

# Military and Veteran Families' Well-Being: Focus on Spouse Employment

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# Why be concerned with Spouse Employment?

- Well-being of Military Personnel, Veterans, and their Families affected by Spouses' Earnings and Employment Satisfaction
- Virginia is home to large proportion of military personnel, veterans, and spouses
- Military spouses have serious employment disadvantages (and they may be cumulative)
- Many veterans (including those disabled) rely on spouse's earnings

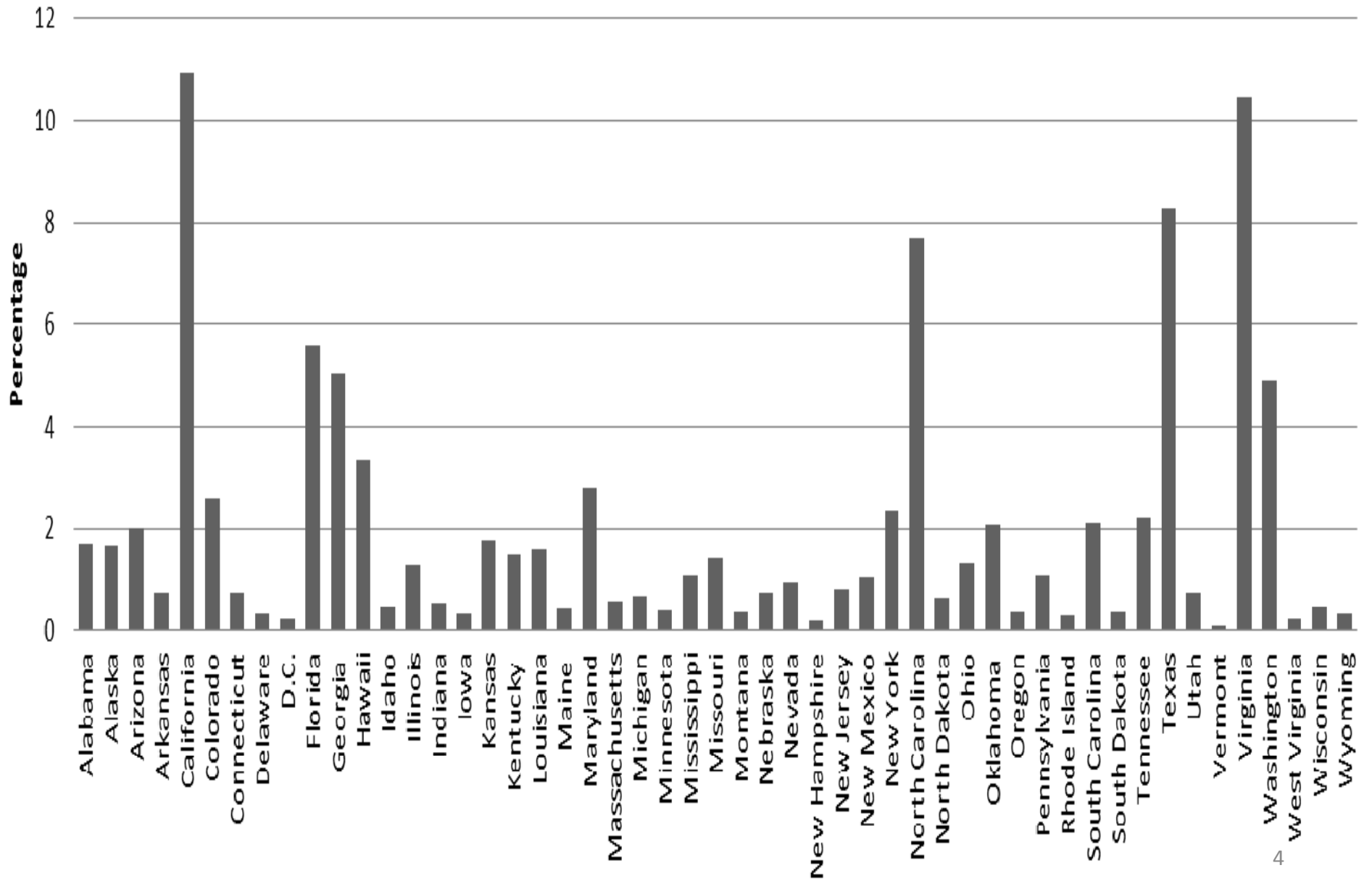
# Data Source

Data from the American Community Survey 2005-2009

Prepared for the Office of the First Lady by:  
Mary K. Kniskern & Dr. David R. Segal  
2011

This is the source for statistics and graphs.  
Other findings and conclusions derive from  
additional research.

# Percentage of Military Wives Residing in Each State



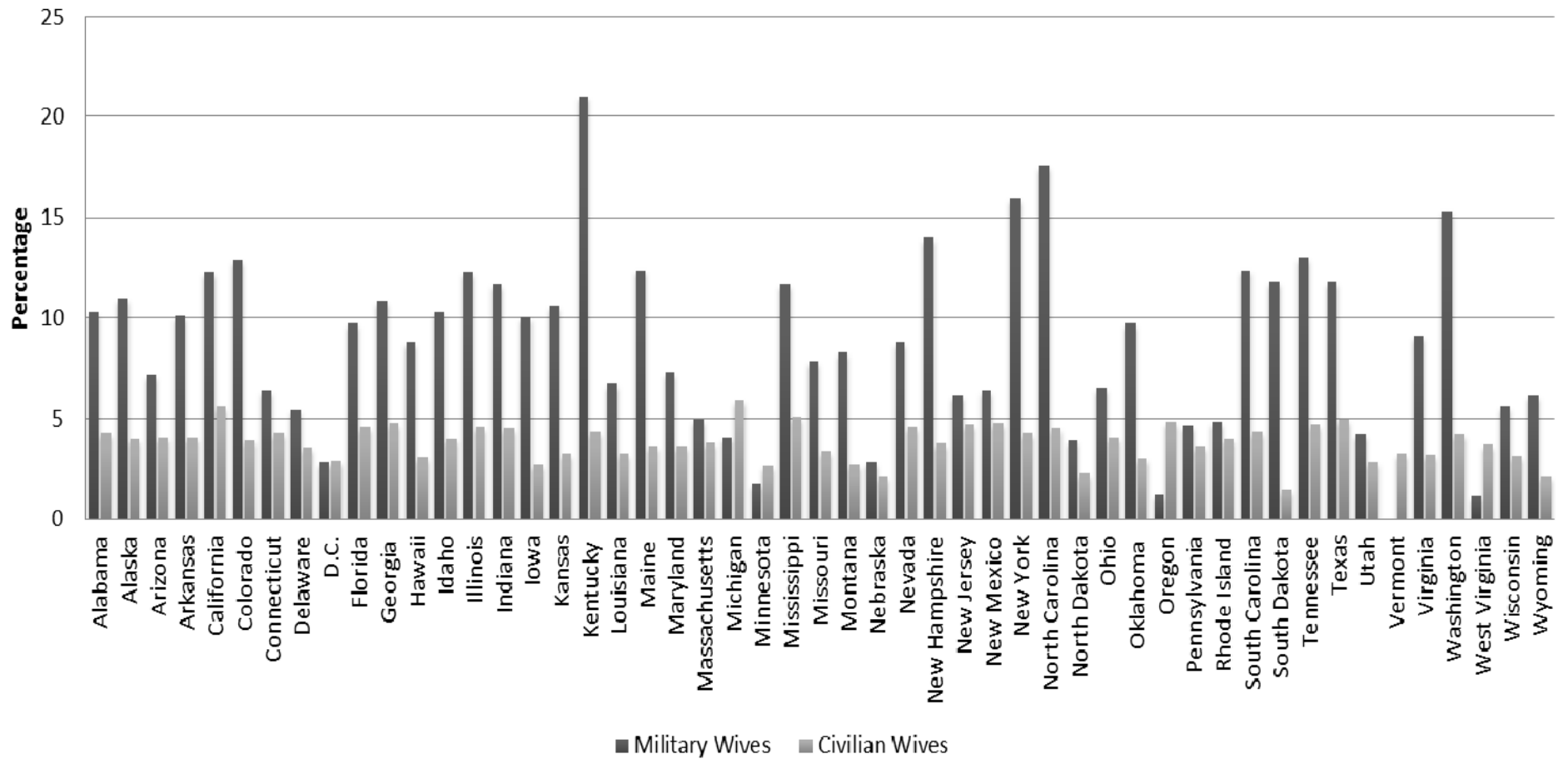
# Labor Force Participation of Married Women (U.S.)

- Military wives are less likely than their civilian counterparts to be employed
  - This finding holds regardless of their education or whether they have moved in past year
  - If employed, military wives are less likely to be employed full-time

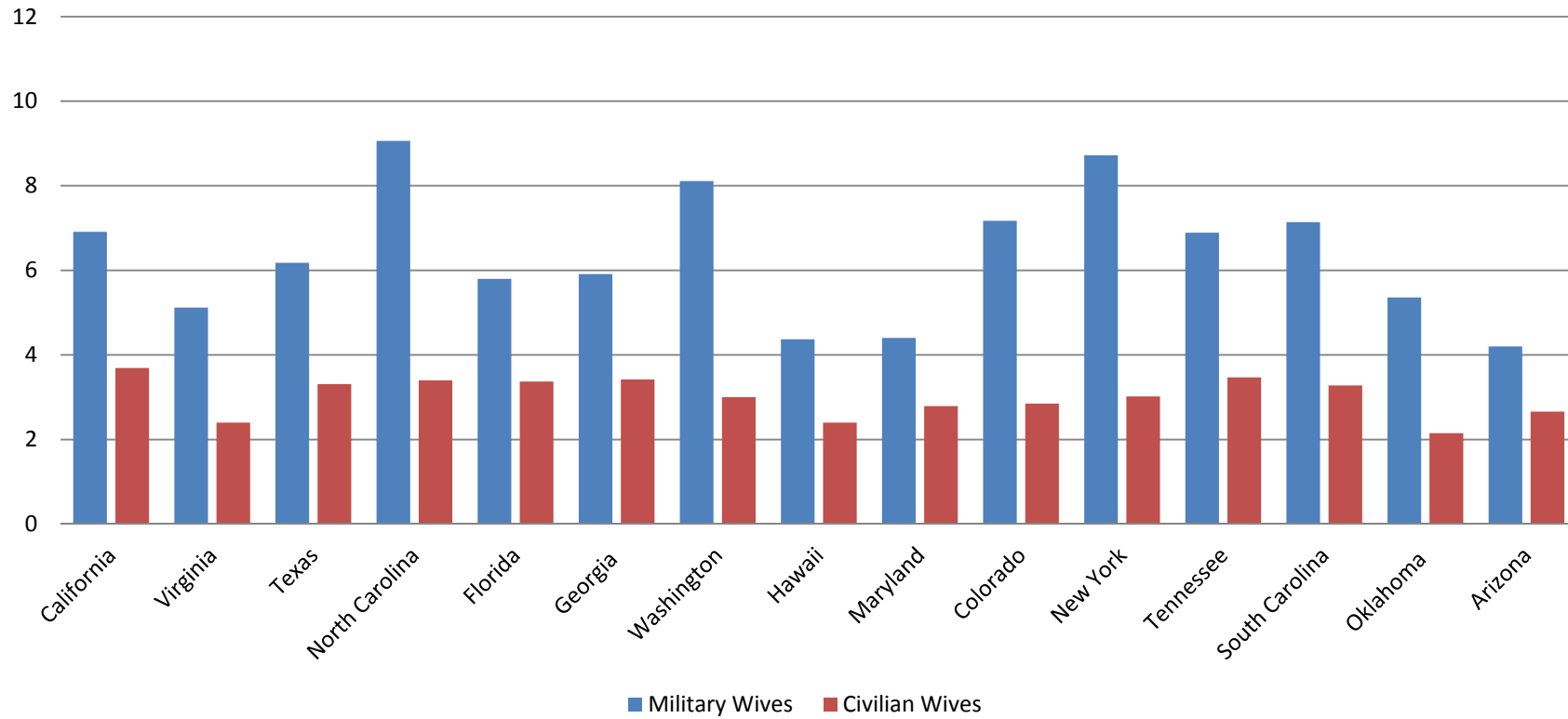
# Unemployment of Military Wives (U.S.)

- Higher percentages of military wives unemployed (not employed, but seeking work) than wives of civilian men

# Unemployment Among Military and Civilian Wives in the Labor Force



## Percentage of Married Women Unemployed in States Where Most Military Wives Reside



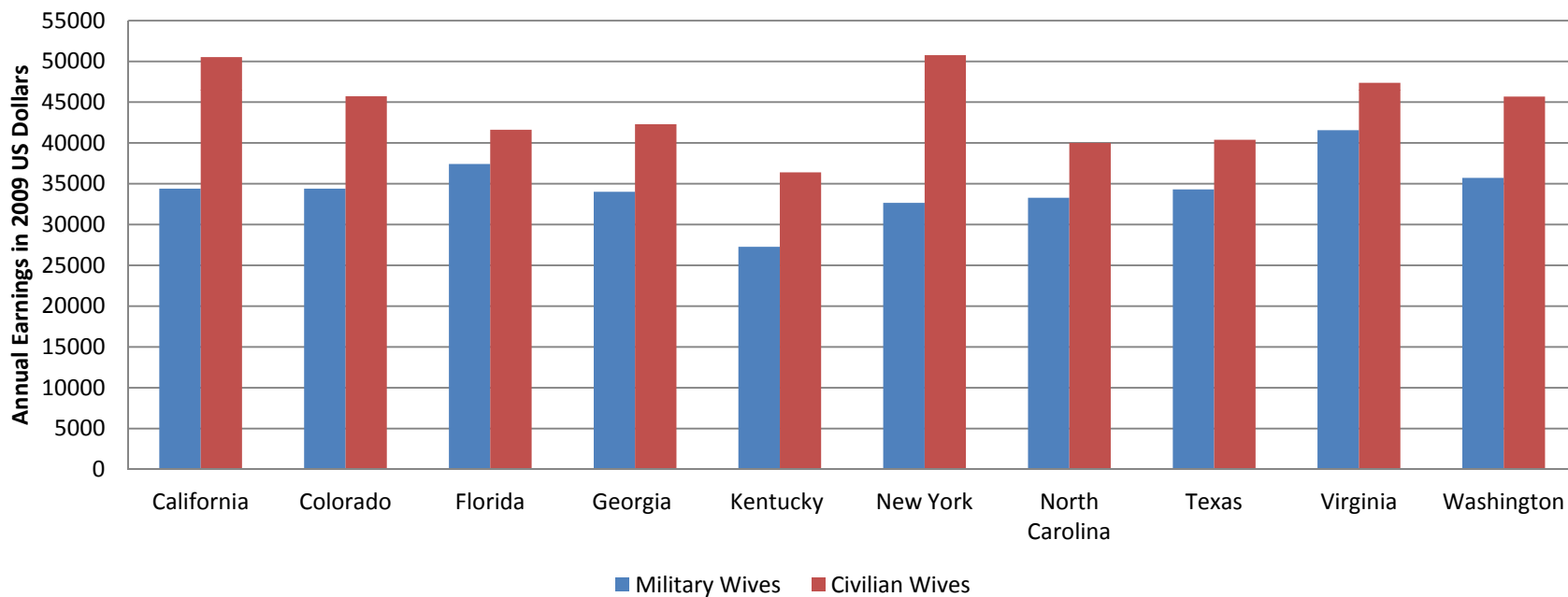


## Percentage of Married Women Unemployed in States Where Most Military Spouses Reside

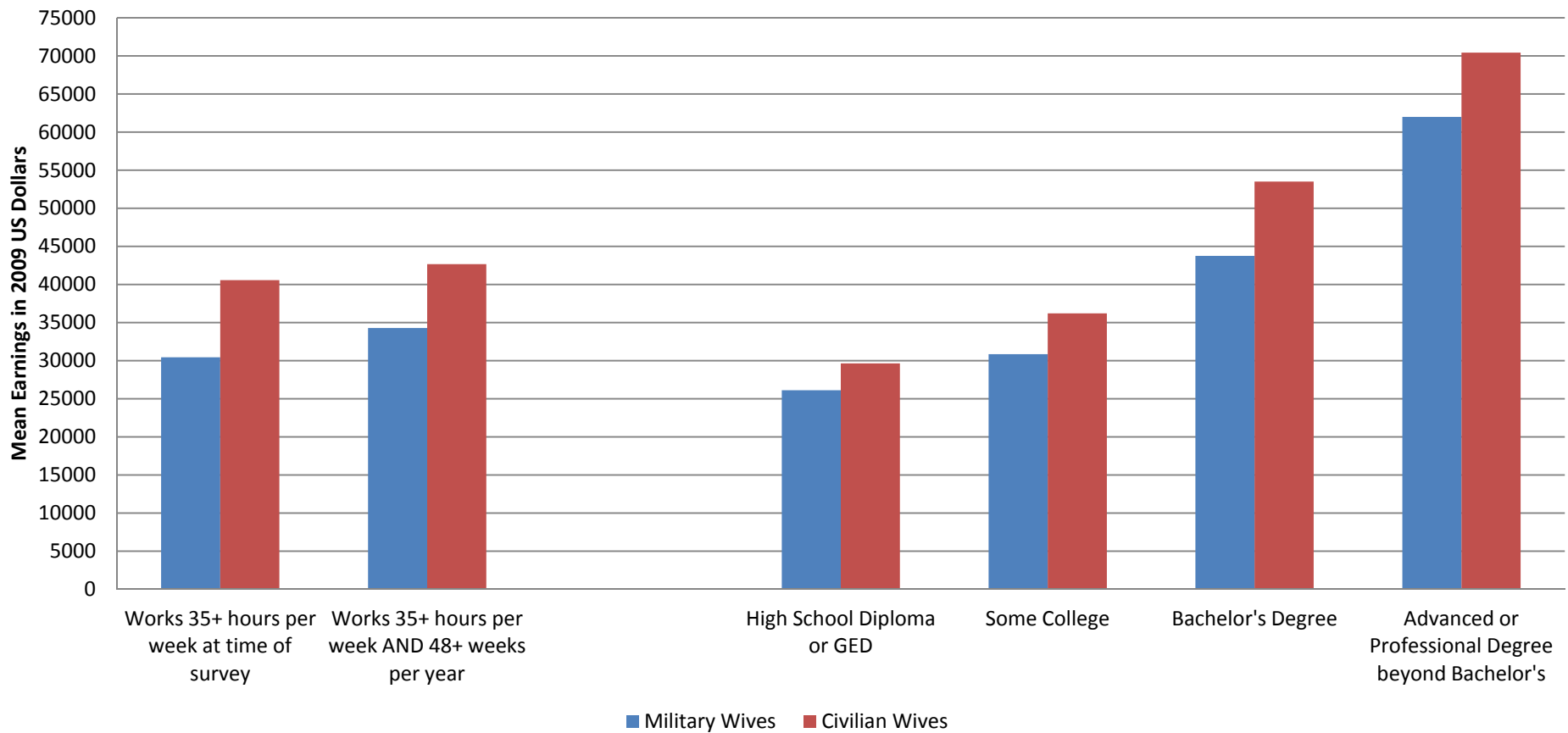
|                | Military   | Civilian   | % Mil Spouses     |
|----------------|------------|------------|-------------------|
| State          | Unemployed | Unemployed | Residing in State |
| California     | 6.91       | 3.69       | 10.95             |
| Virginia       | 5.12       | 2.4        | 10.45             |
| Texas          | 6.18       | 3.31       | 8.26              |
| North Carolina | 9.06       | 3.4        | 7.68              |
| Florida        | 5.8        | 3.37       | 5.56              |
| Georgia        | 5.91       | 3.42       | 5.02              |
| Washington     | 8.11       | 3          | 4.91              |
| Hawaii         | 4.37       | 2.4        | 3.33              |
| Maryland       | 4.4        | 2.79       | 2.79              |
| Colorado       | 7.17       | 2.85       | 2.6               |
| New York       | 8.72       | 3.02       | 2.35              |
| Tennessee      | 6.89       | 3.47       | 2.21              |
| South Carolina | 7.14       | 3.28       | 2.1               |
| Oklahoma       | 5.36       | 2.15       | 2.07              |
| Arizona        | 4.2        | 2.66       | 2.02              |



Comparison of Mean Earnings between Military and Civilian Wives  
Employed Full-time and Year-Round , by State  
Married Women, Ages 18-46, with Husbands Employed Full-time  
Data: American Communities Survey 2005-2009



Comparison of Mean Earnings between Military and Civilian Wives Employed Full-time  
 Married Women, Ages 18-46, with Husbands Employed Full-time  
 Data: American Communities Survey 2005-2009



## Differences in Earnings between Military and Civilian Wives

- **Overall wage gap** between **civilian and military wives** is **42%**.
  - This gap represents both substantially lower labor force participation by military wives, and lower earnings for employment.
- Among **households that moved** year prior to survey, wage gap is over **47%**
- Among **employed wives**, civilian wives earn **27%** more than military wives.
- Overall earnings gap between civilian and military wives **employed full-time** is **25%**
- Geographic mobility decreases labor force participation and earnings from employment through
  - difficulty finding employment in new location
  - decreased job tenure

# Effects of high military presence in local labor market on women's earnings

- The greater the % of local labor market that is active duty, the lower the earnings of women
- This result holds even controlling for other variables, e.g., age, education, race, years of job experience, numbers and ages of children
- Women married to military men earn less than women married to full-time employed civilian men

Source: Booth, Bradford. 2003. "Contextual Effects of Military Presence on Women's Earnings." *Armed Forces & Society* 30:25-52.

# Civilian Husbands of Military Women

Research presented so far covers only civilian wives of military men (more than 85% of civilian spouses of military personnel).

Other research compares civilian husbands of military women to civilian wives of military men

- Male military spouses (civilian husbands of military women) earn more than their female counterparts
- But these husbands are more dissatisfied with their employment than are civilian wives of military men
- Source: Cooney, Richard, Karin De Angelis, and Mady W. Segal. 2011. "Moving With the Military: Race, Class, and Gender Differences in the Employment Consequences of Tied Migration". *Race, Gender and Class* 18, No. 1-2: 360-384.

# Negative Effects of Moving on Military Spouse Employment

- Increases unemployment
- Decreases wages
- Decreases satisfaction with employment

## Geographic mobility measures:

- Number of moves
- Time between moves
- Time at current location

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# Military Spouse Employment Programs

First federal efforts:

- Writing resume'
- Dressing for job interviews
- Behavior at job interviews

This helps, but **not** effective if:

- There are not enough jobs
- Jobs available do not match spouse skill level
- State licensing requirements hinder employment (especially after moving)

# Other Existing and Proposed Employment Efforts

For veterans, military spouses, and military children of working age

- Public- private partnerships to create jobs  
Example: Building on installations for use by private employers – in exchange for training/hiring veterans and military family members
- Tax incentives for employers to train and hire military and veteran family members
- Building/low rent on state property for use by employers of veterans and military/veteran family members
- In-state tuition for veteran and military family members

# Other Recommendations

- Conduct research on military personnel and families in the state to determine needs and programs likely to fulfill those needs
- Build evaluations into program plans
- Update data on spouse employment
- Measure veterans' and military/veteran spouses' awareness of programs
- In determining program needs and evaluation, analyze differences by education, race, age, gender, time at current location, etc.

# Questions and Comments

- **Supplementary slides follow**



# **Moving with the Military: Race, Class, and Gender Differences in the Employment Consequences of Tied Migration**

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**Mady Wechsler Segal**

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# Mobility & Satisfaction w/ Job Opportunities



|                     | <b>SATISFACTION WITH JOB OPPORTUNITIES</b>  |
|---------------------|---|
| <b>OVERALL</b>      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 28.5% of spouses were dissatisfied &amp; 17.2% were very dissatisfied with opportunities (= 45.7% DS)</li> <li>- For each additional year at current location, the likelihood of being DS decreased by 5.6% (but stronger effect for minorities than for Whites).</li> </ul> |
| <b>GENDER</b>       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Likelihood of a civilian wife being DS is 35.3% lower than the likelihood of civilian husband being DS</li> </ul>  |
| <b>RACE</b>         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Asians and Whites do not differ significantly</li> <li>- Black spouses are 42.2% more likely than Whites to be DS</li> </ul>   |
| <b>CLASS</b>        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Enlisted spouses of all rank categories are significantly more likely to be DS than spouses of senior officers</li> </ul>  |
| <b>INTERSECTION</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Black women 49.7% more likely than White women to be DS</li> <li>- Black men do not differ significantly from White men</li> <li>- White women only half as likely as White men to be DS</li> <li>- Black women twice as likely as Black men to be DS</li> </ul>             |





# Mobility & Employment

|               | Employment   |
|---------------|--|
| <b>GENDER</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Women are 43.7% less likely to be employed than men</li> <li>- No significant difference in impact of mobility on employment</li> </ul>   |
| <b>RACE</b>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Black spouses are 22.1% more likely than White spouses to be employed</li> <li>- For every year at location, Whites likelihood of employment increases by 12.8%; for Black spouses, the increase is 56.5% per year</li> <li>- Unlike Whites, # of children not a significant determinant of Black spousal employment</li> </ul>   |
| <b>CLASS</b>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Spouses of junior enlisted personnel are 39.1%, spouses of midgrade enlisted are 73.9%, and spouses of senior enlisted are 77.4% more likely than spouses of field grade officers to be employed</li> <li>- No significant difference in employment rates among officer spouses (company grade v. field grade)</li> <li>- Mobility does not significantly affect officers' spouses, but spouses of enlisted members more likely to work with fewer moves</li> </ul> |



# Mobility & Earnings

|                     | Earnings   |
|---------------------|--|
| <b>OVERALL</b>      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Each move is associated with a 2% loss of earnings</li><li>- Every year increase in time between moves is associated with 1.3% increase in earnings; this increases to 2.6% after one year time on station</li></ul>                               |
| <b>GENDER</b>       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Women earn 17.6% less than men</li></ul>   |
| <b>RACE</b>         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Mobility differentially affects White and Asian spouses; White spouses lose about 2.4% per move, Asians receive a premium of 15.4% per move</li></ul>  |
| <b>CLASS</b>        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Enlisted spouses of all rank categories earn significantly less than officer spouses</li></ul>   |
| <b>INTERSECTION</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Black men do not differ significantly from White men</li><li>- Black women earn 28.4% more than White women</li><li>- White women earn 23% less than White men</li><li>- Black men and women do not differ significantly from each other</li></ul> |



# Potential Impact of Decreasing Geographic Mobility\*

| Group/Sub-Group     | Satisfaction with Opportunities | Employment    | Earnings        |
|---------------------|---------------------------------|---------------|-----------------|
| Men                 | +12.4%                          | +30.0%        | Not Significant |
| Women               | +8.7%                           | +20.0%        | +3.3%           |
| White               | +6.9%                           | +17.7%        | +2.4%           |
| Black               | +15.1%                          | +39.5%        | Not Significant |
| Spouses of Enlisted | +9.8%                           | +14.3%        | Not Significant |
| Spouses of Officers | +7.5%                           | +19.3%        | +1.6%           |
| <b>TOTAL</b>        | <b>+9.6%</b>                    | <b>+19.4%</b> | <b>+3.4%</b>    |

\* Average time between moves and time at current location increased by one year, number of moves decreased by one, all other variables held constant.

# Causes of Lower Employment Outcomes

- Moving (more frequently and longer distances)
- Local labor markets in vicinity of military installations
- Employer bias against hiring transient military spouses