

USC-SCAG Annual Demographic Workshop  
June 1, 2015

**Children's Doubled Importance  
in the New Generational Future  
of Orange County & California**

**Dowell Myers**

**USC** Sol Price  
School of Public Policy

# Demographic Assumptions Focused on Children

are Core to Public Beliefs about  
Services and Taxation  
and about

**Priorities for California Policy**

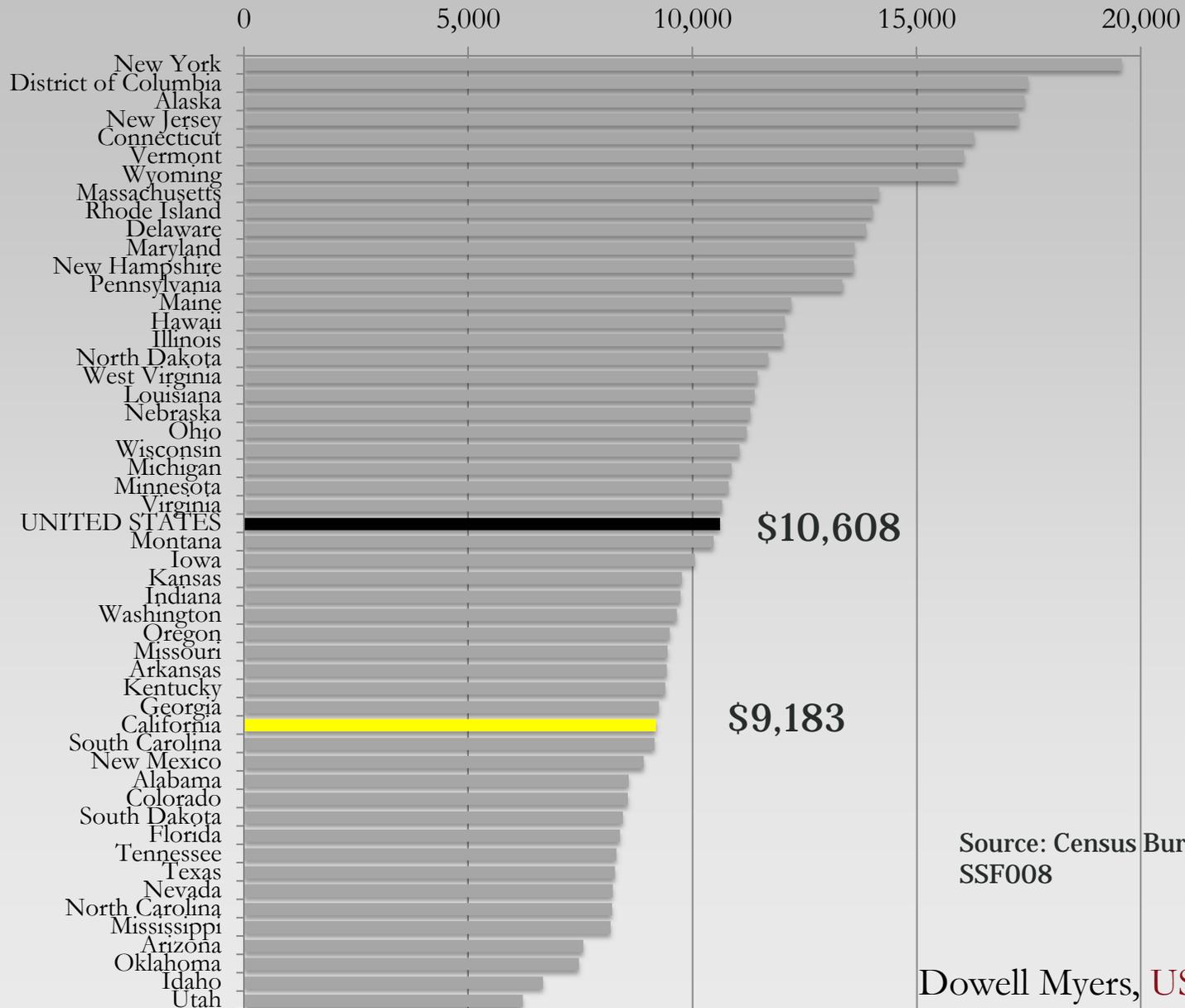
**Are assumptions outdated?  
How valid are they?**

# Old Social Understandings in California

- Children are Too Numerous
- Children are a Burden on the Taxpayers
- We Don't Need Other People's Kids
- We Don't Want to Support Them –  
especially if they are ethnically different
- We Really Can't Afford It

**How Does  
California Compare on Spending  
to Other States?**

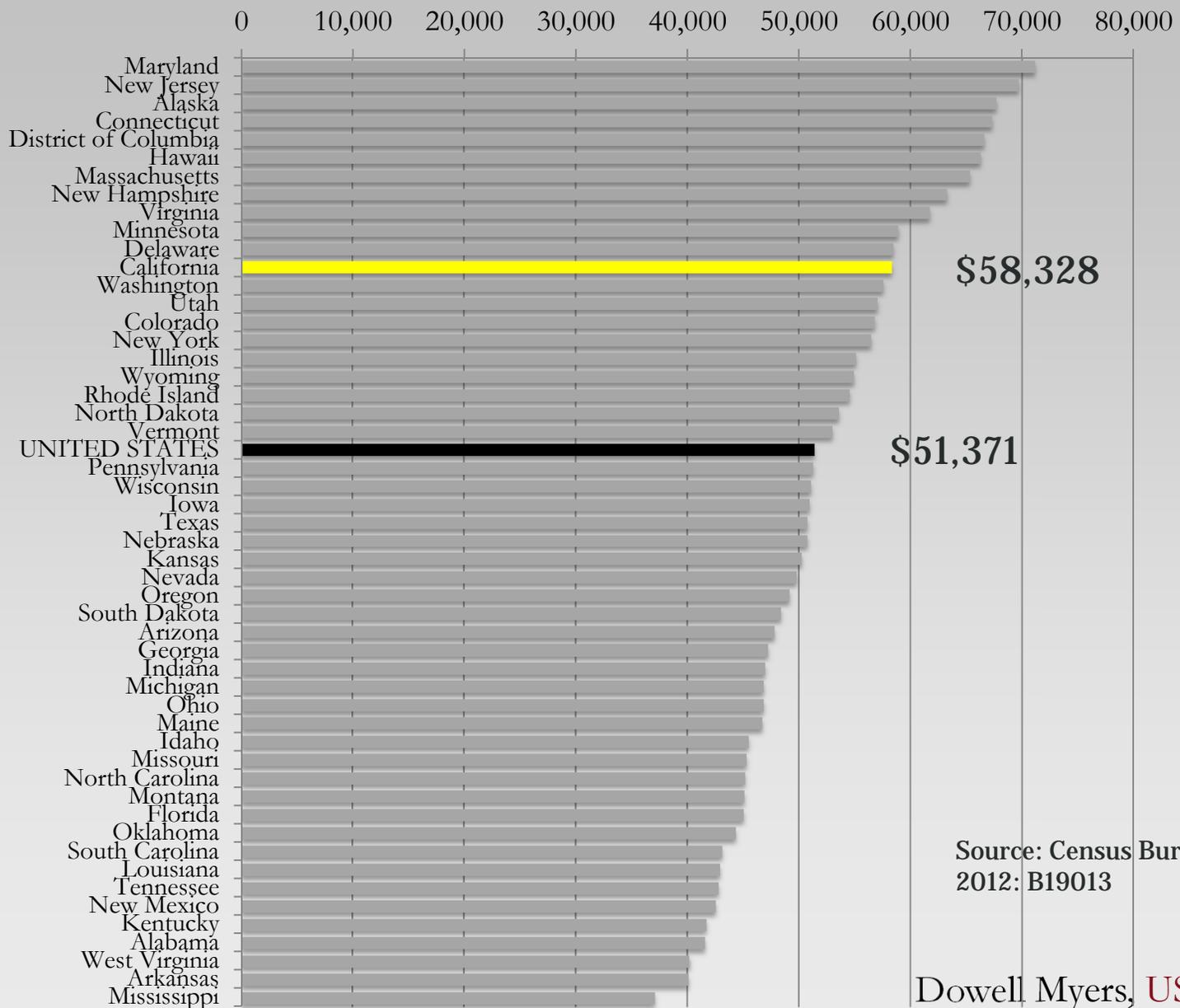
# K-12 Spending per Pupil, by State (2012)



Source: Census Bureau  
SSF008

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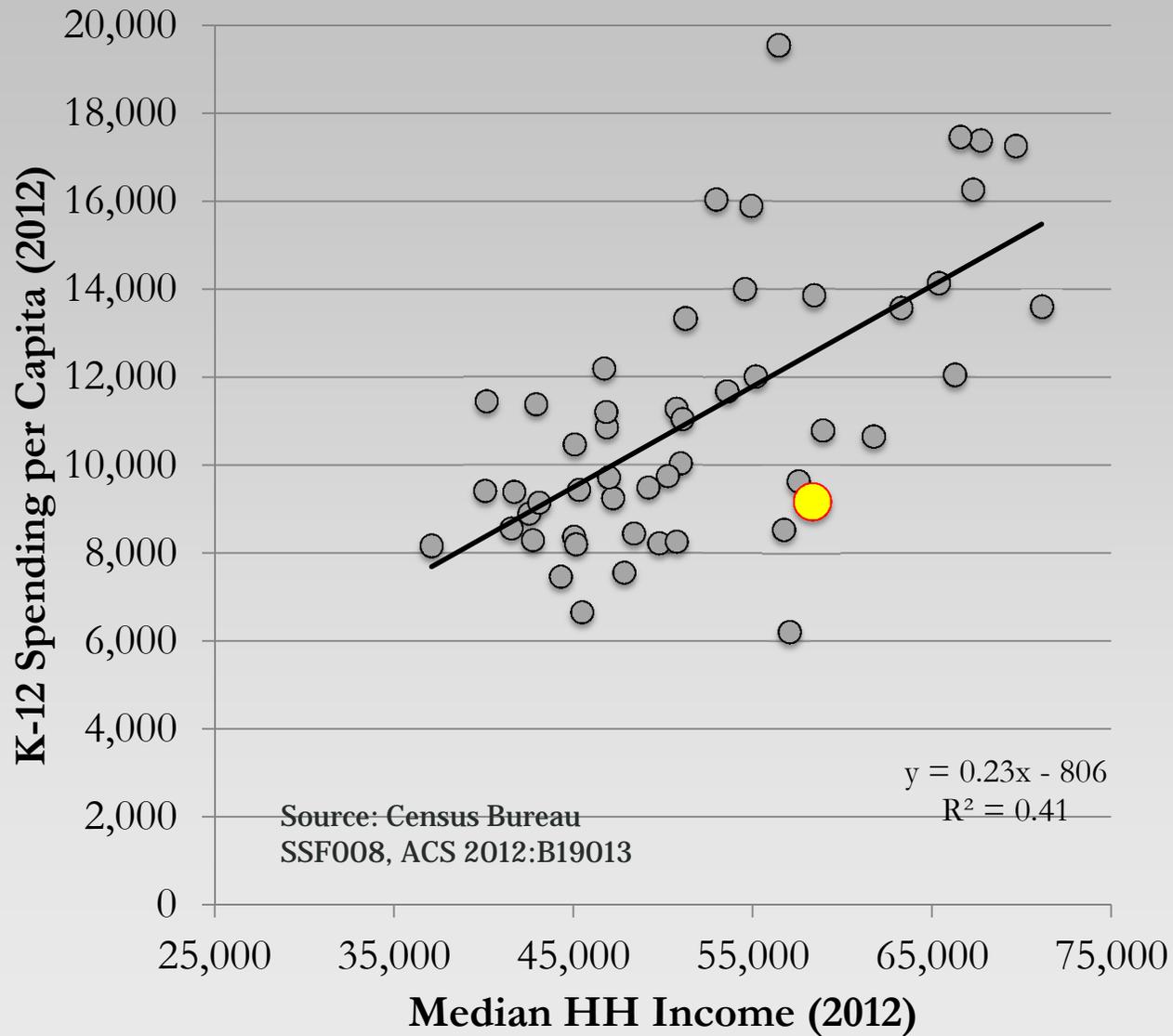
# Median Household Income, by State (2012)



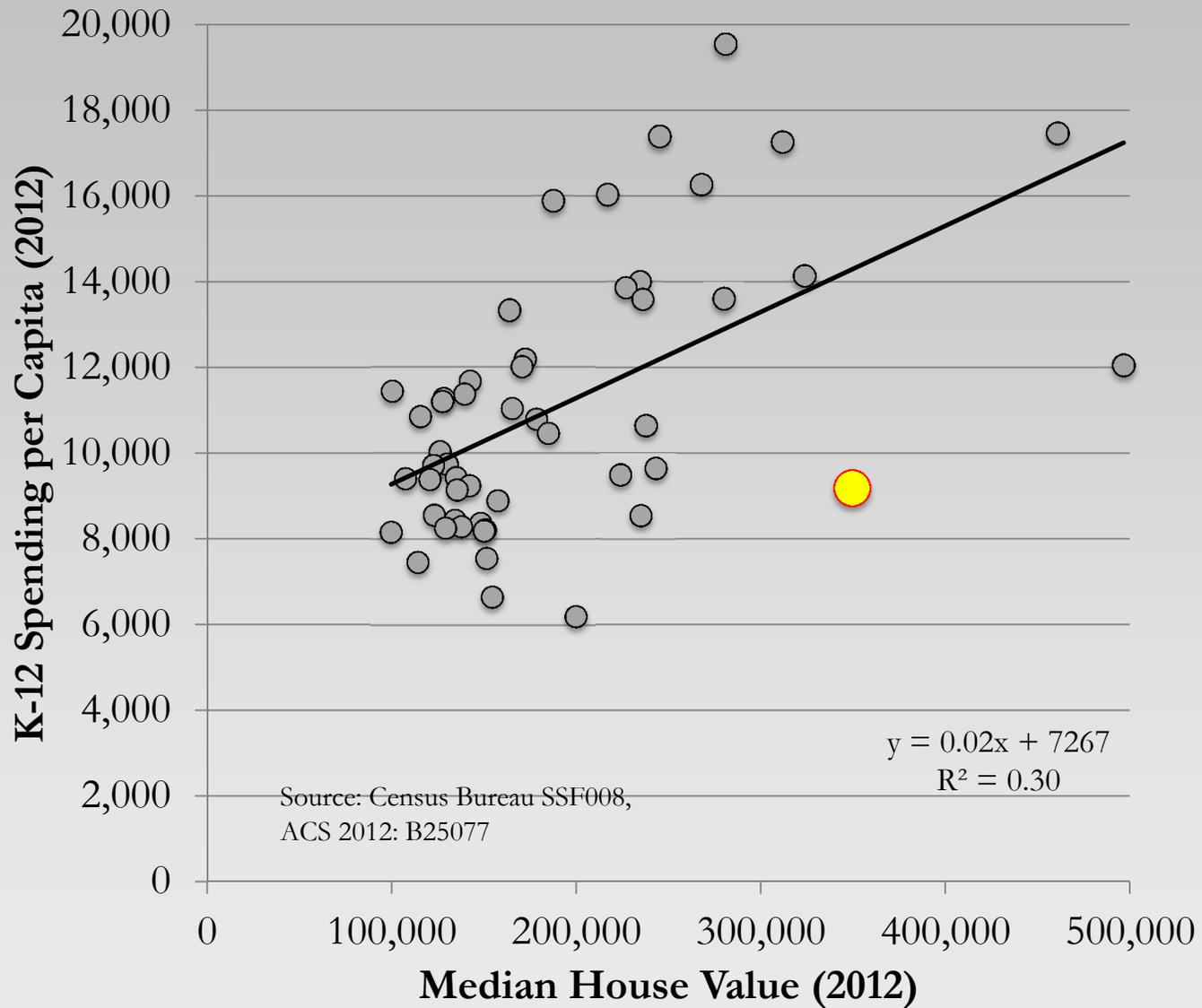
Source: Census Bureau ACS  
2012: B19013

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# K-12 Spending and Median State Income



# K-12 Spending and Median House Value



Source: Census Bureau SSF008,  
ACS 2012: B25077

$$y = 0.02x + 7267$$
$$R^2 = 0.30$$

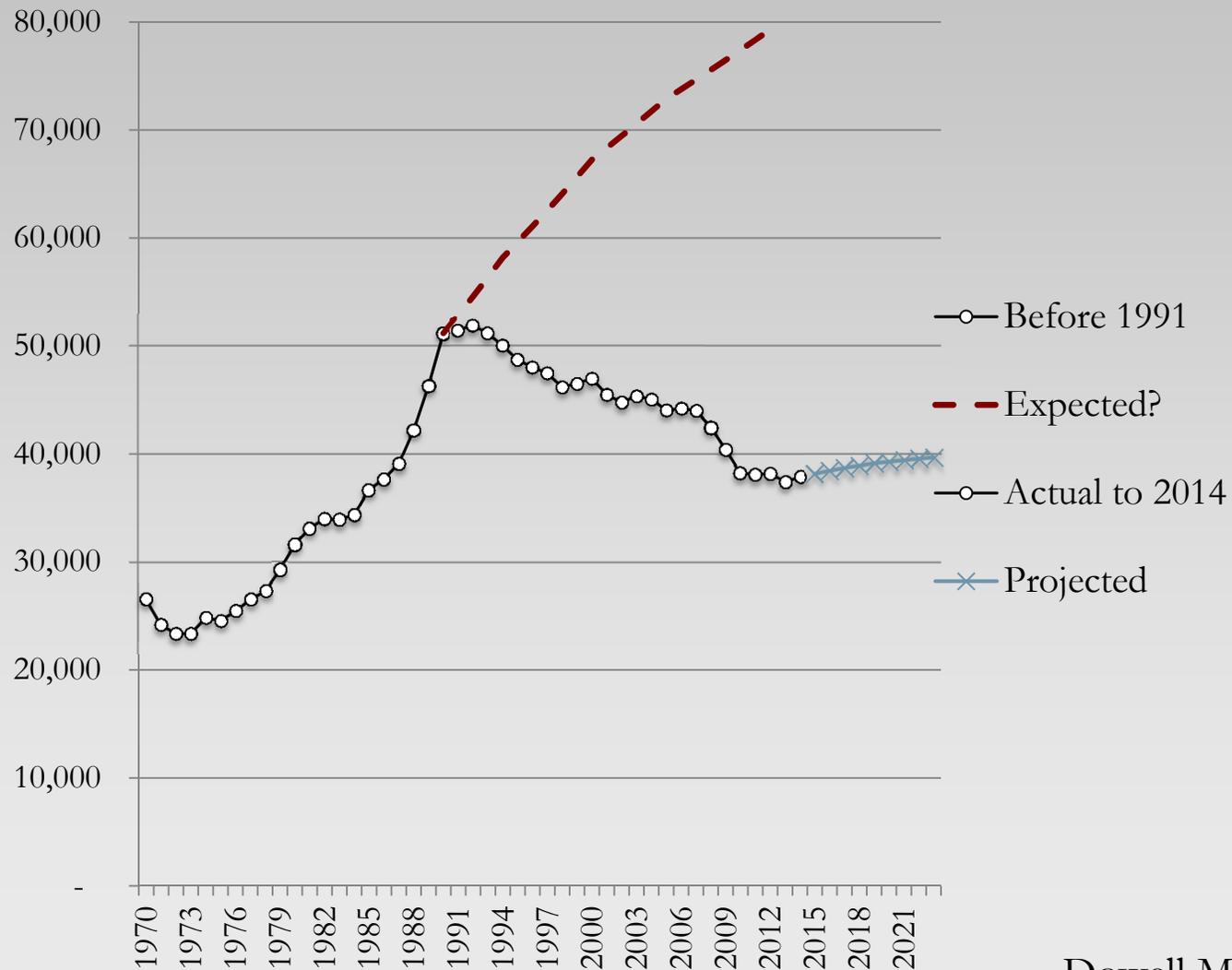
So, what IS the social understanding  
about **spending on children**  
that we are working under?

What IF our assumptions  
are outdated

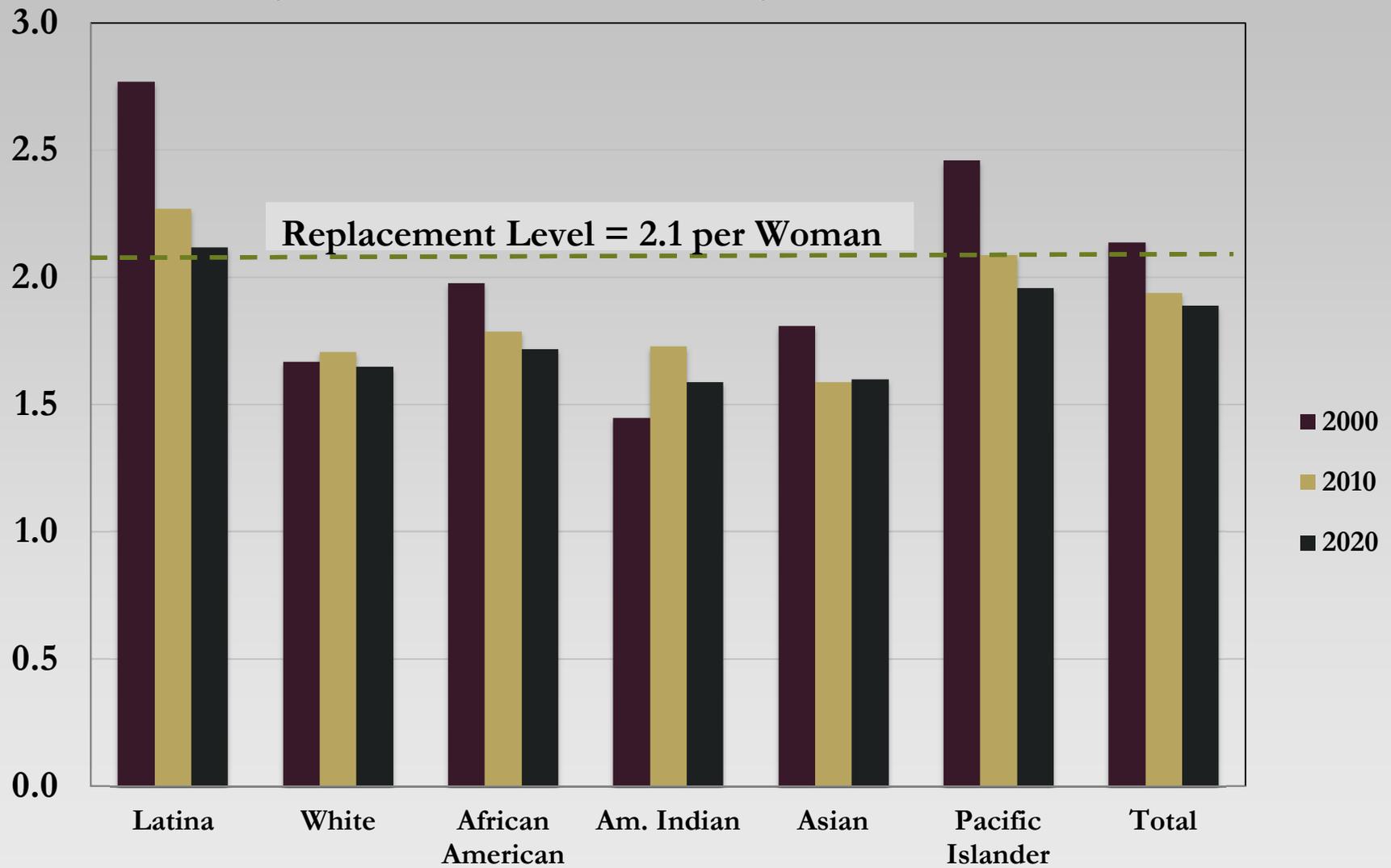
and our social understanding is  
**Now – All – Wrong?**

# High Fertility and Growing Numbers of Children

# Number of Babies Born in Orange County



# Number of Children Born per Woman, by Race/Ethnicity, California

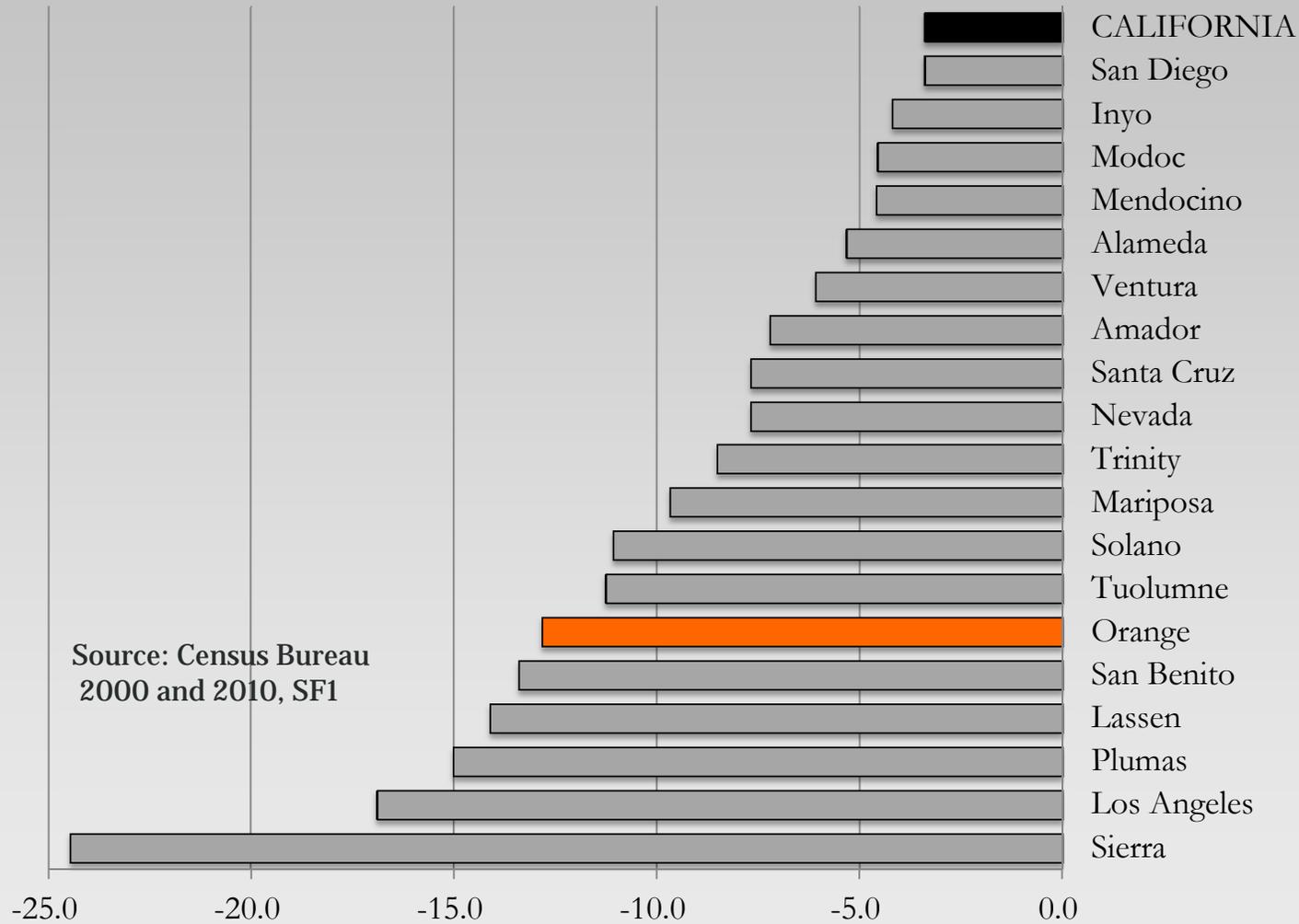


Source: California Department of Finance

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# Losses of Children Under Age 10

Among Counties with Losses Greater than the State Average  
2000 to 2010



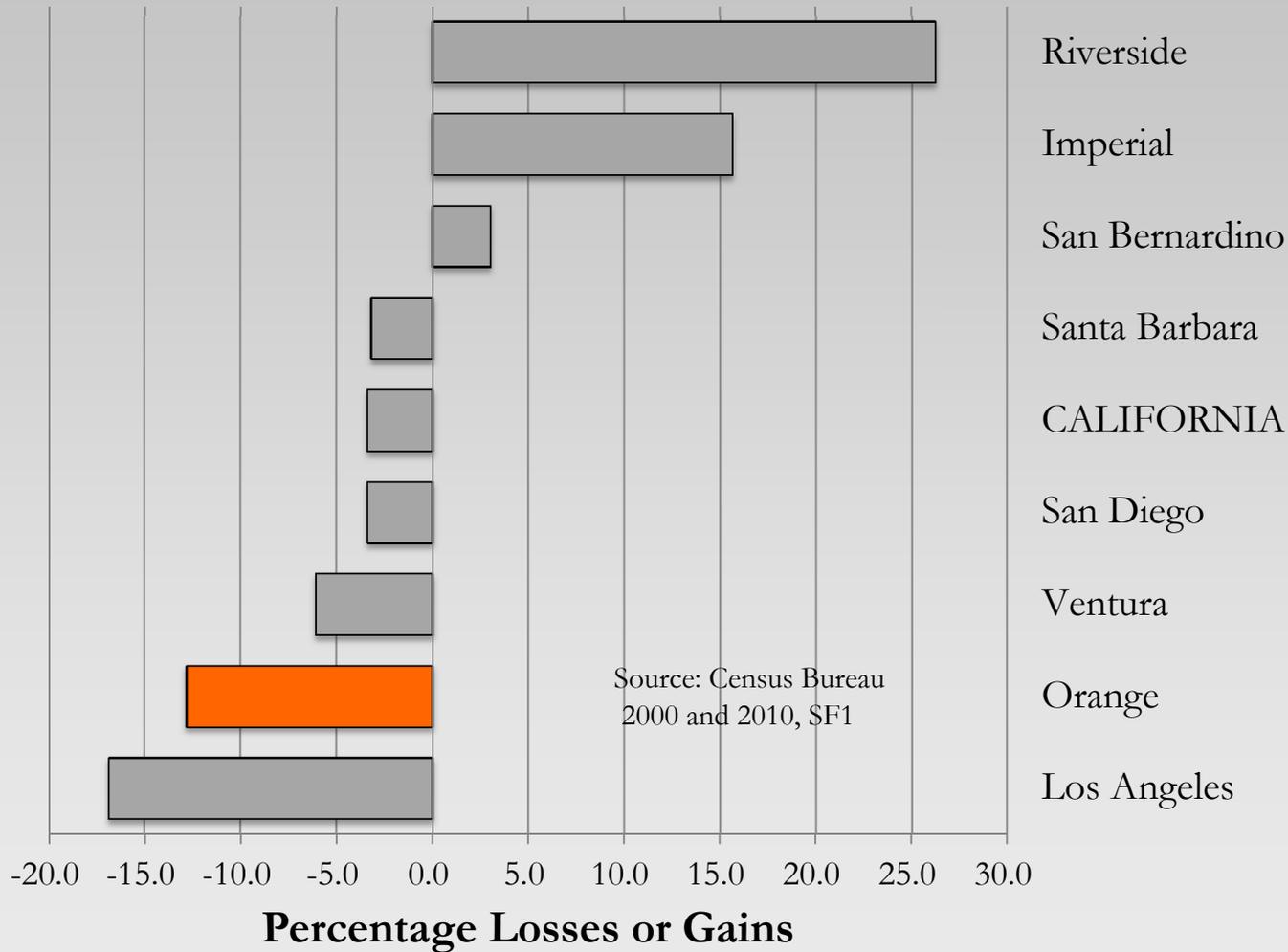
Source: Census Bureau  
2000 and 2010, SF1

Percentage Losses

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# Losses of Children Under Age 10

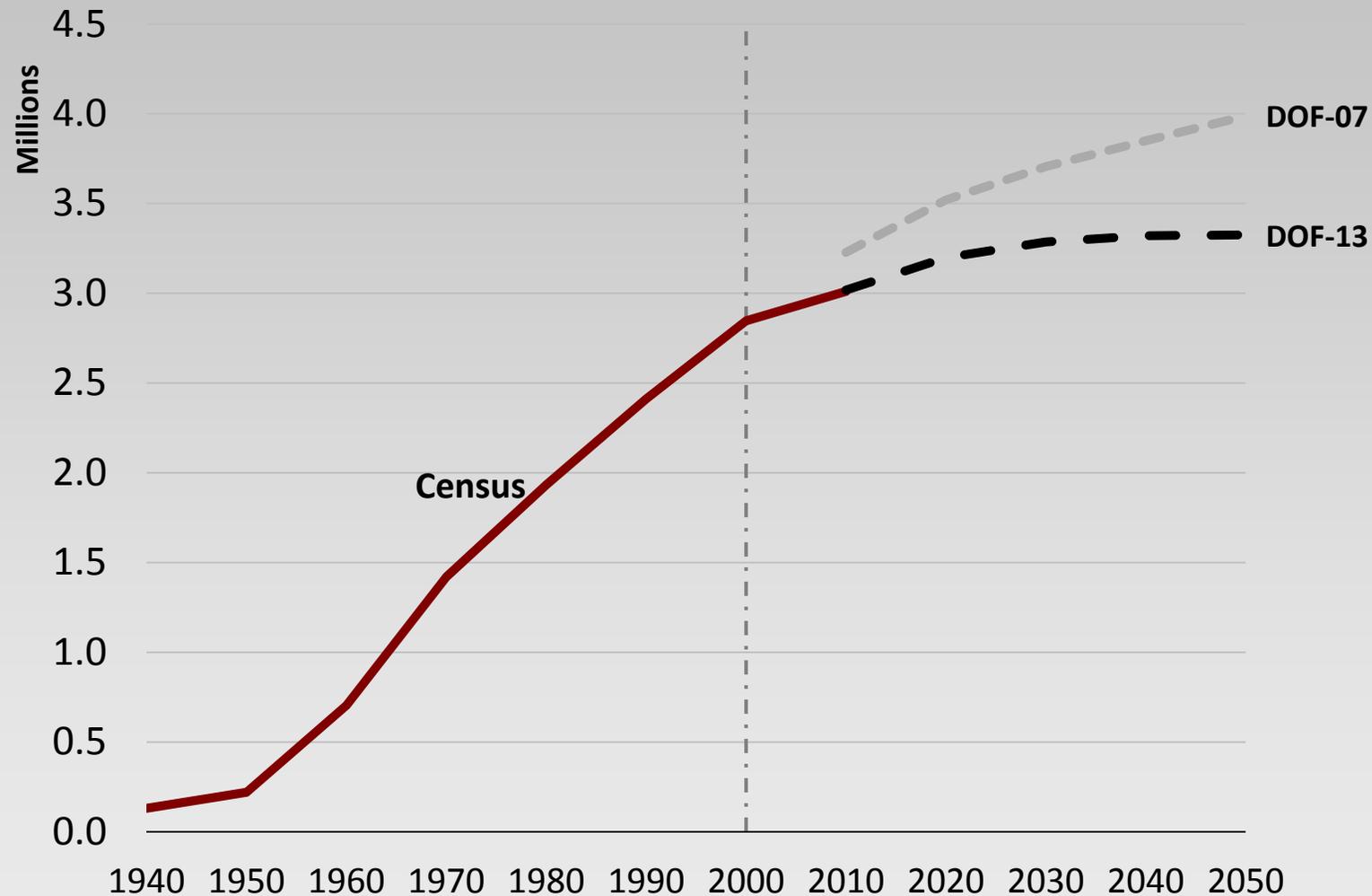
Among Counties of Southern California  
2000 to 2010



# Generation Revolution

# Total Population of Orange County

How Much Will Growth Resurge?



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# Population Slowdown and Aging

## What Year Does Orange County Reach 3.5 Million Population?

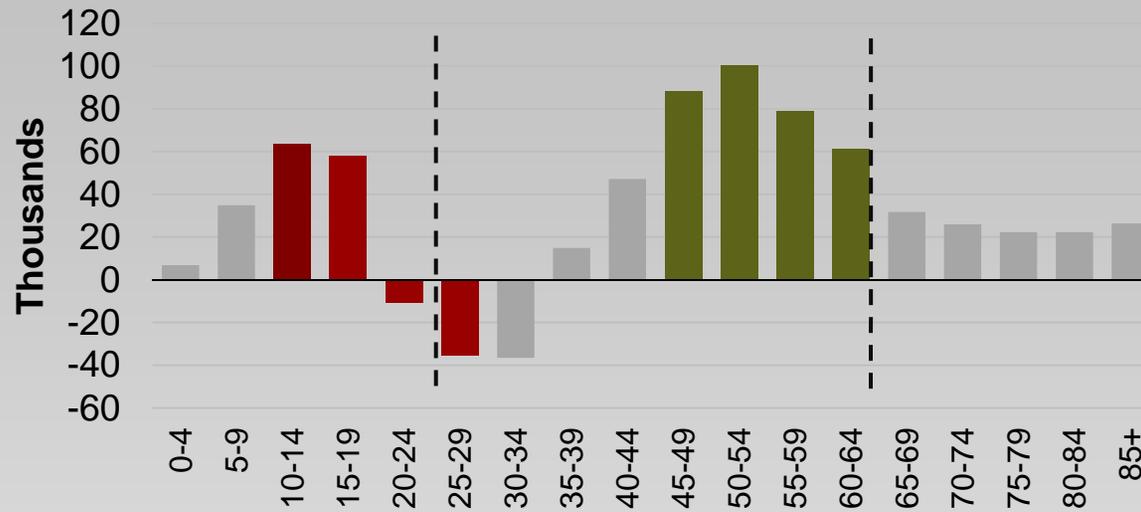
- Old Expectation = 2017
- New Outlook = never

Source:

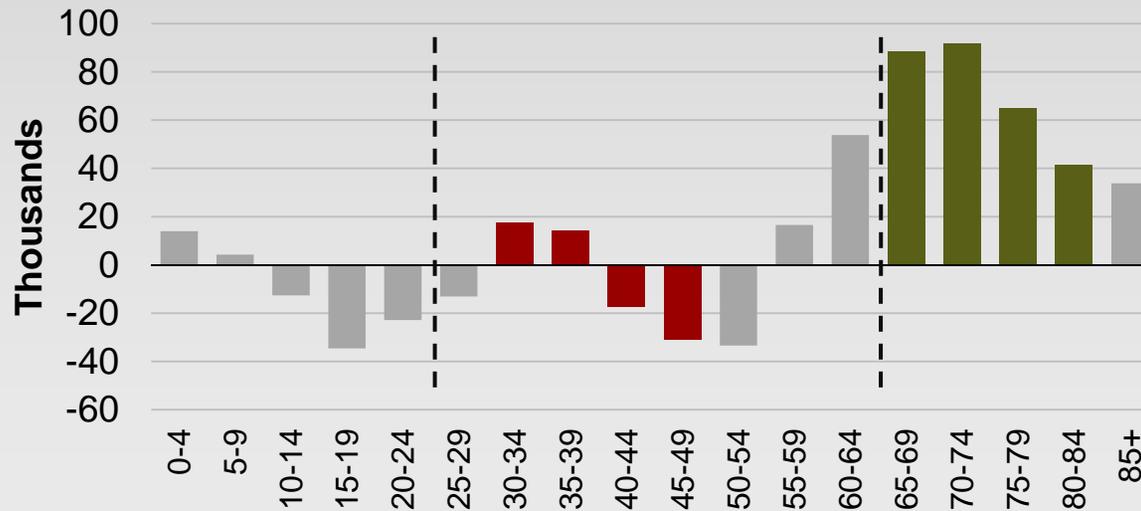
California Department of Finance, 2007 and 2013

# Growth in Age Groups in Orange County

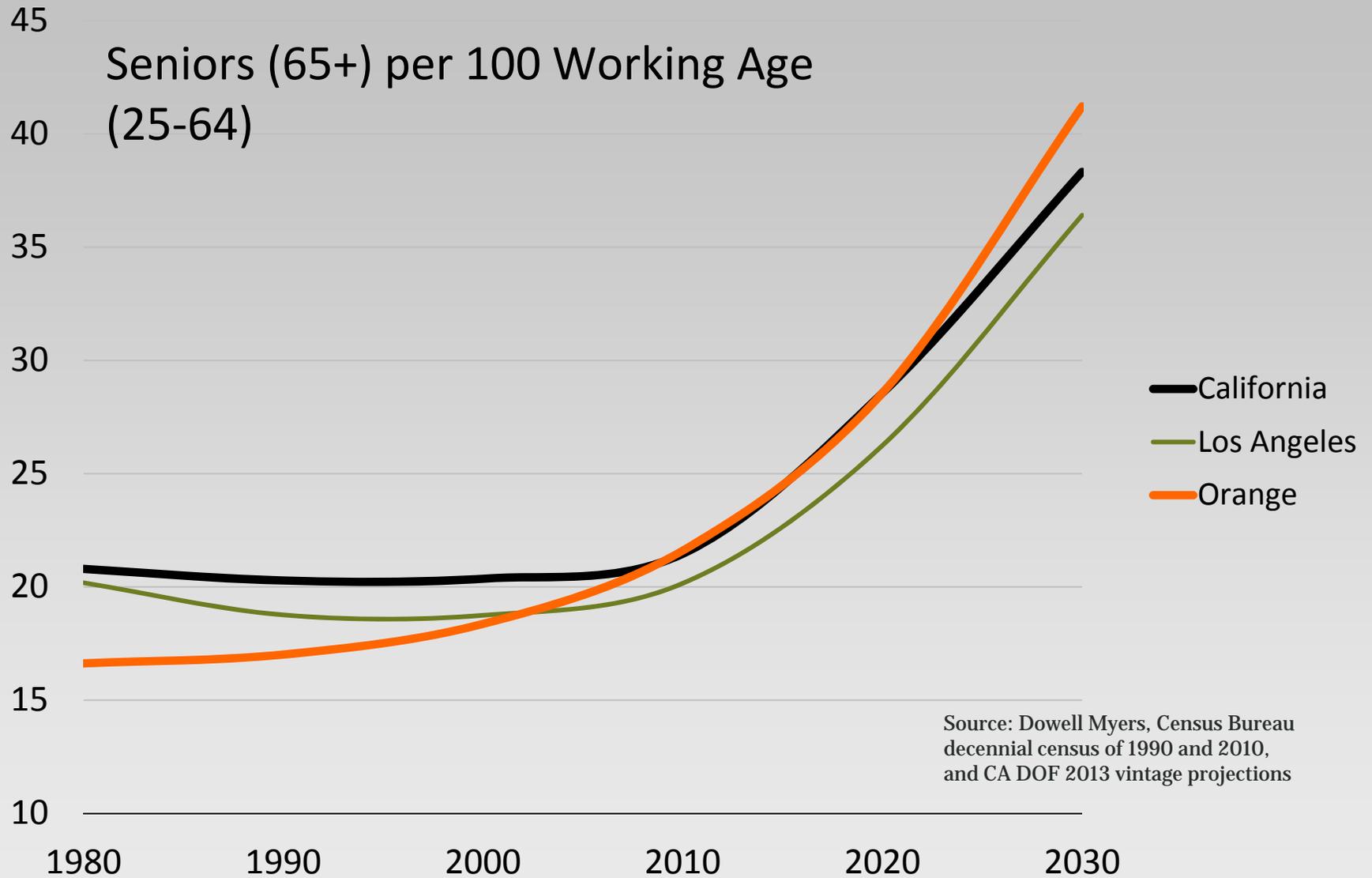
1990 - 2010



2010 - 2030



# Senior Ratio Soars



Source: Dowell Myers, Census Bureau decennial census of 1990 and 2010, and CA DOF 2013 vintage projections

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# Likely Responses to Rising Senior Ratio

- Reduced growth in GDP
- Delayed retirement by seniors
- Reduced or delayed senior benefits
- Higher taxes on young and old
- **Young adults in supreme demand !**
- **Greater reliance on immigrant workers**
- **Rediscovery of neglected minority youth**

# No Youth Can be Neglected

- Need all hands on deck
- No drop outs are acceptable
- College financial aid for all who need it
- **Universal pre-school and early childhood literacy – major lifetime benefits**
- This is not just a nice thing to do:  
**Older Californians need this to happen**

# Measuring the Growing Importance of Children

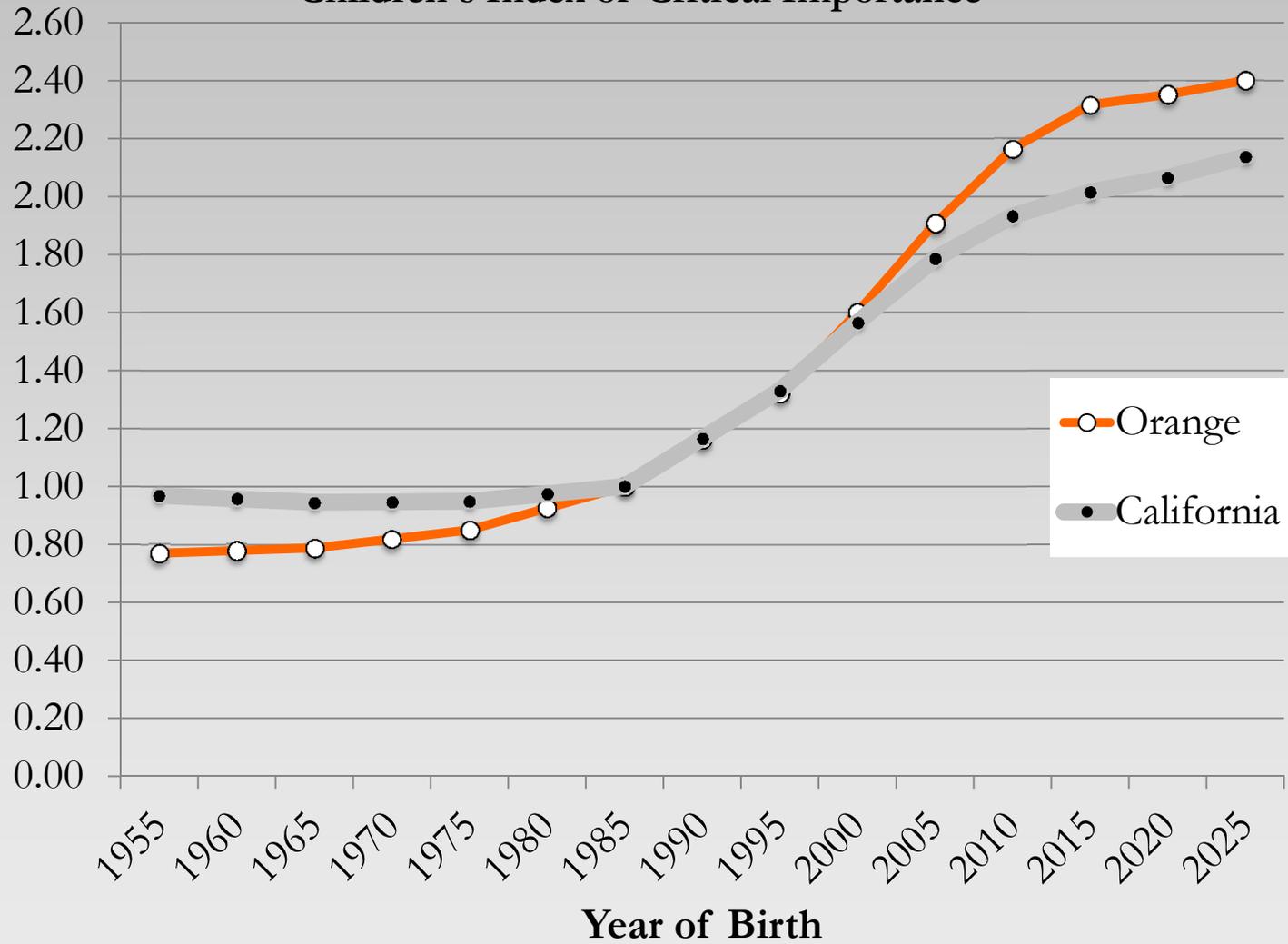
# Children's Index of Critical Importance (iCi)

- Assigned at birth, the iCi is based on the increase in the senior ratio expected at the time the child reaches age 25 (number of seniors per 100 working age).
- With growth in seniors, today's children assume critical importance due to the added economic and social weight carried by our children when grown.
- A child born in 2015 in California is fully **twice as important** (index of 2.02) as a child who was born in 1985 (index of 1.00).

# Surging Importance of Children

iCi

Children's Index of Critical Importance



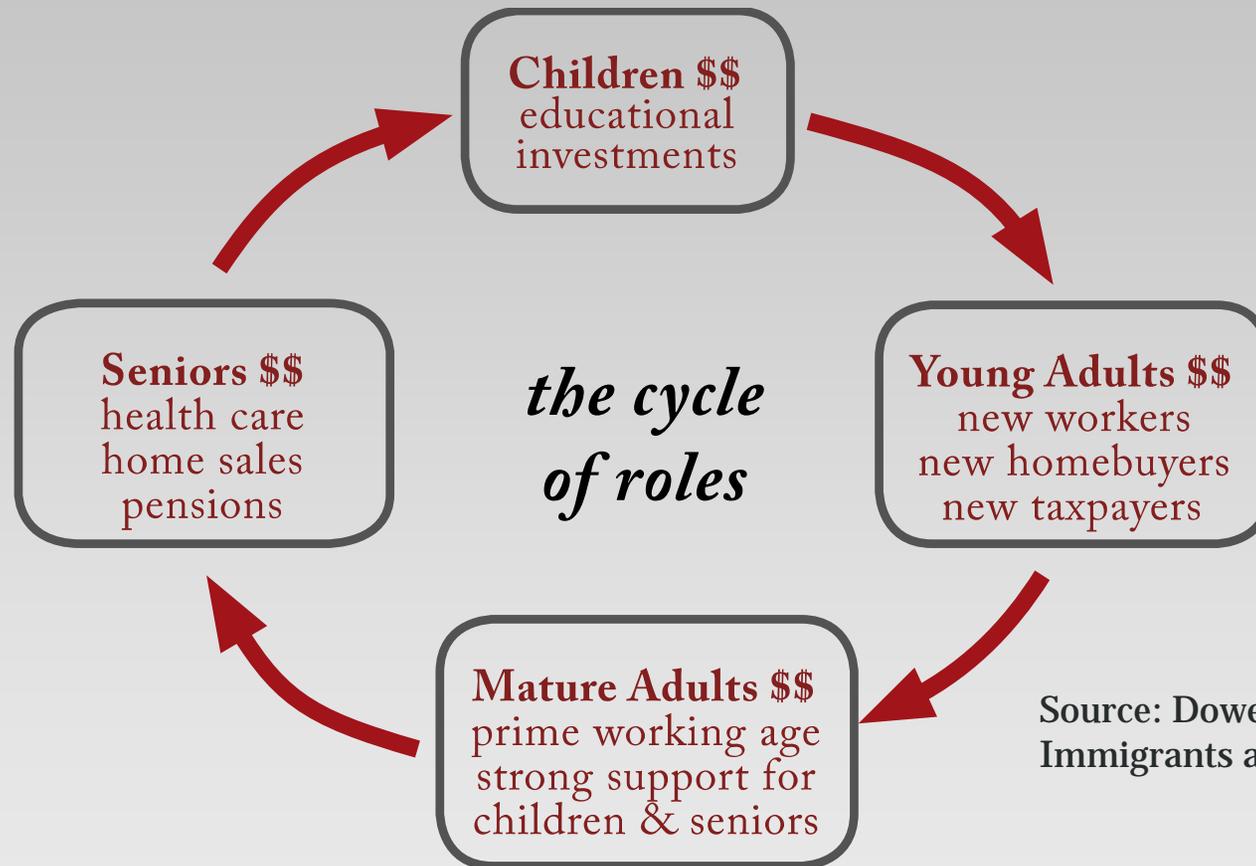
Source: Dowell Myers analysis of US Census and  
DOF 2013 California projections

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**A New Social Contract**

**for the New Generational  
Future of California**

# The Intergenerational Partnership Rediscovered



# Conclusions

Kids are scarce and we must rely on our homegrown more than ever.

Twice as valuable as before, it is newly urgent that we nurture children to achieve their very best.

Major mutual benefits call all Californians to step up their support of children in every way possible.

**Now can we just get  
everyone  
on the same page?**

**We are connected.**

*Thank you*

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Information on**

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# Publications Referenced in this Presentation

Myers, Dowell, “California Futures: New Narratives for a Changing Society,” *Boom: A Journal of California*, July 2012.

Pitkin, John and Dowell Myers, “Generational Projections of the California Population: By Nativity and Year of Immigrant Arrival,” USC Population Dynamics Research Group, April 2012.

Myers, Dowell, “California's Diminishing Resource: Children,” Lucile Packard Foundation for Children's Health, January 2013.

Myers, Dowell, “Benefits for California and Its Growing Number of Seniors of Expanded Youth 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, USC 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.

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

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