

Using the ACS to Estimate State-Level WIC Eligibility

Presented by Paul Johnson and Erika Huber



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Why this talk?

Since the early 1990's, national-level WIC eligibility has been estimated using the **CPS** .

Starting in 2010, the Urban Institute added state-level eligibility estimates to the national-level estimates provided to FNS by using the **ACS**.

Both the **CPS** and **ACS** are used in order to achieve consistent national and state estimates.



Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC)

Serves persons with the following characteristics:

- **Demographic**

- Pregnant women
- Postpartum and breastfeeding women
- Infants
- Children up to age 5

- **Financial**

- Family income less than 185% of poverty, or
- Enrolled in Medicaid, SNAP, TANF



Why are Our Eligibility Estimates Needed?

Help estimate total **Federal** funding requirements.

Judge the effectiveness of **States** in enrolling eligible individuals.

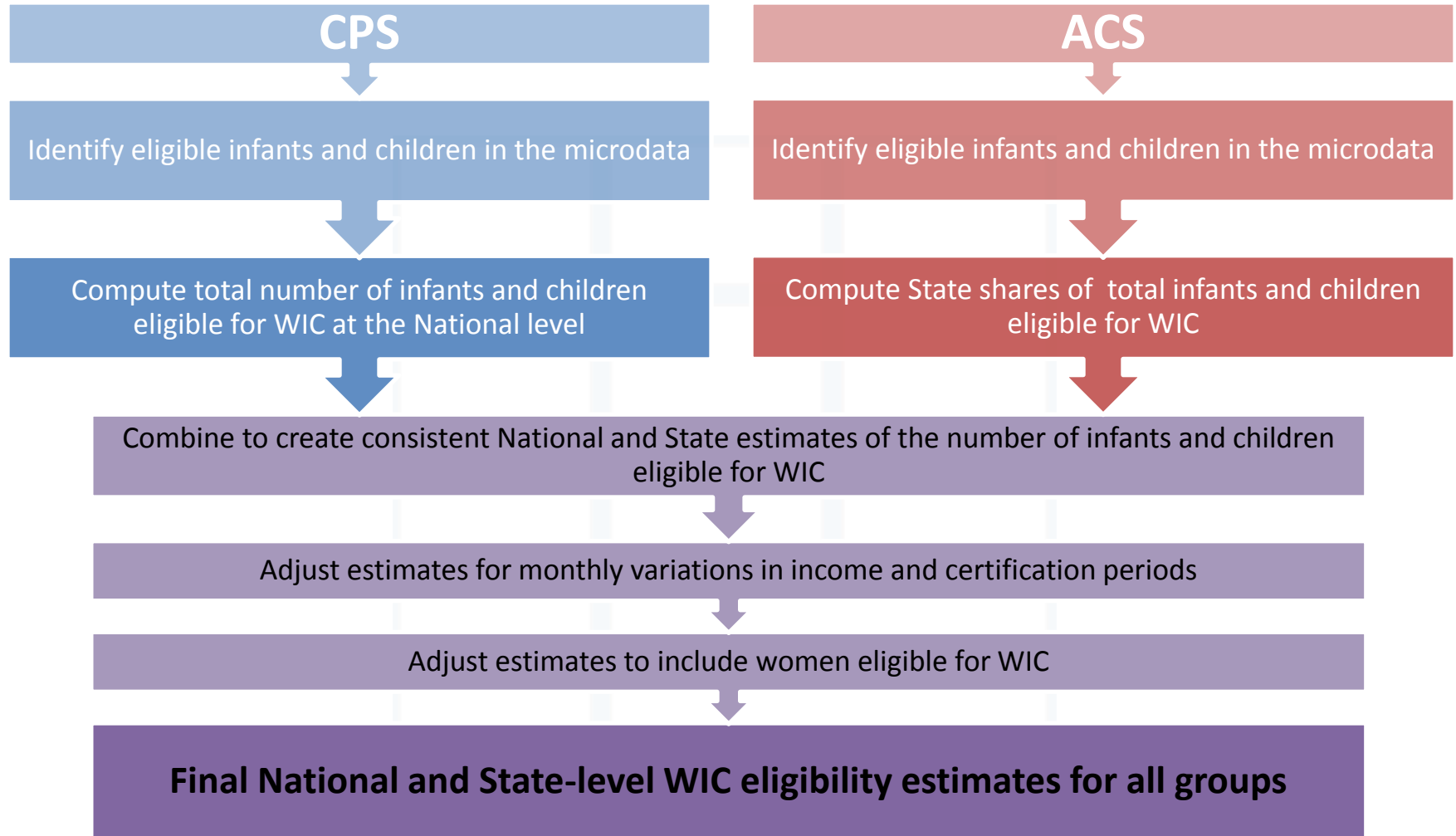


Eligibility-Related Data Available from the ACS and CPS

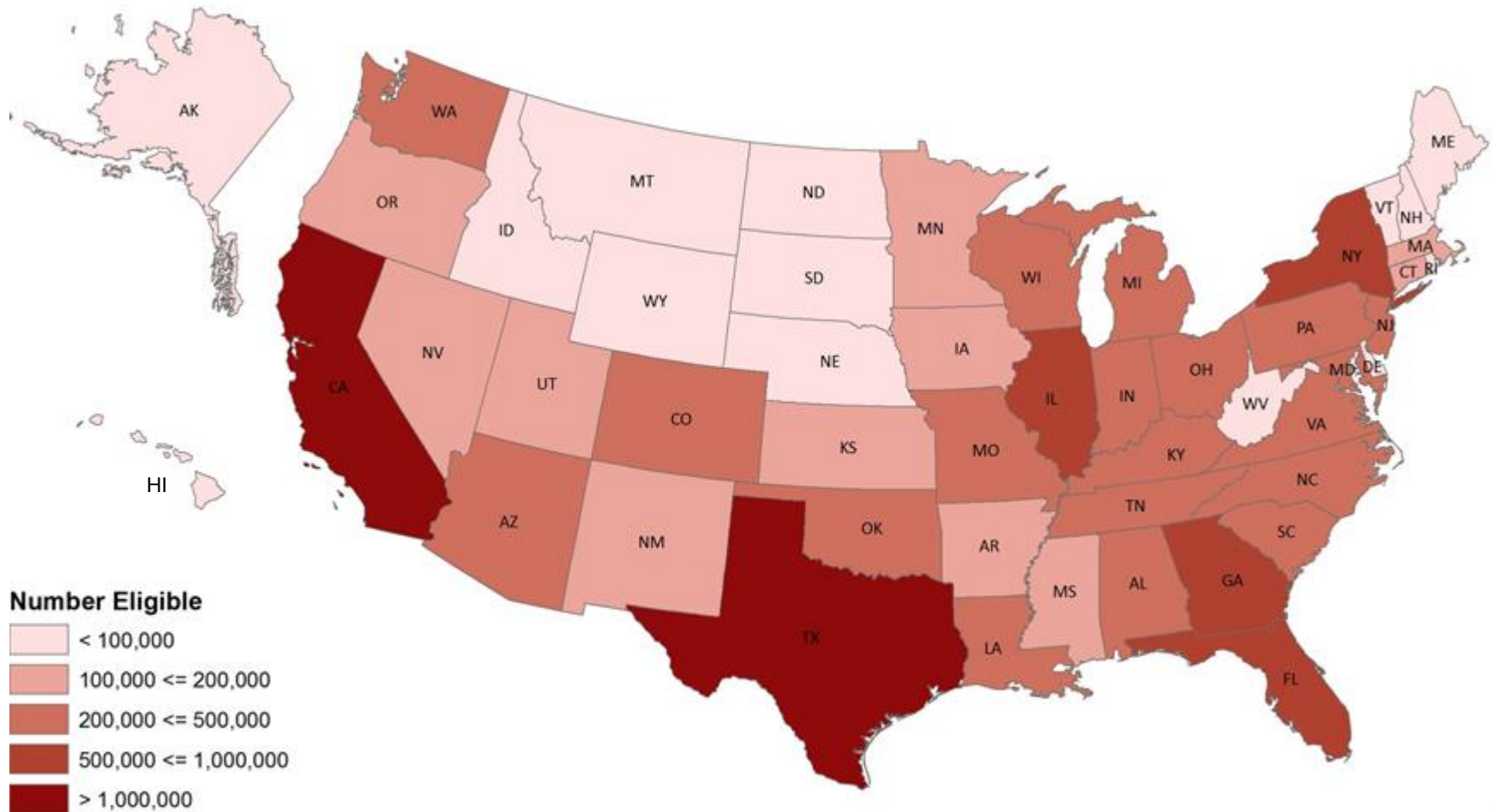
	ACS	CPS
Income	✓	✓
Family Relationship	✓	✓
Time Period Covered	✓	✓
State Level	✓	✓
Monthly	✗	✗
Pregnancy/Breastfeeding	✗	✗



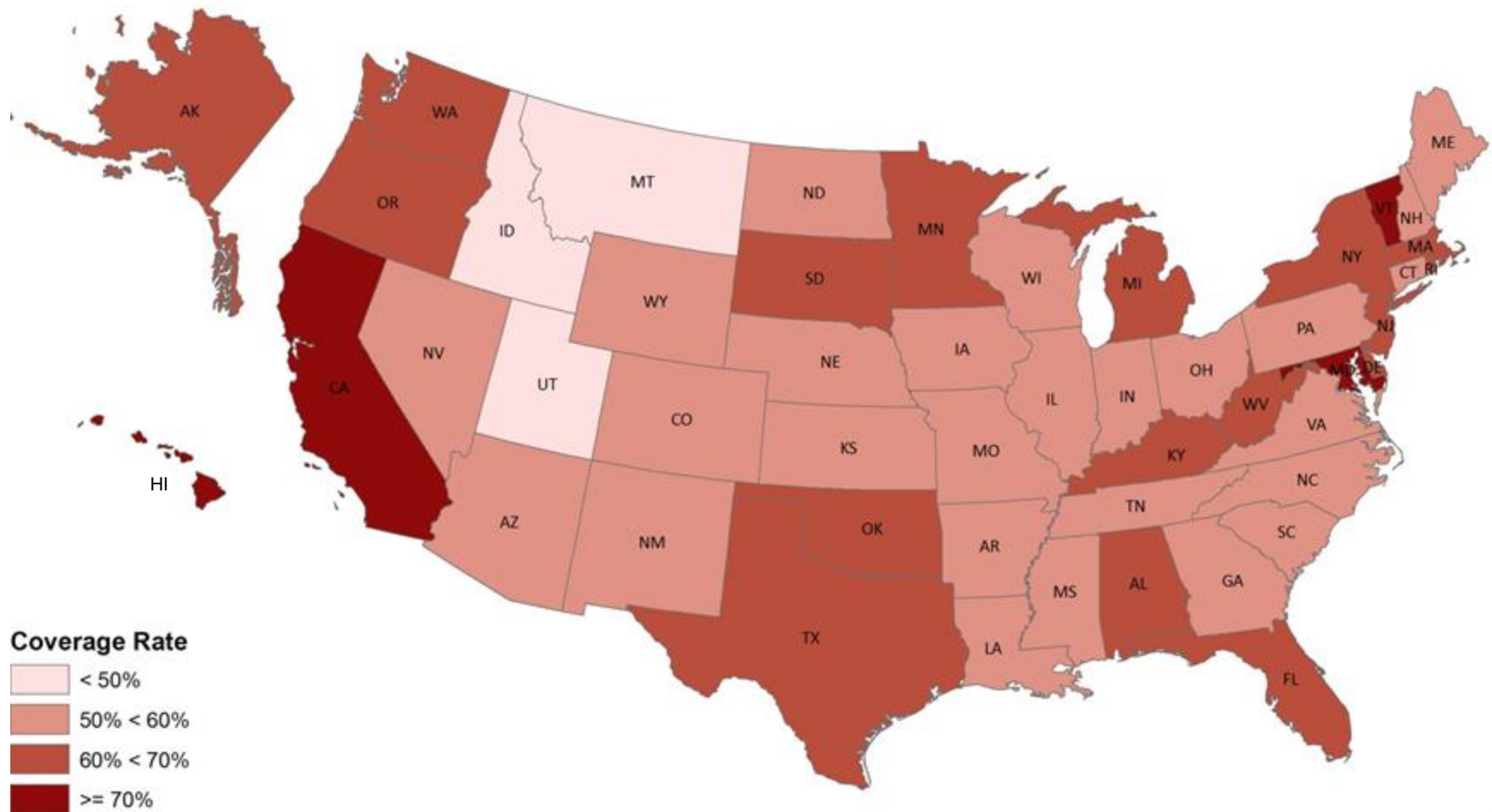
Estimating Eligibility using CPS+ACS



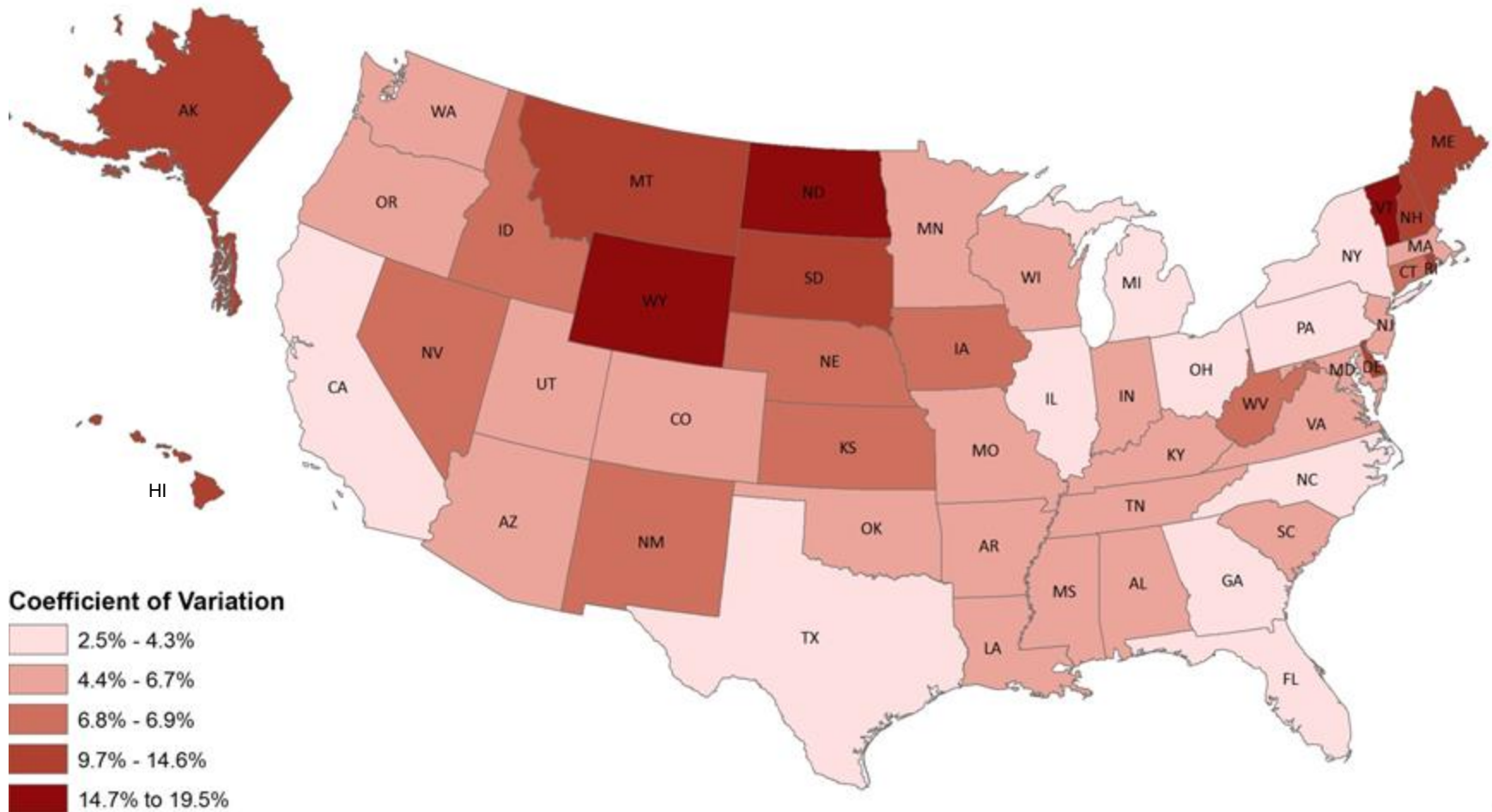
Estimated Eligibility by State, 2011



Estimated Coverage Rates by State, 2011



Precision of State Estimates, 2011



Final Thoughts

CPS supplies detail, but not enough sample for states

ACS supplies less detail, but offers state-level precision

CPS+ACS enhances, rather than replaces, prior estimates

Neither source provides everything, so adjustments are needed



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Link to latest report

<http://www.fns.usda.gov/national-and-state-level-estimates-special-supplemental-nutrition-program-women-infants-and-childr-0>

