

STRENGTHENING

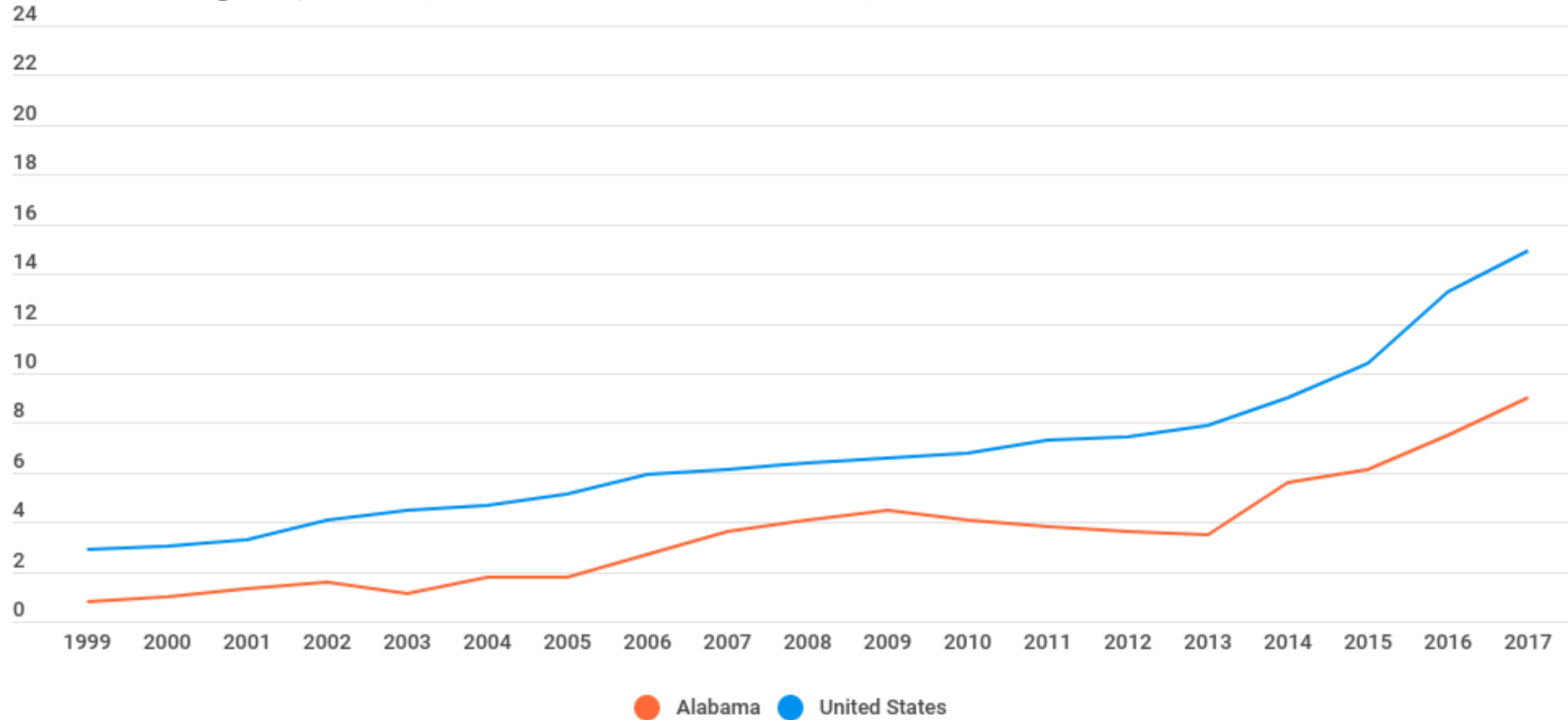
THE LOCAL RESPONSE

TO THE OPIOID EPIDEMIC IN ALABAMA

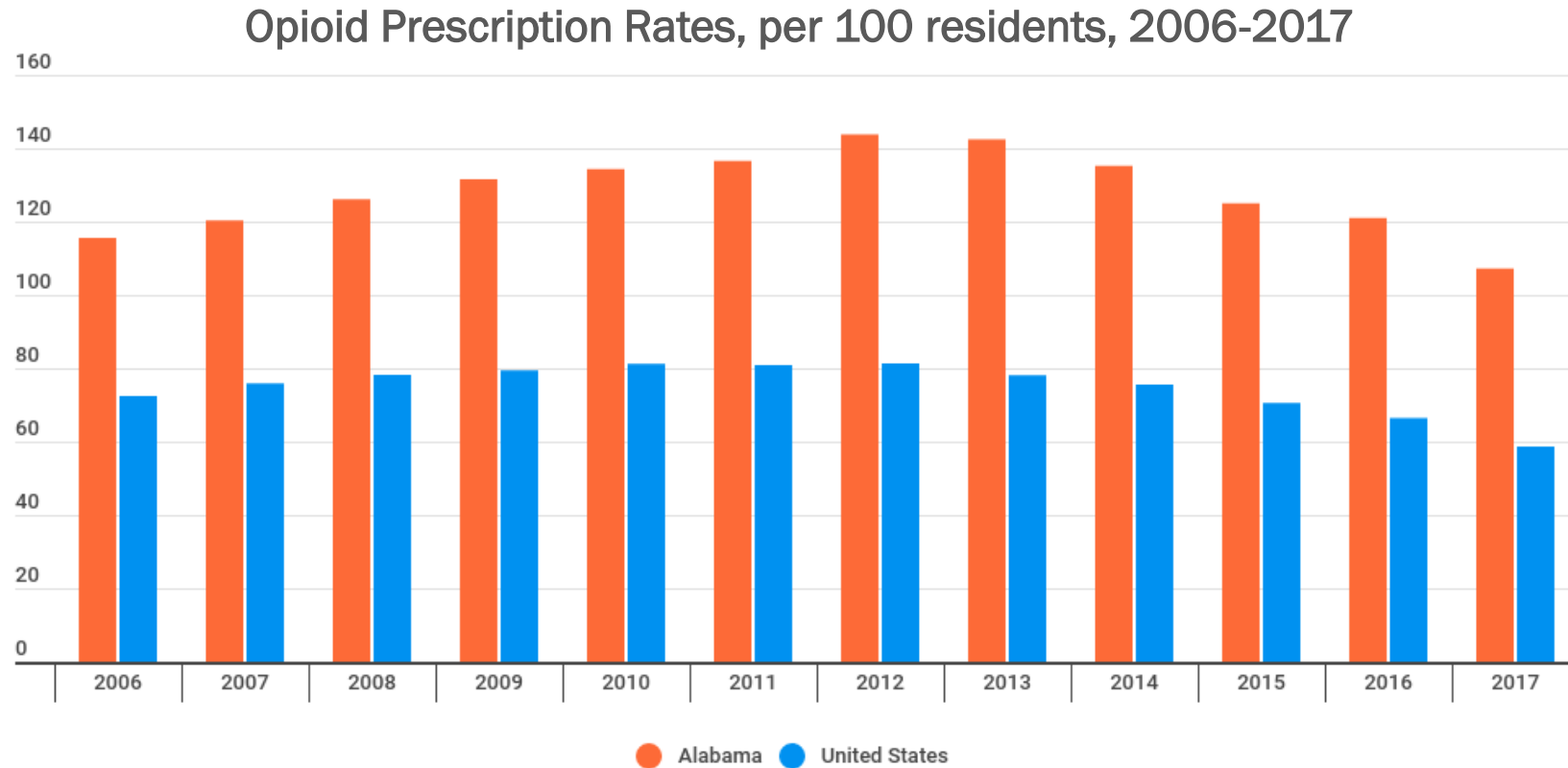


APPALACHIAN COUNTIES IN THE EYE OF THE STORM

Age-Adjusted Opioid Overdose Death Rates, per 100,000 residents, 1999-2017



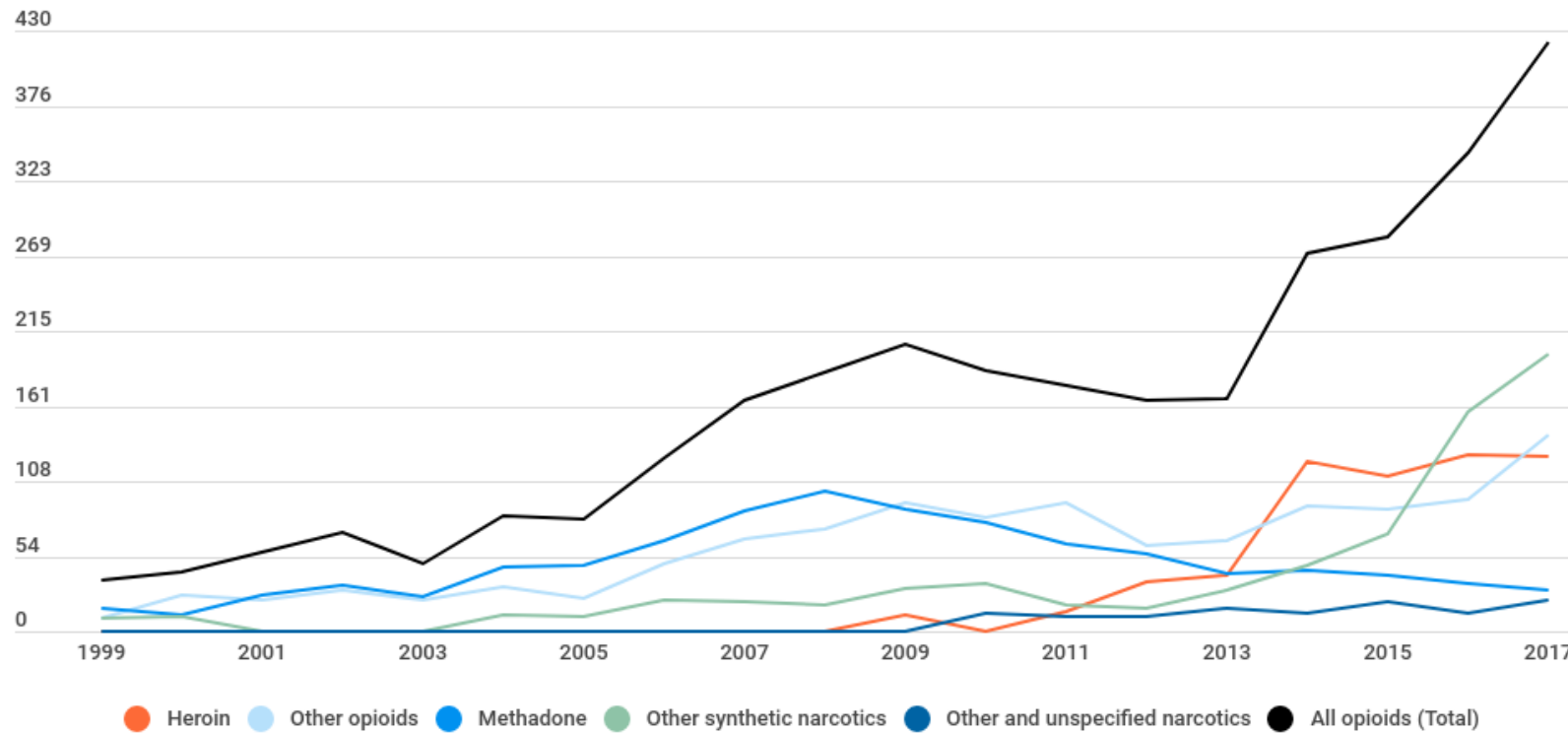
OPIOID EPIDEMIC: SUPPLY SIDE



In 2017, the opioid prescription rate in Alabama was 107.2 prescriptions per 100 residents - **83% higher** than the United States rate.

OPIOID EPIDEMIC: DEMAND SIDE

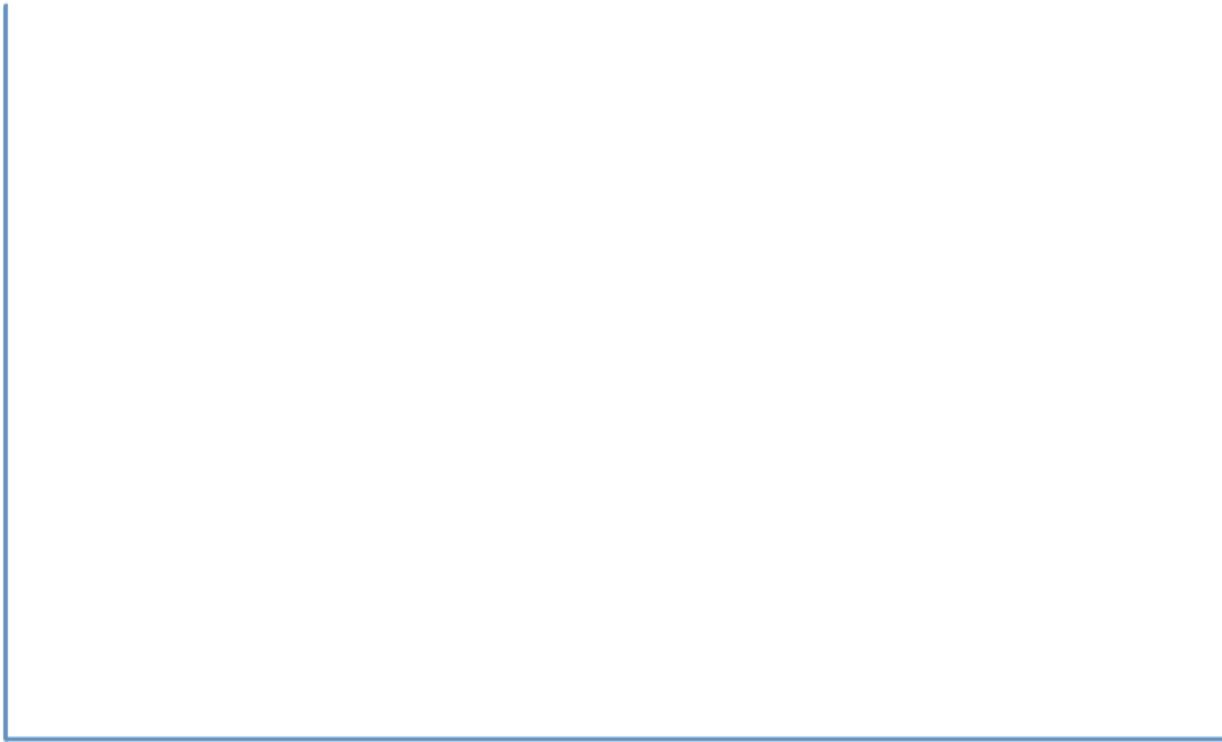
Total Opioid Overdose Deaths in Alabama,
by Type of Opioid, 1999-2017



From 1999-2017, opioid abuse progressed from legal, prescription opioids to **illegal opioids**, like heroin and fentanyl.



1) What has been your biggest challenge with stemming the opioid epidemic in your county?

- a. Lack of communication and collaboration across county systems
 - b. Lack of data on the impact of the crisis in your county
 - c. Lack of effective treatment options or providers
 - d. Lack of housing and employment opportunities to support people in recovery
 - e. Lack of training for law enforcement and other first responders on how to react to overdoses
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WHY COUNTIES?

Counties are on the frontlines due to their involvement in:



HEALTH



**HUMAN
SERVICES**



**JUSTICE & PUBLIC
SAFETY**



**ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT**

2) What have you as a county leader done in your community to address the opioid epidemic?

- a. Convened stakeholders to come up with solutions
- b. Increased public awareness of the dangers of opioid misuse
- c. Increased access to naloxone and medication-assisted treatment
- d. Worked with law enforcement to stem the tide of illegal opioids in the county
- e. Collaborated with schools and businesses to help people in recovery get meaningful training and employment

RECOMMENDATION 1

EXERCISE STRATEGIC LOCAL LEADERSHIP

- Set a tone of compassion in local conversations on opioids
- Convene diverse stakeholders and faith-based organizations to form Opioid Task Forces
- Foster regional and intergovernmental cooperation

RECOMMENDATION 2

EMPHASIZE PREVENTIVE AND EDUCATIONAL INITIATIVES

- Increase public awareness and facilitate safe disposal sites for opioids
- Conduct community outreach to children and families, particularly within the education system
- Leverage data and technology to target services

RECOMMENDATION 3

EXPAND ACCESS TO ADDICTION TREATMENTS

- Increase the availability of and access to naloxone and medication-assisted treatment (MAT)
- Employ telemedicine solutions
- Encourage mental health treatment and counseling alongside addiction treatments

RECOMMENDATION 4



IMPLEMENT A CRIMINAL JUSTICE RESPONSE TO ILLEGAL OPIOID SALES AND PROVIDE TREATMENT AND SERVICES TO JUSTICE-INVOLVED INDIVIDUALS WITH OPIOID USE DISORDERS

- Reduce the illicit supply of opioids
- Facilitate treatment and workforce training in jails and upon reentry to reduce recidivism
- Connect people in recovery, including those involved in the criminal justice system, to housing and employment opportunities

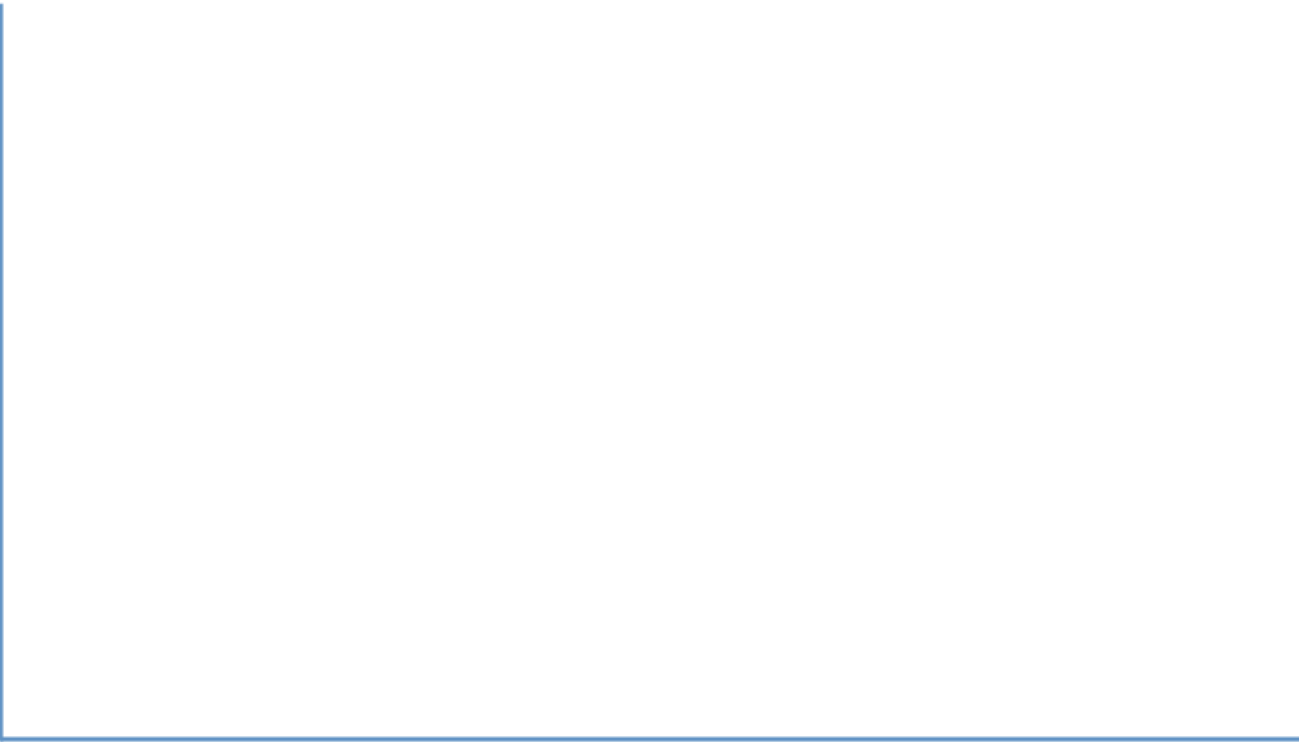
RECOMMENDATION 5

MITIGATE LOCAL ECONOMIC IMPACTS AND CONSIDER NEW ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES

- Collaborate with high schools, educational institutions and businesses to align education and workforce training with shifting industry needs
- Leverage each county's strengths to attract and retain high-quality businesses, and help them learn to work with individuals in recovery
- Reinforce safety net services and expand education and employment opportunities for families experiencing cyclical poverty
- Expand entrepreneurial opportunities for county governments to make recovery initiatives sustainable



3) What sort of resources do you as a county official need to lead your county's efforts to address the opioid crisis?

- a. Training and education on best practices
 - b. Case studies and examples of counties having an impact
 - c. Peer-to-peer learning opportunities
 - d. Templates for legislation, information-sharing agreements or MOUs
 - e. Other
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CONCLUSION

- **45,000** deaths due to opioid overdoses nationwide in 2017
- **3,111** of these deaths were in Alabama
- Counties must partner with states, with the federal government and regionally with municipalities and other counties to pool their resources and develop solutions together.

QUESTIONS?

Nastassia Walsh
nwalsh@NACo.org
202-942-4289



www.NACo.org/OpioidsInAppalachia

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