

# State of the States: Problem Gambling Services in the United States



## Report to the 24<sup>th</sup> National Conference on Problem Gambling June, 2010

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# A (Very) Brief History



- Gambling (especially related to divination) is one of the oldest activities.
  - Why do dice have pips and not numbers?  
Recognizable dice date back to 1,300 BC but the Hindu-Arabic number system only originated 700 AD—2,000 years later!!!!
- Americans may be more prone to take risks—immigrants, pioneers, entrepreneurs...
- But also a deep rooted tradition of viewing gambling as a sin—gamblers (especially addicts) were seen as godless, greedy, guilty...
- In the US, gambling is generally illegal unless a certain form has been specifically legalized.

# Why A National Issue? 5 P's



- **Presence:** Legal in 48 states + 2/3rds of tribes.
- **Participation:** 85% of American adults have gambled at least once in their lifetimes:
  - 65% at least once in past year;
  - 30% at least once in past month;
  - 15% at least once in past week.
- **Prevalence:** 2-3% meet criteria for a gambling disorder = **4-6 million adults + 500,000 adolescents.**
- **Proceeds:** **\$95 billion** to states and companies + **\$6 billion** to U.S. Treasury from tax on winnings.
- **Problems:** In addition to personal financial, emotional and physical harm, cost to society from crime, bankruptcy, etc... **\$6.9 billion.**
- **Perception:** Large majorities believe problem gambling is a serious issue.

# National (Conflicting) Perceptions



- 65% believe gambling is morally acceptable **BUT..**
- 70% say legalized gambling encourages people to gamble more than they can afford.
  - ✦ Gallup (2005), Pew Research Center (2006)
- 32% believe problem gambling is mostly a personal or moral weakness, 13% mostly a disease, 51% both **BUT...**
- 68% think controlling compulsive gambling is mostly a matter of willpower.
  - ✦ Ipsos-Reid (2008)

## Federal Government (Generally, Hopefully or Frighteningly) Reflects Our Priorities



- *Not a single cent* of the *\$3.55 trillion* Federal budget is dedicated to problem gambling.
- Not a single person in the entire Federal government has problem gambling in their job responsibility or description.
- As a result, what programs we have been able to get are generally ad-hoc, one-time and use extremely scarce discretionary funds.

# Previous/Current Federal Efforts



- National Institute of Mental Health project – Rachel Volberg
- National Gambling Impact Study Commission
  - Report itself
  - NRC book
  - Special PA
- Center for Mental Health Services contract
- Center for Substance Abuse Treatment
  - Co-occurring designation - Dr. H. Westley Clark
  - Addiction Technology Transfer Centers
  - Sponsor Midwest Conference on Problem Gambling and Substance Abuse
- National Clearinghouse for Alcohol and Drug Information
  - Problem gambling toolkit
- Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention
- On going National Institutes of Health research

# Public vs. Private Sector

## Public

- Initiated with expansion of legalized gambling
- Occurs at the local and state level in the US
- Limited to what is in legislative intent and appropriations
- Typically state HHS agencies

## Private

- “Grassroots” efforts
- Typically non-profit
- Longer history
- Limited to missions and funding restrictions
- Typically Affiliate Councils, also includes some industry efforts

# About the APGSA



- Formed in 2000
- Mission: To support the development of services that will reduce the impact of problem gambling.
- Vision: An active association that enhances the effectiveness and efficiency of its member organizations through support, information dissemination, and adherence to professional standards.
- Membership currently at 31 states
- Survey US states for public PG services every two years



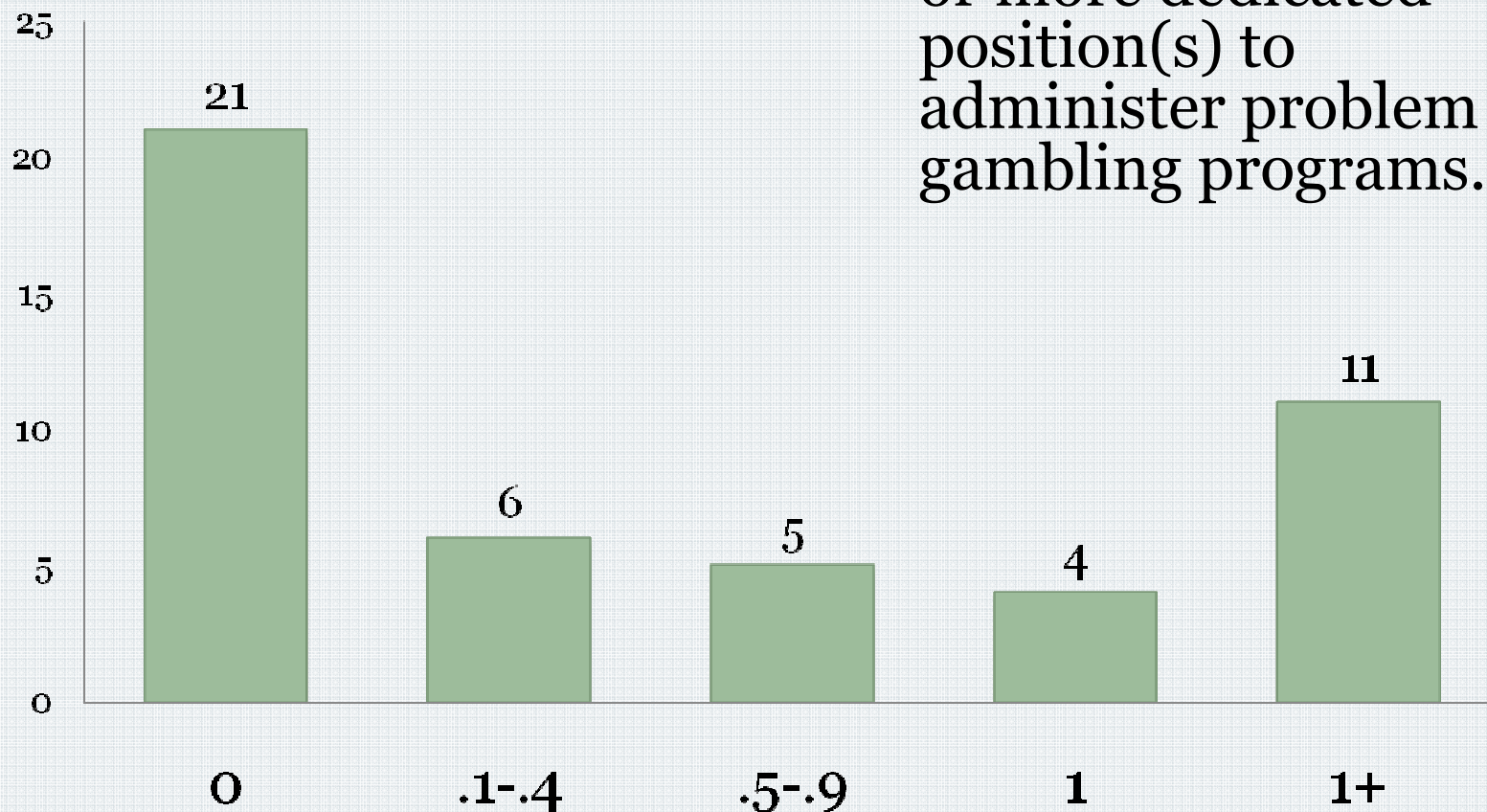
# APGSA Survey Methodology



- **A survey was completed on 46 states.**
  - Survey emailed then completed by representative(s) from one or more government agencies and/or state council
  - "Phase II" interviews were conducted with 41 survey respondents to review the information provided with one of the study's PIs
- **For those states that did not complete a survey**
  - An average of 7 contact attempts were made
  - Web search provided some information (Florida & WV)
  - Unable to obtain any information (Ohio & Georgia)

# Number of FTE Dedicated to PGS

- Only 15 states fund one or more dedicated position(s) to administer problem gambling programs.

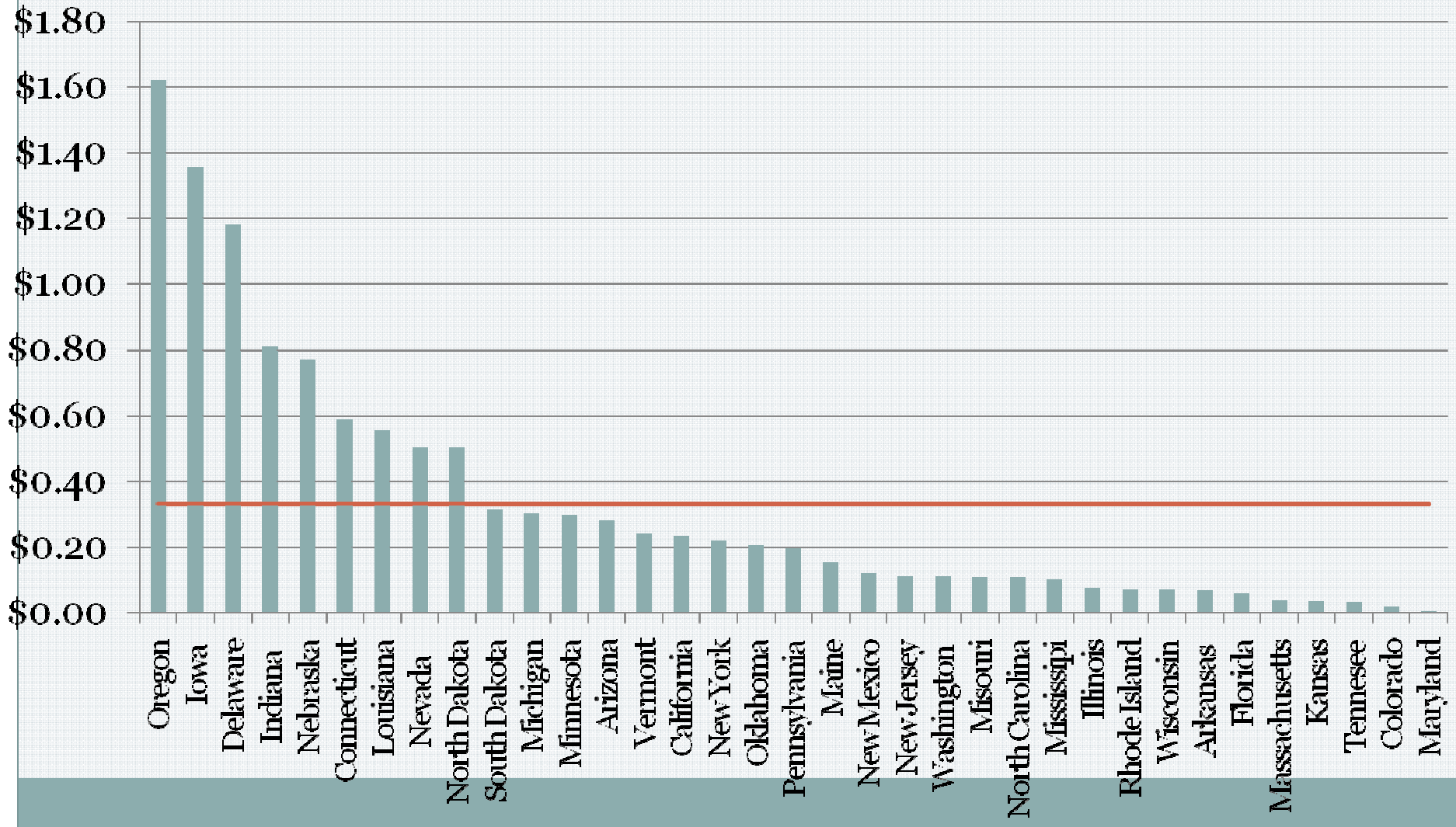


# Current Status of Public Efforts

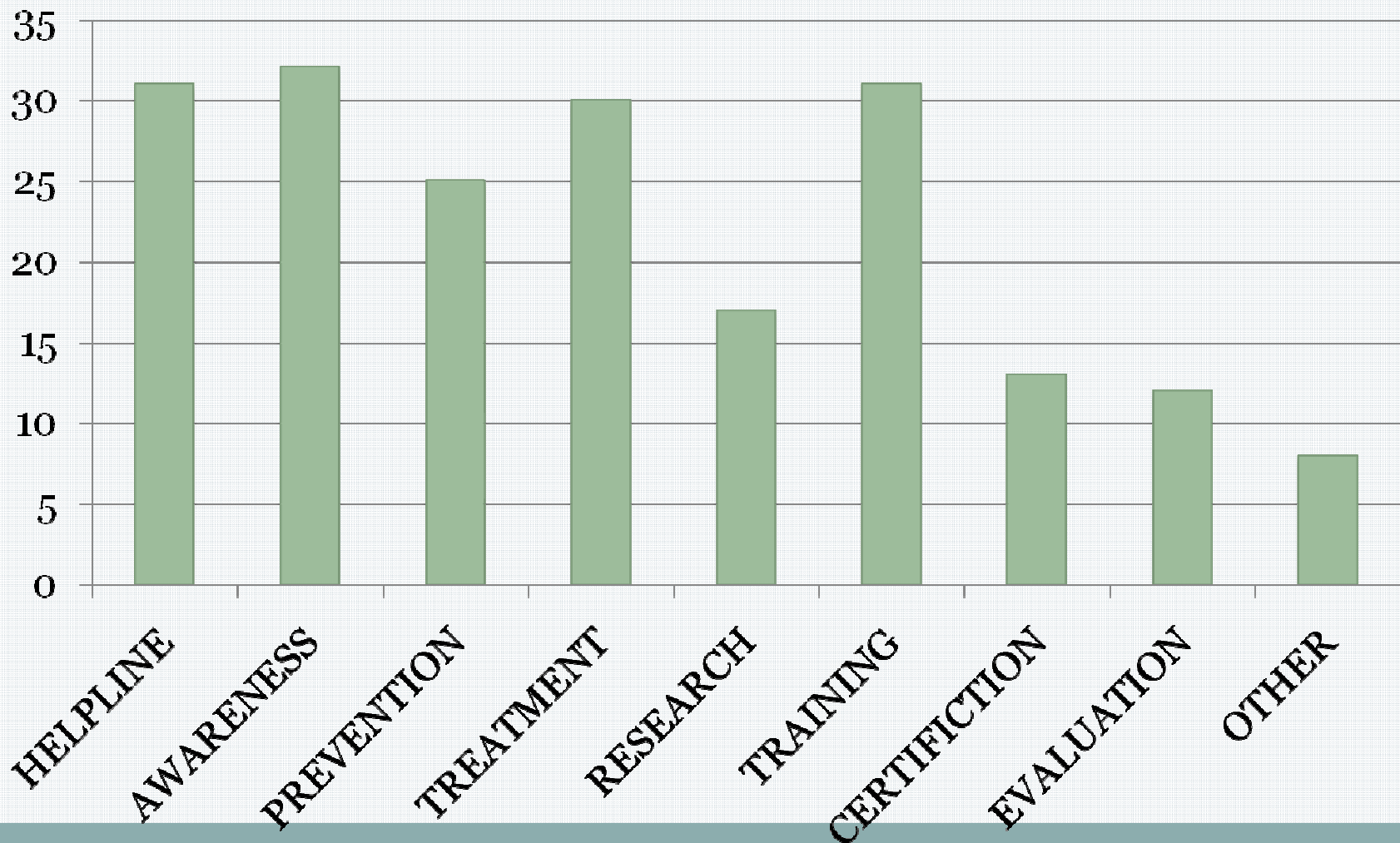


- **APGSA survey of 50 states**
  - 2001 – 13 states with problem gambling funding
  - 2008 – 34 states with problem gambling funding
  - 2010 - 38 states with problem gambling funding
- **Per capita funding of PG services**
  - Range of <\$0.01 to \$1.62
  - Average: \$0.33 ; Median: \$0.20
  - CA – Per capita gambling revenue= \$228
    - Per Capita problem gambling allocation=\$0.24

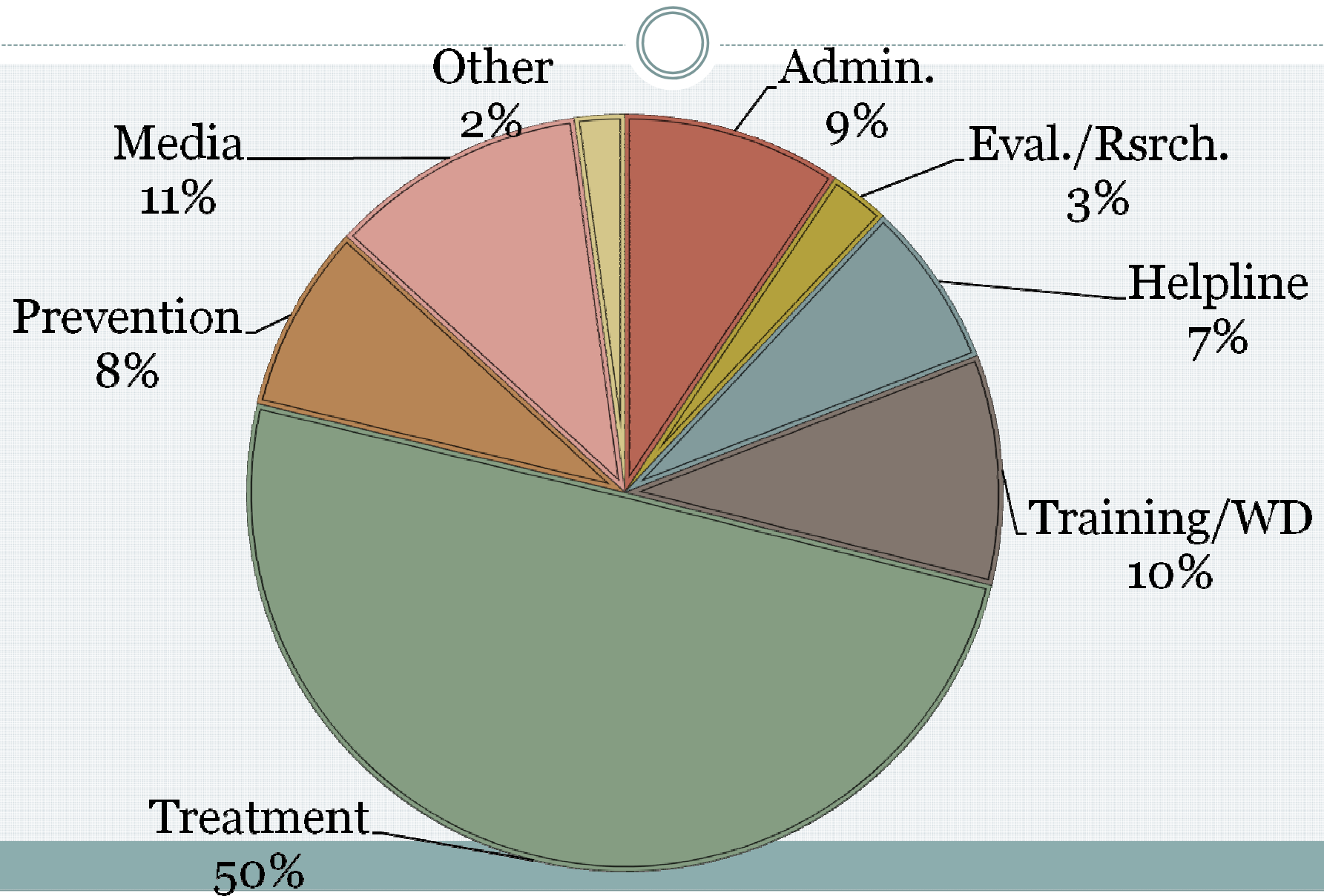
# 2010 Per Capita Spending by U.S. States On Problem Gambling Services



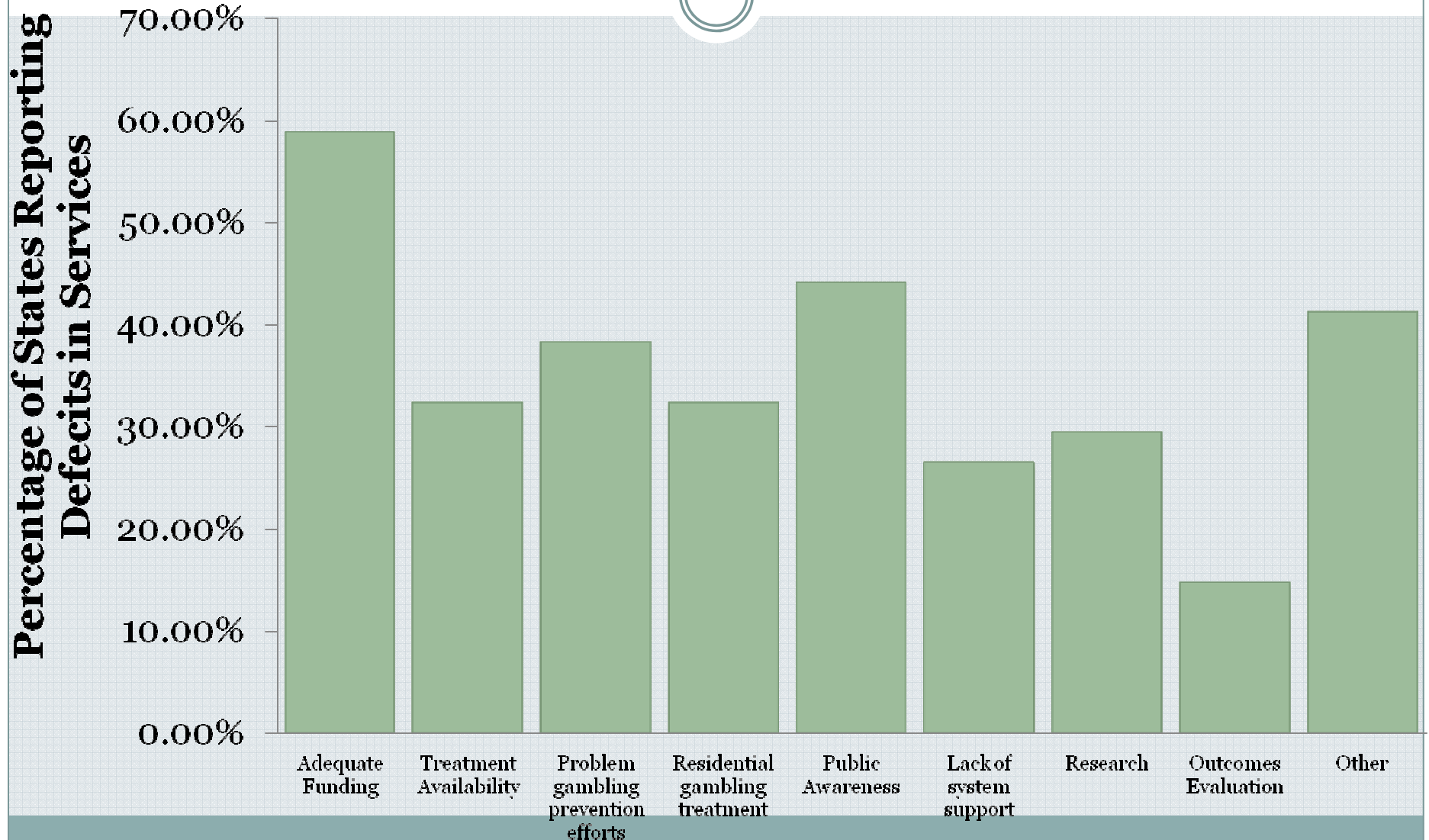
# Number of States Using Public Funds for Specific Problem Gambling Services



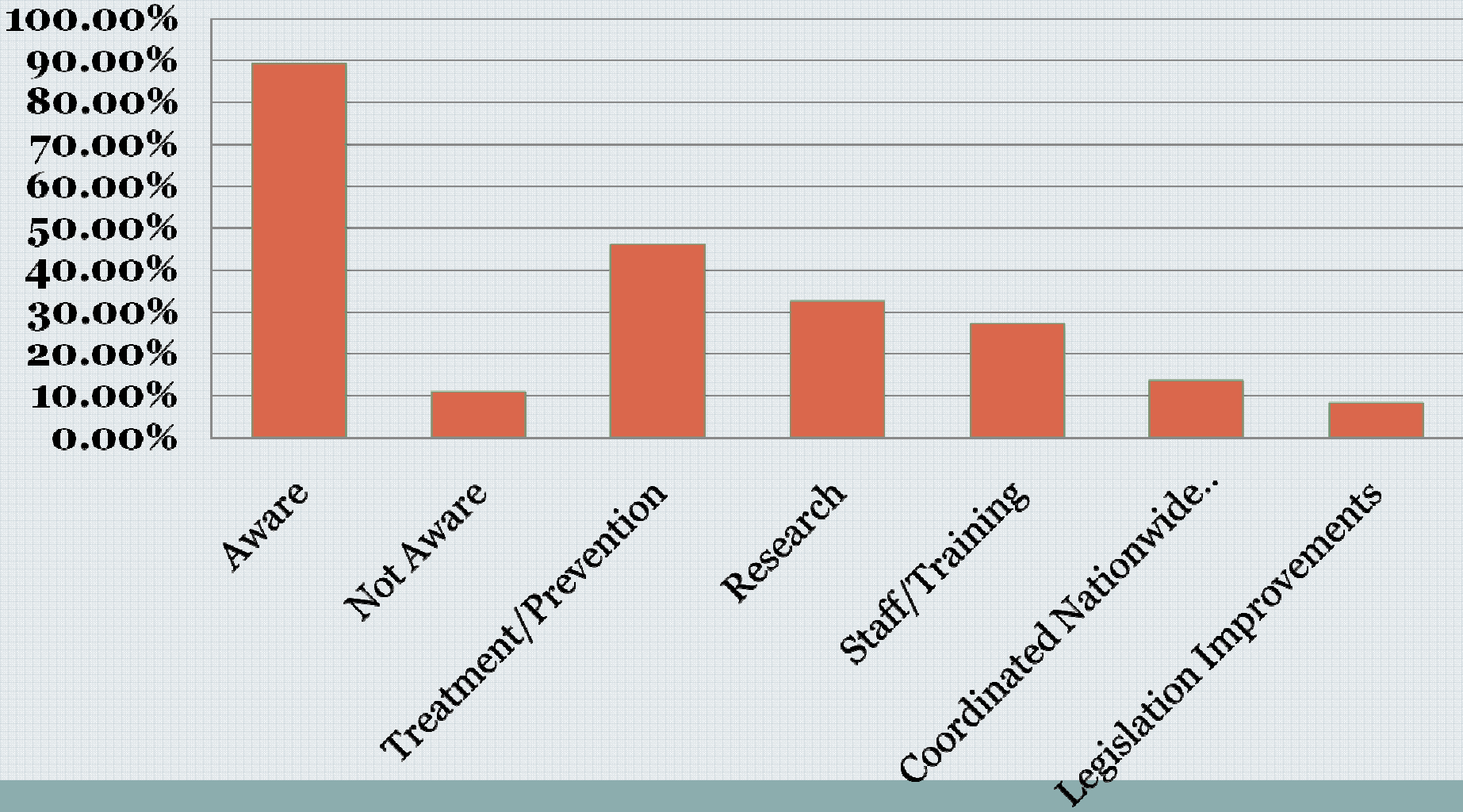
# Allocations by Service Category



# Identified Gaps in Services



# Comprehensive Problem Gambling Act Awareness & Desired Outcomes





# 2010 Survey of Publicly Funded Programs in the United States

- Full report with analysis to be completed by early September and available on [www.APGSA.org](http://www.APGSA.org)

The logo for the Association of Problem Gambling Service Administrators (APGSA) features the acronym "APGSA" in a large, blue, serif font. A stylized orange and yellow swoosh arches over the letters, starting under the 'A' and ending under the 'A'.

ASSOCIATION OF PROBLEM GAMBLING  
SERVICE ADMINISTRATORS

# About NCPG



- The national ADVOCATE for programs and services to assist problem gamblers and their families.
- Founded in 1972.
- NEUTRAL on legalized gambling.
- National grassroots non-profit with chapters in 35 of 50 states, including Oregon.
- Work with government, gaming industry & community.

# Core Programs



- Helpline Number (800.522.4700) & Network
- Nat'l Problem Gambling Awareness Week
- Annual Conference on Problem Gambling Prevention, Treatment, Research & Recovery (June 30-July 2, 2011, Boston, MA)
- Public Awareness & Media
- Certification Administration
- **ADVOCACY!**

# Comprehensive Problem Gambling Act



- Authorizes Federal health agencies to address PG and appropriates \$71,000,000 for grants.
- House version introduced June 2009 as H.R. 2906; referred to Committee on Energy & Commerce, Health Subcommittee.
  - 57 sponsors as of 6/4/10
- Senate version introduced as S. 3418 May 2010; referred to Health, Education, Labor & Pensions Committee.
  - Lead sponsors Merkley (D-OR) and Johanns (R-NE)



## Section 3: SAMHSA Authorities

Designates Federal lead

Improve coordination  
and collaboration  
among states

Synergistic benefit from  
coordinated approaches

Provide technical  
assistance and guidance  
to states



## Section 4: Public Awareness



- Model after other successful public health initiatives
- Create common themes, look and feel to augment existing state and local community efforts
- Early identification and intervention key to reducing harm
- National Problem Gambling Awareness Week

## Section 5: Research



- States unable to fund meaningful research independently
- Encourages collaboration between Universities and existing programs to identify policies and services that produce positive outcomes
- Supports the goal of improving efficiency and effectiveness of problem gambling services

# Section 6: Treatment

- Only 32 states provide any funding for problem gambling treatment
- Encourages public/private partnerships to meet identified needs
- Intended to fill gaps in services, not supplant existing efforts
- Flexibility in service design and delivery





# Summary



- Common sense solution to identified needs
- Fills gaps in policy and programs only the Federal government can address
- Expands and supports existing programs which have demonstrated effectiveness
- Supported by numerous national, state and local organizations.

# Advocacy



*“The punishment of wise men who refuse to take part in the affairs of government is to live under the government of unwise men.”*

*Plato*

**WE NEED YOUR HELP TO PASS THIS  
HISTORIC LEGISLATION!!!!**

**Contact Congress—ask your Representatives to support H.R. 2906 and your Senators to support S. 3418. For legislative tools, tips and templates, go to:**

**[www.ncpgambling.org/advocacy](http://www.ncpgambling.org/advocacy)**

Wear With Pride



**FIGHT  
GAMBLING  
ADDICTION!**

**SUPPORT  
H.R. 2906  
S. 3418**

# Contact Information



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