



Rural Traffic Safety Culture

June 22, 2009

Big Sky, Montana

Positive Traffic Safety Culture

“A social climate in which traffic safety is highly valued and rigorously pursued.”

Car crashes rank among the leading cause of death in the United States.



2008 Traffic Safety Culture Index

April, 2008



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Key Findings

- Culture of complacency
- Prevailing attitude: “Do as I say, not as I do.”

Second Annual Traffic Safety Culture Index

- Nationally representative telephone survey
 - Random sample of driving-age population (16+)
 - 2,501 interviews, avg. ~15 min
 - Landline and Cell
 - English and Spanish
 - Questions about traffic safety knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors
 - Conducted April 15 – May 12

Limitations

- Preliminary Findings
- Analyses and interpretation ongoing

Safety Culture: Do People Care?

- ***2/5 say local govt. not doing enough*** to make roads and highways safer
- ***Only 2/5*** support 10 cent/gal increase in gas tax to ***improve dangerous roads***
- ***Nearly half are concerned*** about friend or relative's driving
 - 4/5 actually talked to the person about it

Do People Care? (cont.)

- **2/5 strongly considered crash test ratings** in recent car purchase
- If they had info (e.g., usRAP map) **3/5 would consider avoiding dangerous roads** in their areas even if they were the most convenient
- Nearly 3/4 would want to use safety info to plan trips on unfamiliar roads

But Still...

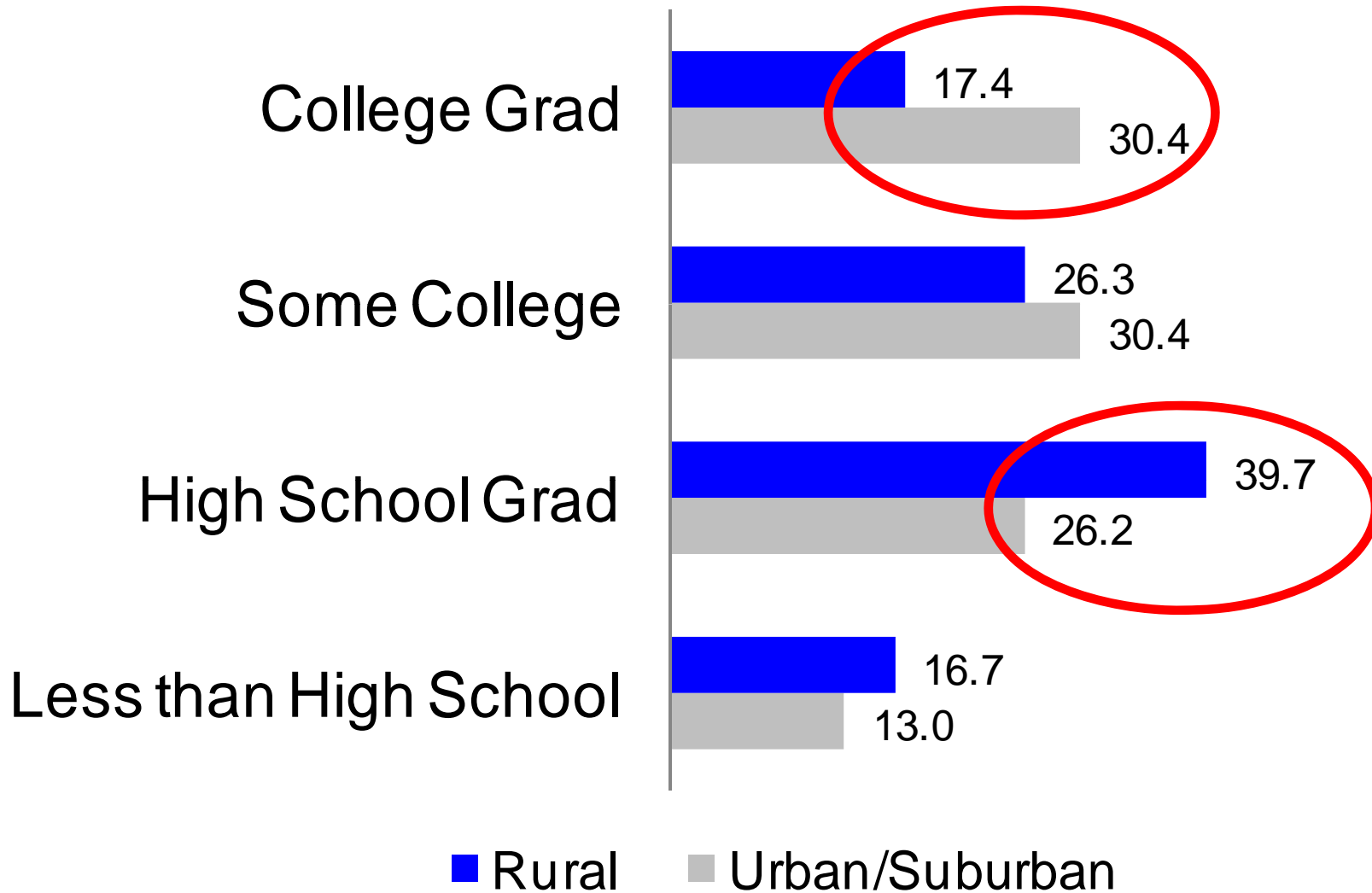
“Do as I Say, Not as I Do”

- **nearly 9/10** say drivers using cell phones are a somewhat or very **serious threat** to their safety, and..
- **Over 4/5** admit using a cell phone while driving make it **more likely** they will crash
 - **2/3** used cell phone while driving in past month (including **28%** “**fairly often**” or “**regularly**”)
- Similar situation with speeding

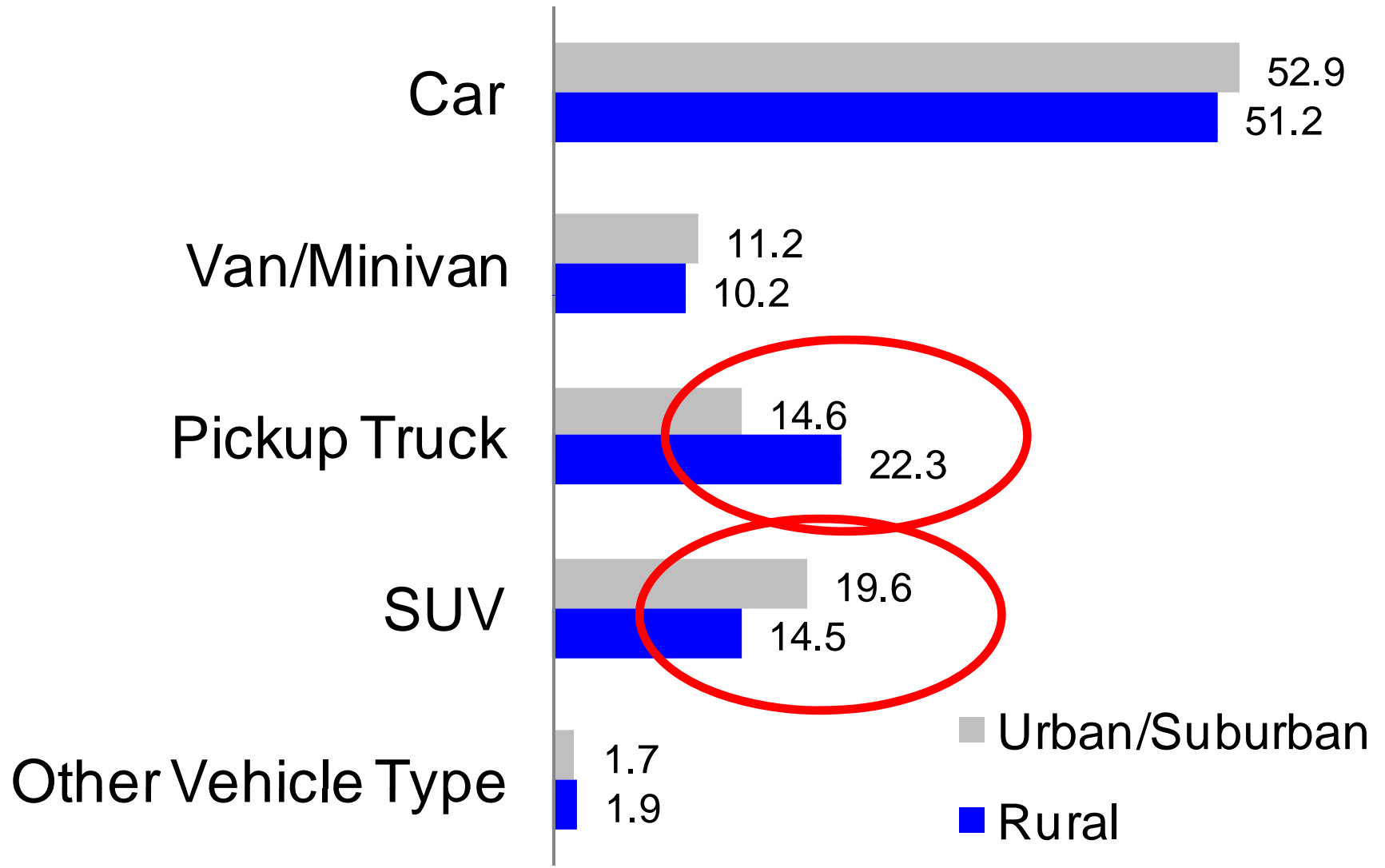
Rural Safety Culture: Defining Rural

- Landline phone sample used OMB classification
- Cell phone sample
 - Imputed urban/rural status from demographic characteristics of landline and cell samples

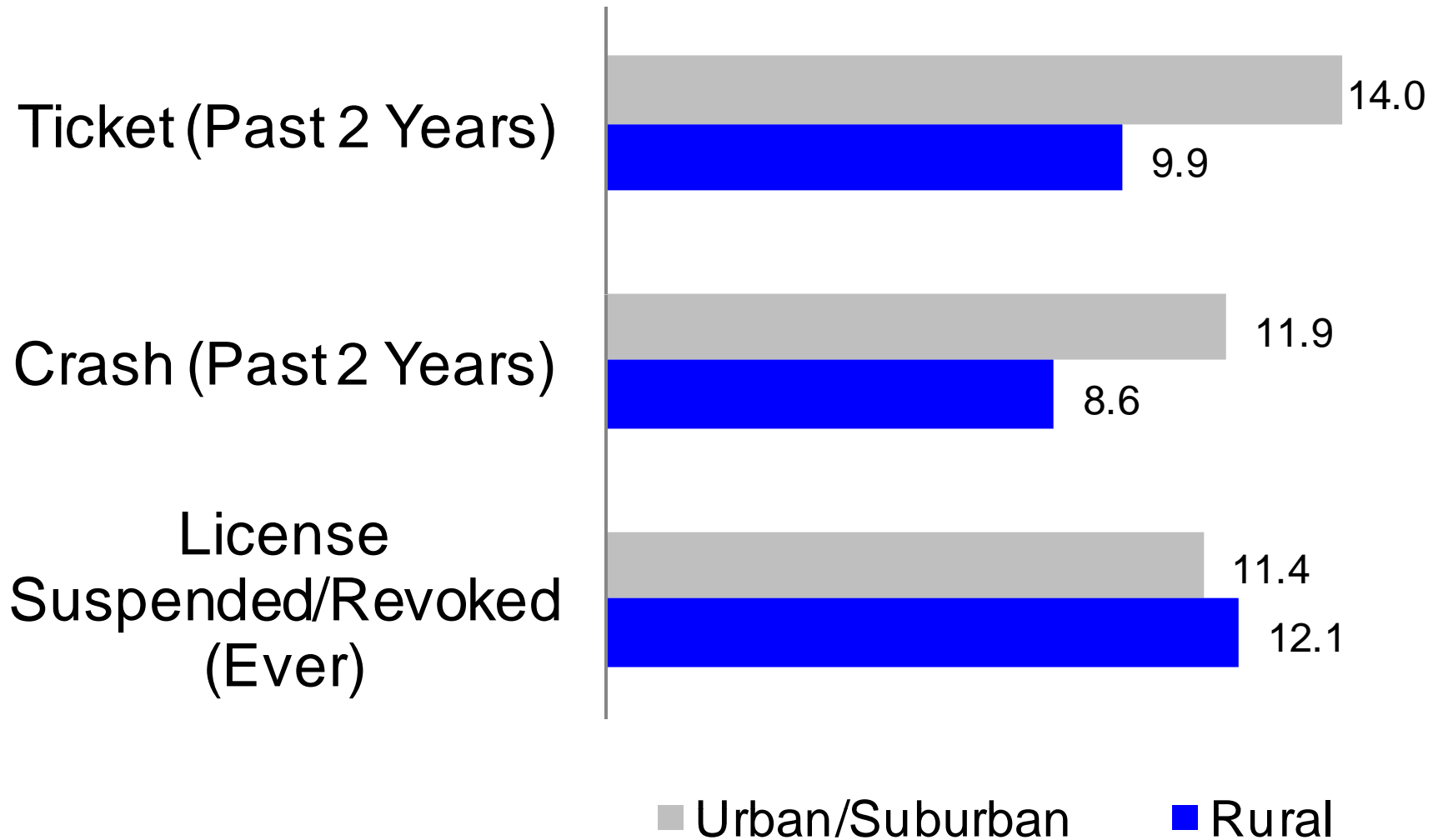
Highest Level of Education



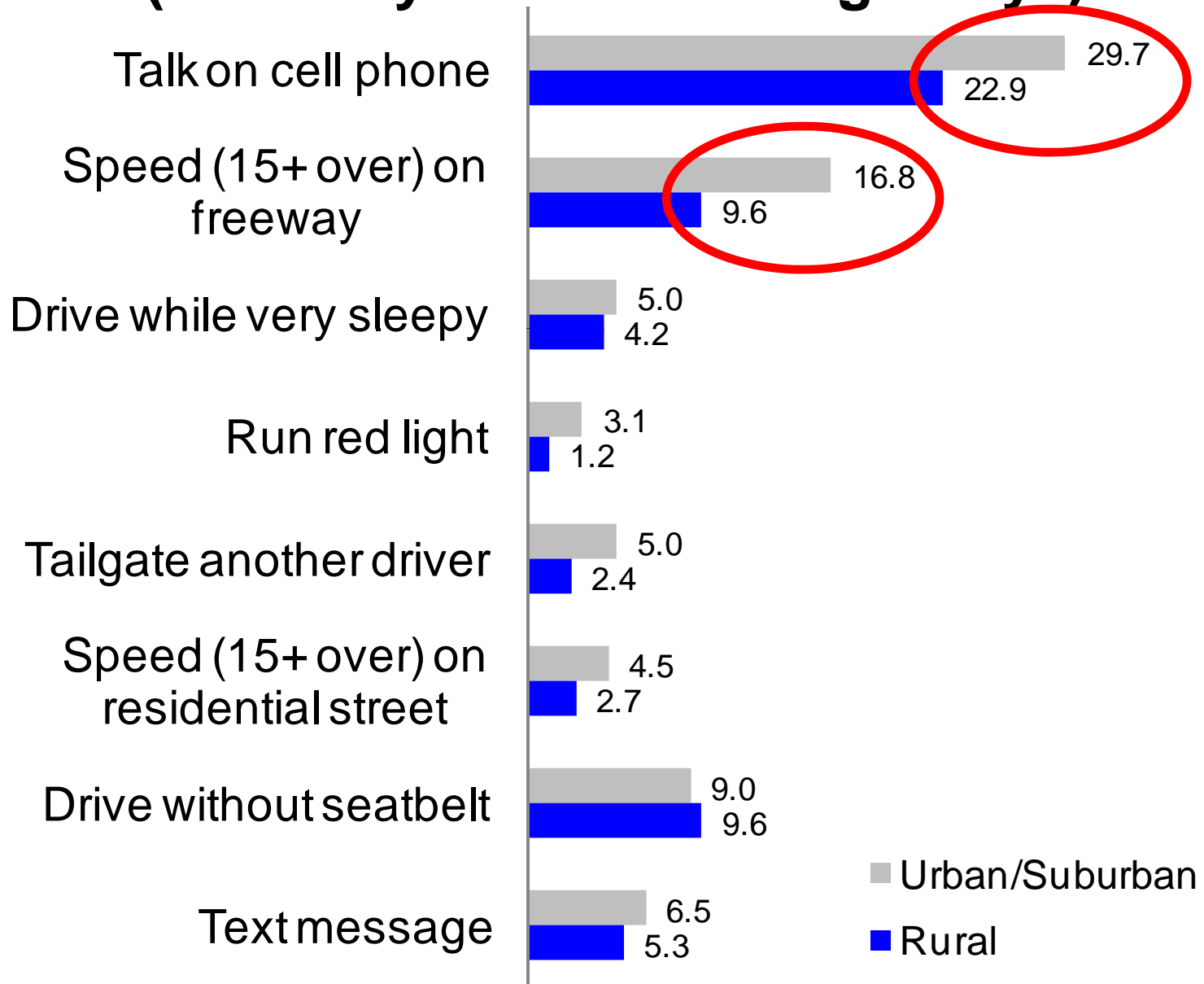
Vehicle Driven Most Often



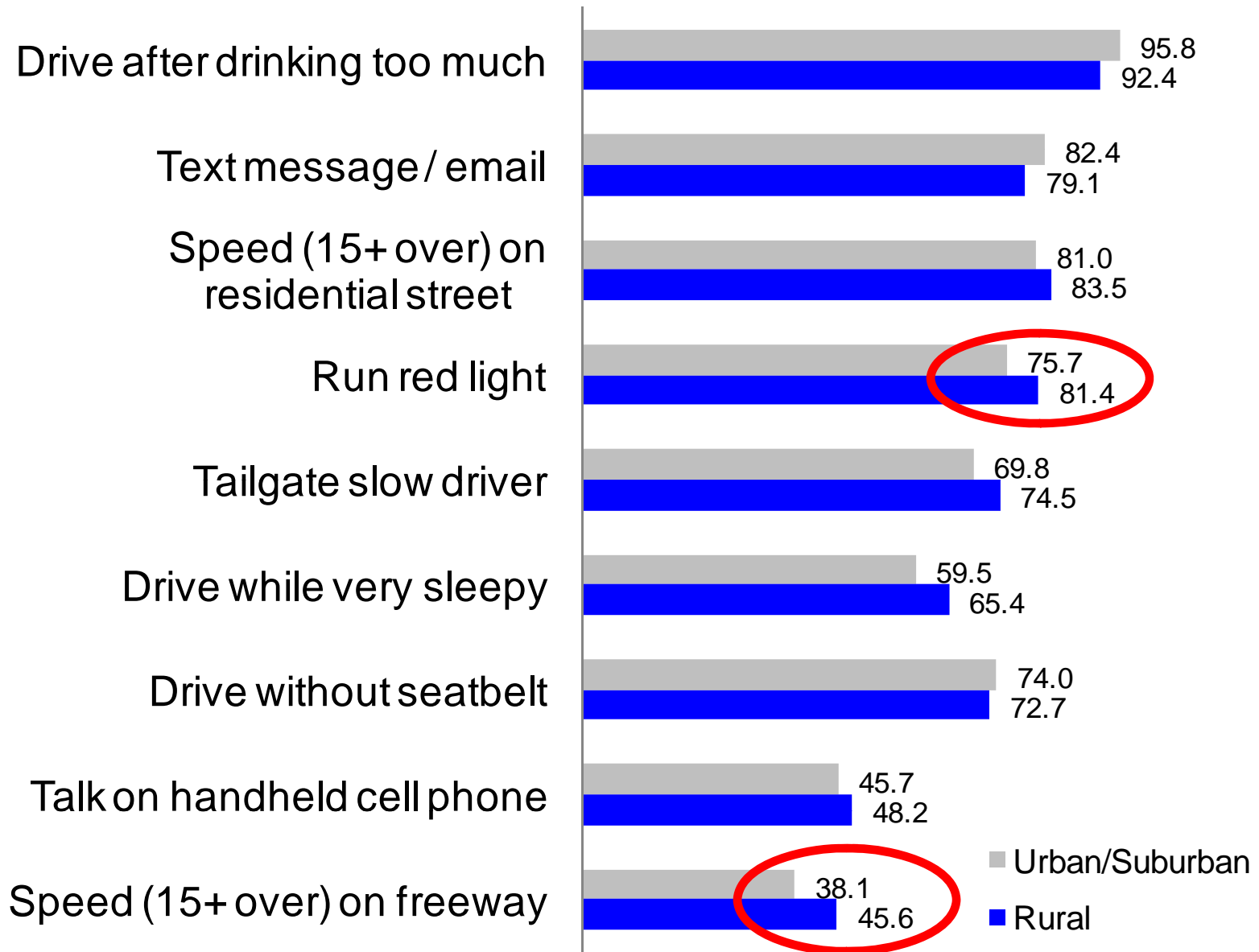
Tickets and Crashes



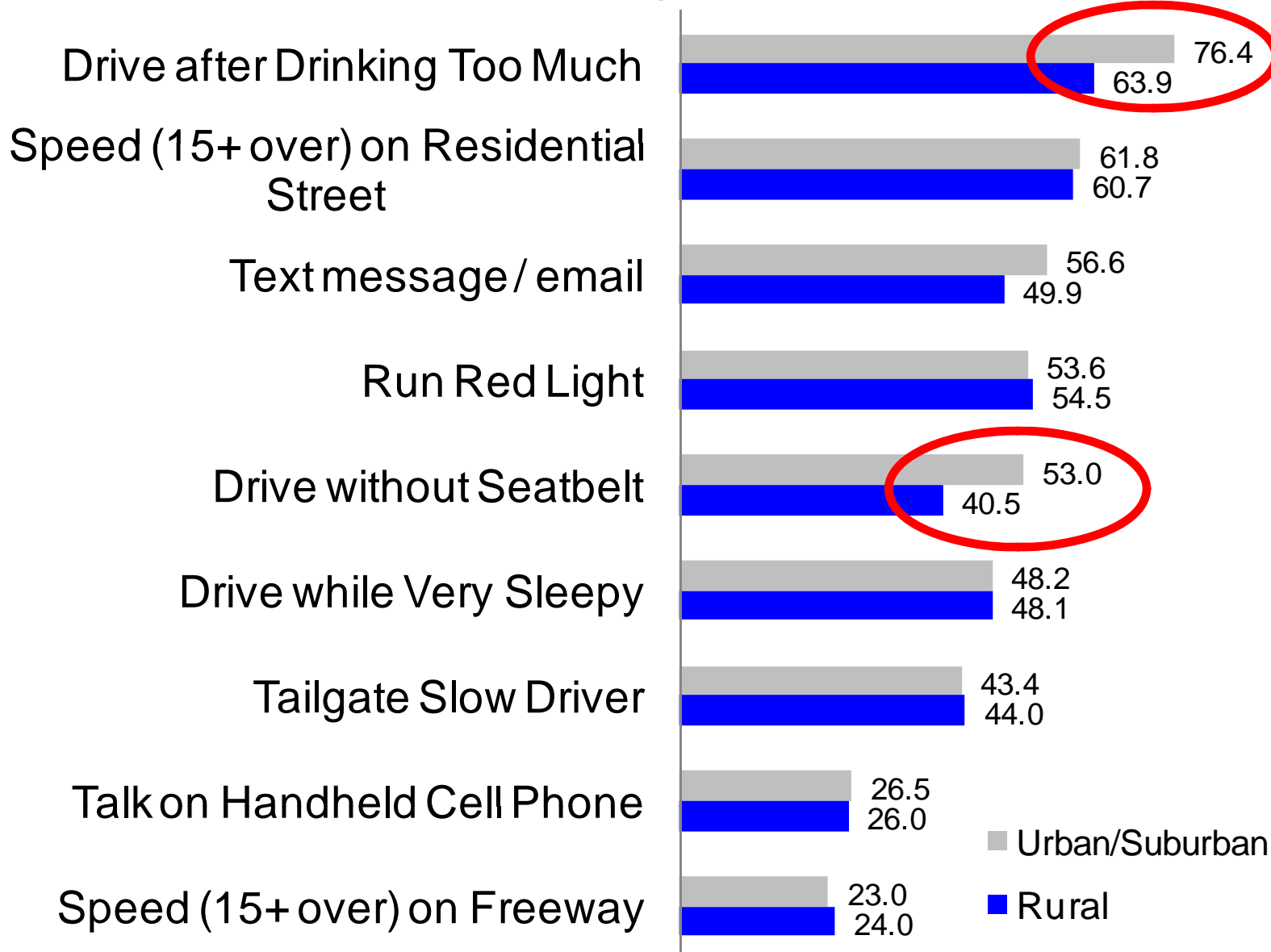
Recent Driving Behavior (% “Fairly Often” or “Regularly”)



Acceptance of Dangerous Driving (% “Completely Unacceptable”)

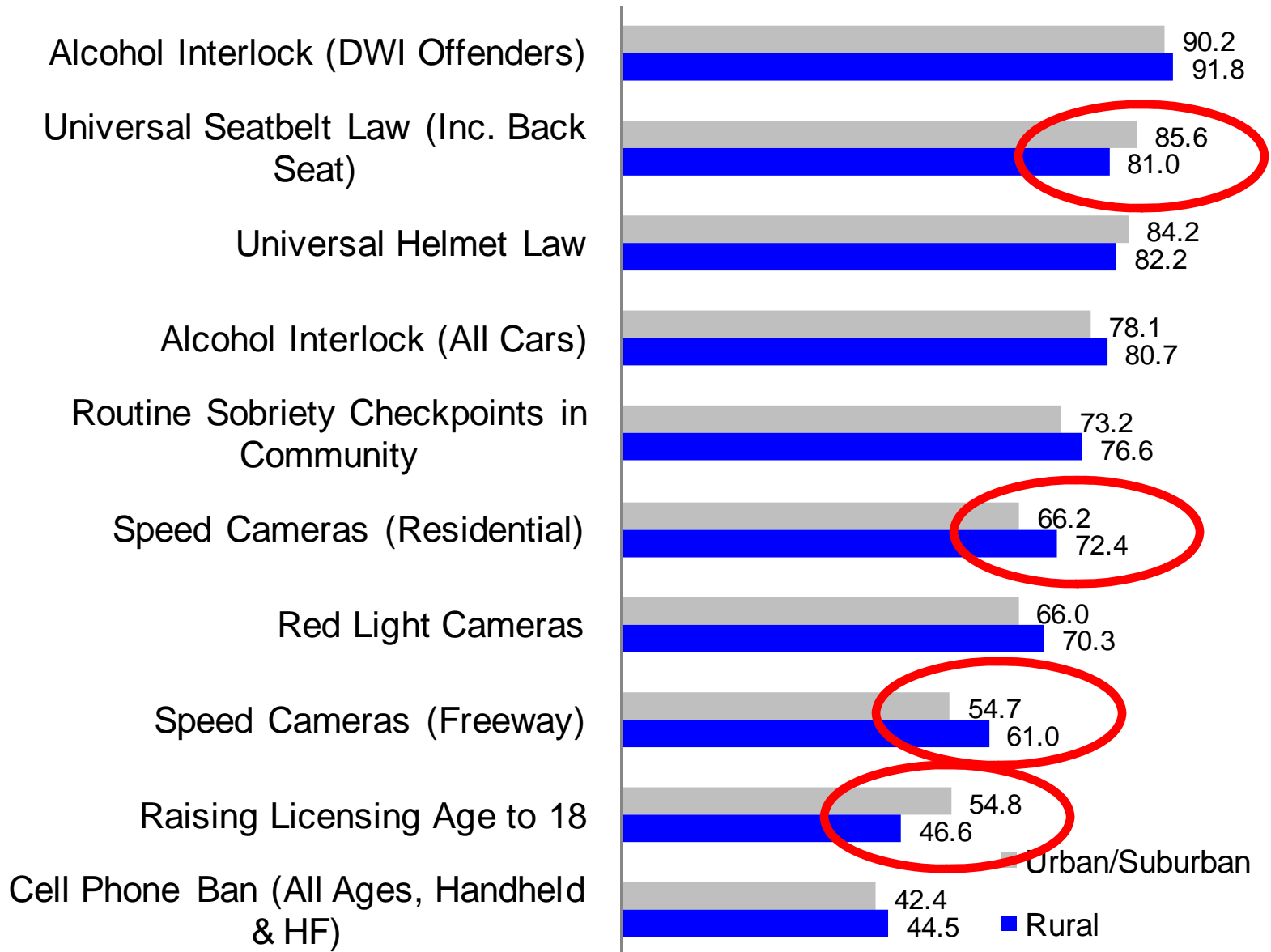


Perceived Social Norms (% “Completely Unacceptable”)



Support for Safety Measures

(% Support)



Key Urban/Rural Differences

- Education
 - Rural → more HS-only, fewer college grads
- Vehicle type
 - Rural → more pickup trucks, fewer SUVs

Key Urban/Rural Differences

- Driving behavior
 - Rural → lower prevalence of freeway speeding, cell phone use
- Acceptance of Dangerous Drivers
 - Rural → less acceptance of running red lights, speeding on freeways

Key Urban/Rural Differences

- Perceptions of Social Norms
 - Rural → greater acceptance of drinking and driving, not wearing seatbelt
- Support for Safety Measures
 - Rural → more support for speed cameras and less support for seatbelt laws & higher license age

THANKS



- For more information, go to:
 - AAAFoundation.org