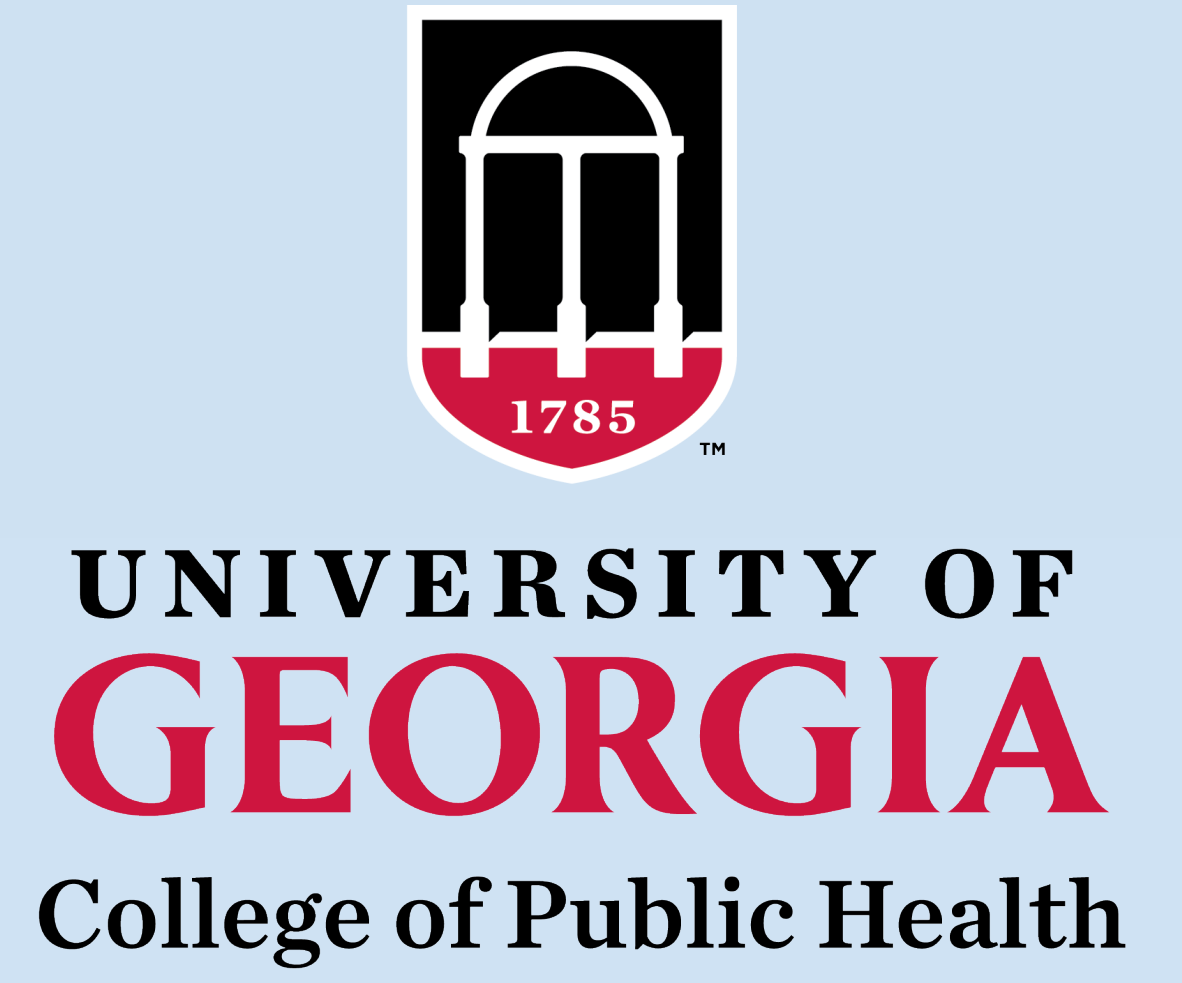




Twice as Deadly: Rural-Urban Disparities in Georgia Traffic Fatalities

Lila Ralston, MPH



Traffic Safety Research and Evaluation Group, University of Georgia, Athens, GA

Introduction

The traffic fatality rate per 100 million vehicle miles traveled is **more than twice as high** for rural Georgians (1.98) as for urban residents (0.97). In 2016, rural Georgians made up **17%** of the state's population, but **39%** of its traffic fatalities.

Data

Data set: Fatal crashes in Georgia in 2016 from the Fatality Analysis Reporting System (FARS)

Variables: Age, restraint use, crash type, crash time, transport to hospital/DOA, vehicle age, speeding, alcohol involvement

Circumstances are Different

The proportion of vehicle occupants 65 and older was **55% higher** in rural fatal crashes

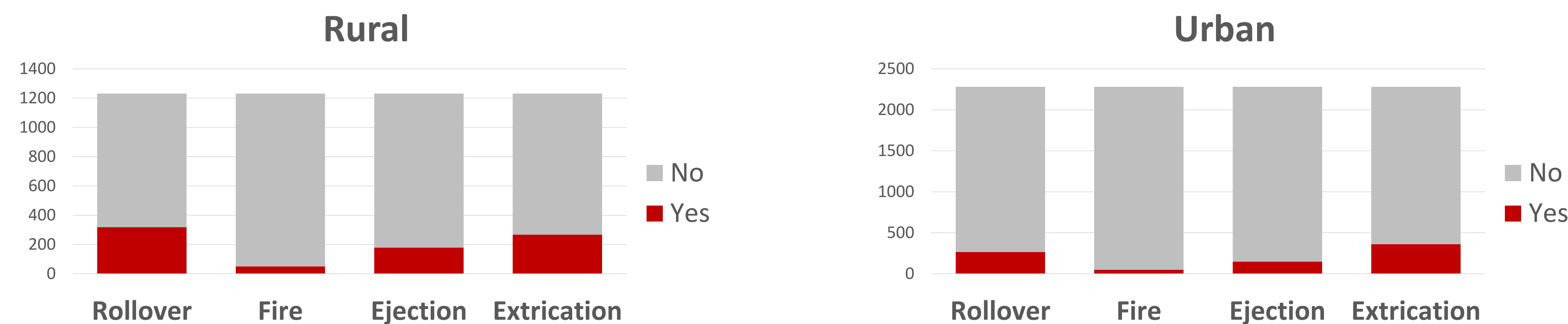
- Daytime crashes: Rural 55.4%, urban 46.8%
- 1-vehicle crashes: Rural 61.9%, urban 54.4%
- Unrestrained fatalities: Rural 53.4%, urban 34.4%

72% of those killed in rural pickup crashes were not wearing seat belts

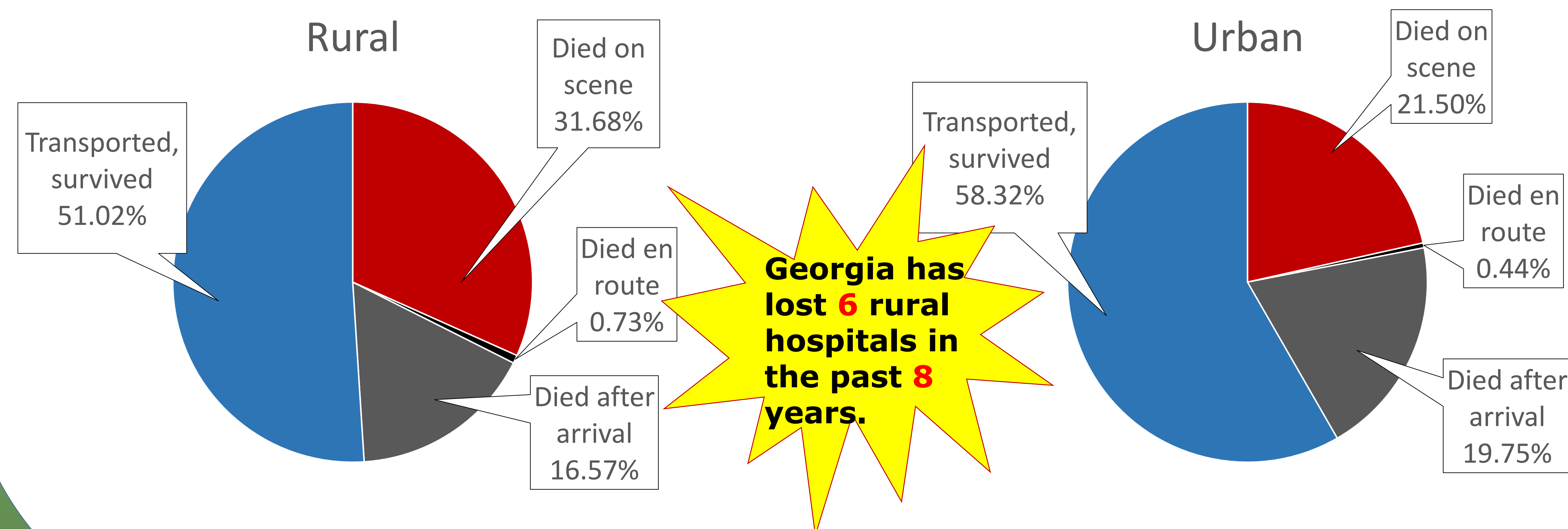
Action Needed

- Strengthen seat belt and child safety seat education in rural areas
- Increase high-visibility enforcement on rural roads
- Improve safety features and markings on rural roads
- Improve rural EMS response times
- Keep rural hospitals open
- Research causes of rural single-vehicle crashes

Crashes are Different



Emergency Response is Different



Georgia has lost **6 rural hospitals** in the past **8 years**.

Vehicle age, speeding, and alcohol involvement were similar between the two groups.

Funded by a grant from the Georgia Governor's Office of Highway Safety

Contact: Lila Ralston, TSREG
141C Wright Hall, 100 Foster Rd.
Athens GA 30602

lfr32327@uga.edu