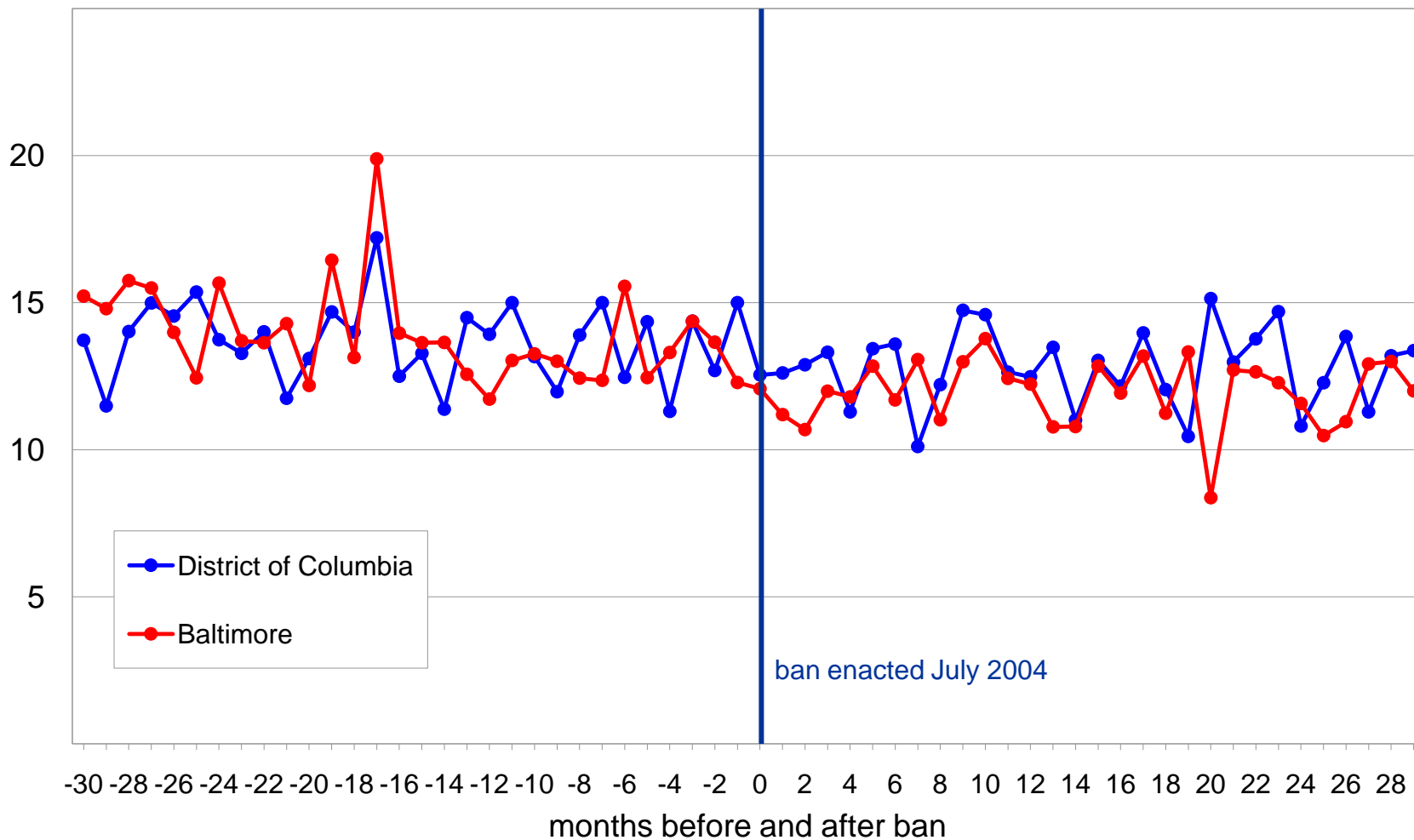
Collision claim frequencies for new vehicles by month

District of Columbia vs. Maryland and Virginia



Collision claim frequencies for new vehicles by month

District of Columbia vs. Baltimore



Would we be safer without mobile phones in cars?

Knowledge and questions

- Analyses of cellphone usage shows it to be a potent distraction
 - Crash risk when talking is 4 times risk when not talking, hand-held or hands free
- Is it a bigger distraction than exists in its absence?
 - Cellphone usage has increased 3-fold since 2000, but crash risk has declined
- Collision claim frequency has been unaffected by state bans on hand-held phone usage by drivers
 - Those bans have reduced hand-held usage by $\frac{1}{3}$ to $\frac{1}{2}$
- Research needed to determine reasons for these contradictions
 - Do drivers increase hands-free usage when hand-held usage is banned?
 - 1979 Indiana “Tri-Level Study” estimated “driver error” to be proximate cause of 9 out of 10 crashes

Does phone usage substitute for other distractions or add to them?



www.iihs.org

Dedicated to reducing deaths, injuries,
and property damage on the highway