



United States Department of Agriculture

Access to Healthy and Affordable Foods

**Georgia Senate Study Committee on Improving Access to Healthy
Foods and Ending Food Deserts
October 5, 2021**

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USDA, Economic Research Service



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- To conduct high-quality, objective economic research to inform and enhance public and private decision making.

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- Agricultural Economy
- Food and Nutrition
- Food Safety
- Global Markets and Trade
- Resources and Environment
- Rural Economy

ERS is one of 13 principal federal statistical agencies within the federal government.



Presentation Outline

- Motivation
- A brief overview of the Food Access Research Atlas (FARA) and food store access measures
- National estimates from the FARA
- State level estimates from the FARA
- Georgia county level estimates from the FARA



Motivation

- Limited access to retailers selling healthy and affordable food may impede the ability of some Americans to achieve a healthy diet and food security.
- Distance, lack of transportation and limited resources could impact...
 - ... the choice of stores to shop for food.
 - ... the time and monetary costs of travel to shop.
 - ... the frequency of shopping.

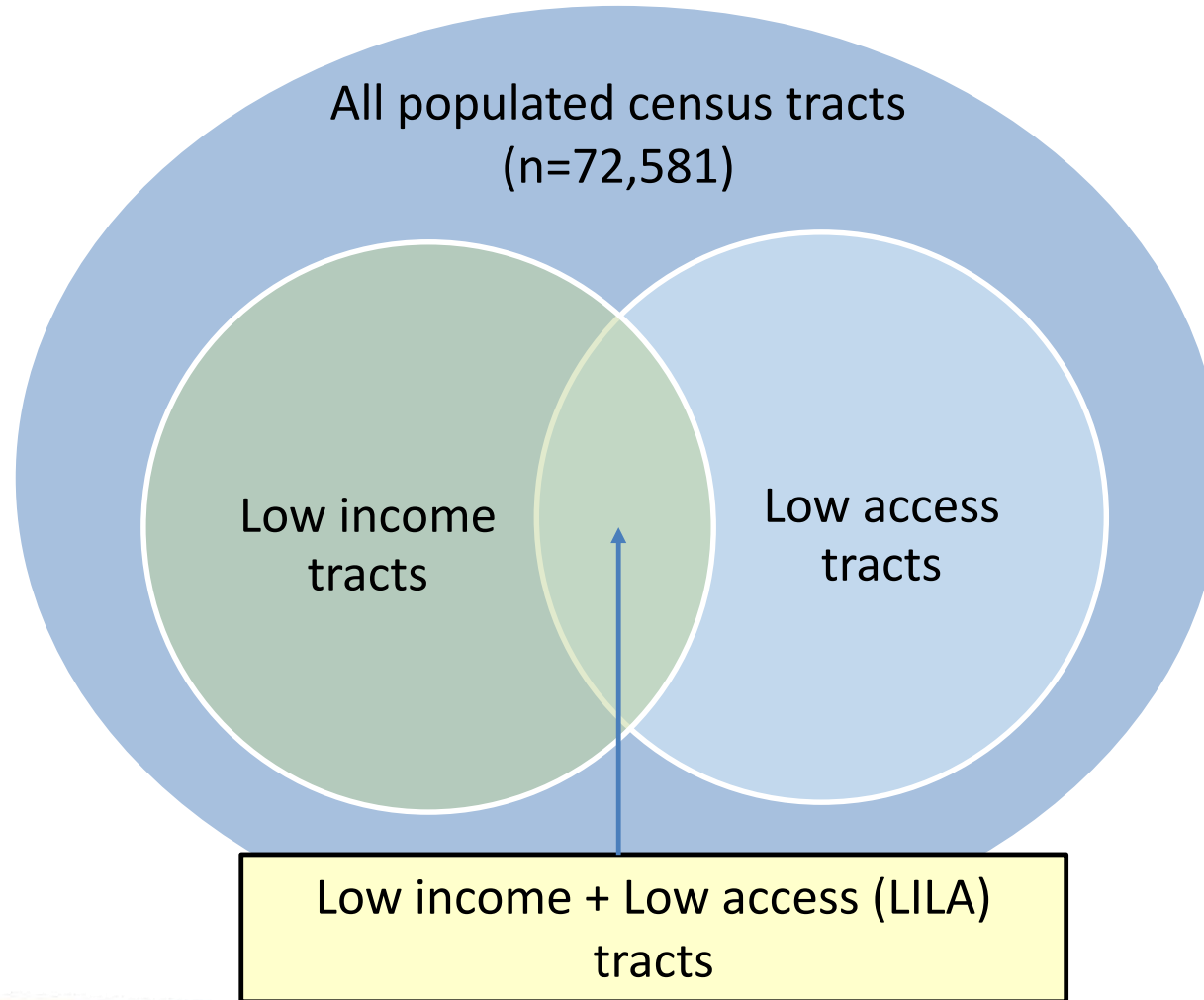


Food Access Research Atlas (FARA)

- Presents a spatial overview of food access indicators at census tract level.
- Provides maps and data on food access indicators for populations that can be viewed, downloaded or printed.
- Used by Federal, State and local governments, community planners and researchers to understand food store access in communities and the consequences of poor access.



FARA's Census Tract Measures of Food Access



Low-Income (LI) Defined

- **Low income (LI):**
 - Tract poverty rate $\geq 20\%$, or
 - Tract median family income $\leq 80\%$ of the metropolitan area or state median income level.



Low Access (LA) Defined

- **Low Access (LA):** A significant number or share of the tract population is more than:
 - **LA at 1 and 10 miles** - 1 mile (urban) or more than 10 miles (rural) from the nearest supermarket.
 - **LA at 0.5 and 10 miles** - 0.5 mile (urban) or more than 10 miles (rural) from the nearest supermarket.
 - **LA at 1 and 20 miles** - 1 mile (urban) or more than 20 miles (rural) from the nearest supermarket.



Low Access (LA) Defined cont.

- **LA using vehicle access and at 20 miles:** A tract that meets at least one of the following conditions:
 - More than 100 housing units do not have a vehicle and are more than 0.5 mile from the nearest supermarket, supercenter, or large grocery store. Or
 - At least a significant number or share of the tract population are more than 20 miles from the nearest supermarket, supercenter, or large grocery store.



Sources For Demographic and Economic Data

Data	Data Source	Source geographic level
Store directory	2019 TDLinx and 2019 STARS	Latitude and longitude coordinates
Total population	Census 2010	Block
Housing units	Census 2010	Block
Vehicle access	ACS, 2014-2018	Block group
Income	ACS, 2014-2018	Block group and tract



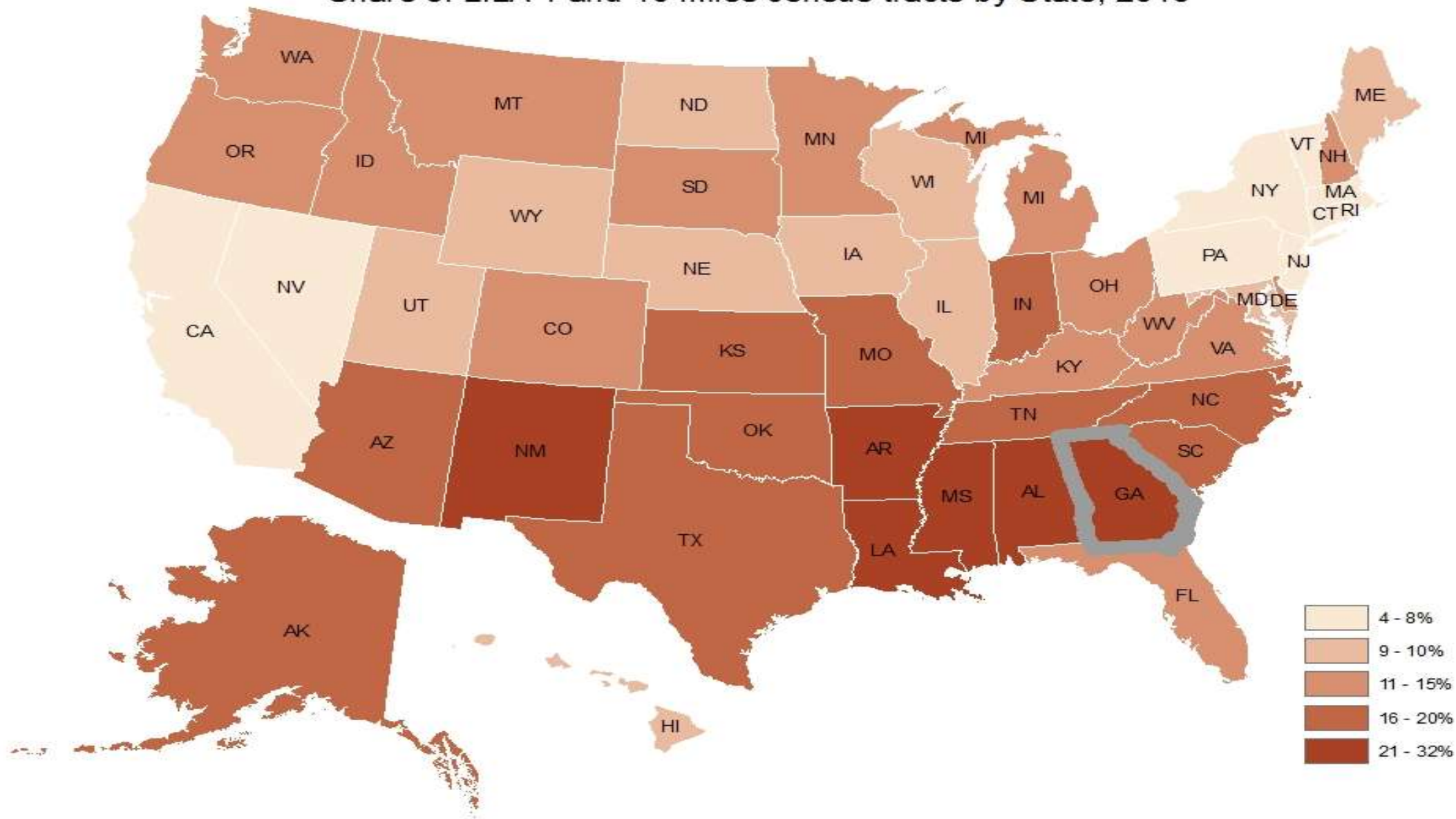
Low-Income and Low Access (LILA) in the U.S.

Access measure	LILA 1 and 10		LILA vehicle access and 20 miles	
	2015	2019	2015	2019
Low-Income (LI) Number %	30,870 42.6	30,287 41.8	30,870 42.6	30,287 41.8
Low Access (LA) Number %	27,527 38	27,548 38	16,638 22.9	15,574 21.5
Low-Income & Low Access (LILA) Number %	9,245 12.7	9,293 12.8	10,869 15	10,126 14

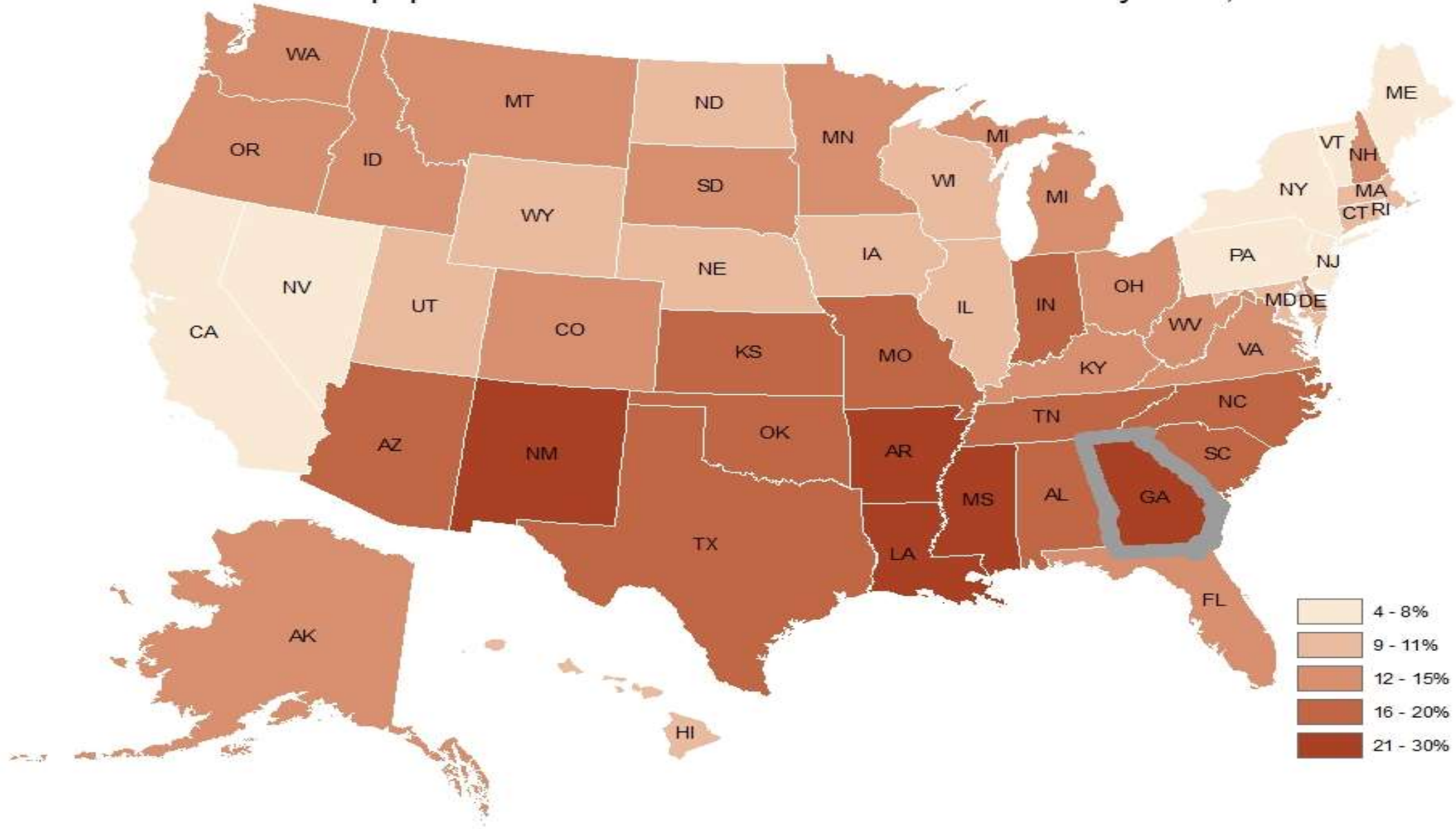
Total tract count:
72,531 populated tracts



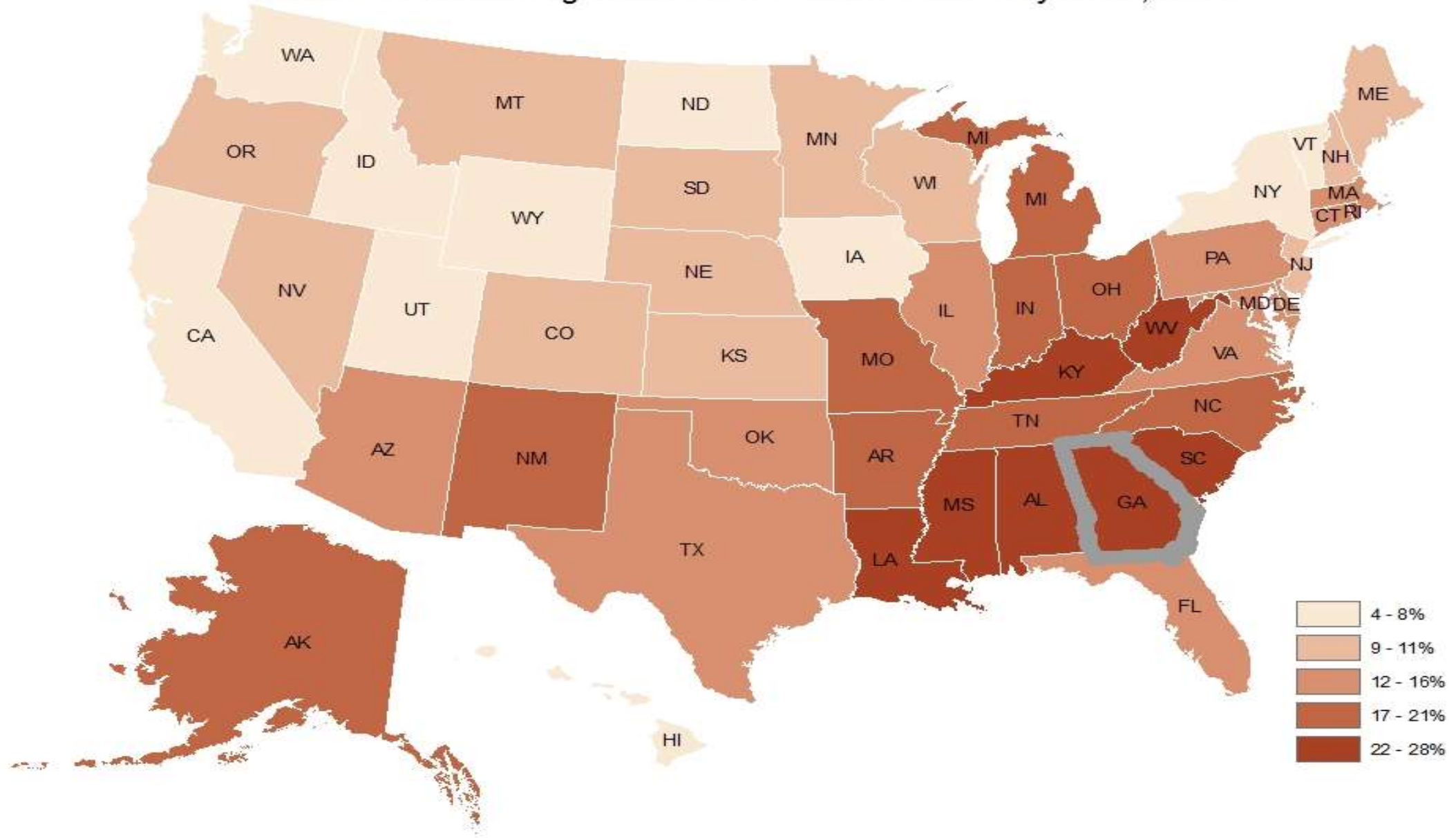
Share of LILA 1 and 10 miles census tracts by State, 2019



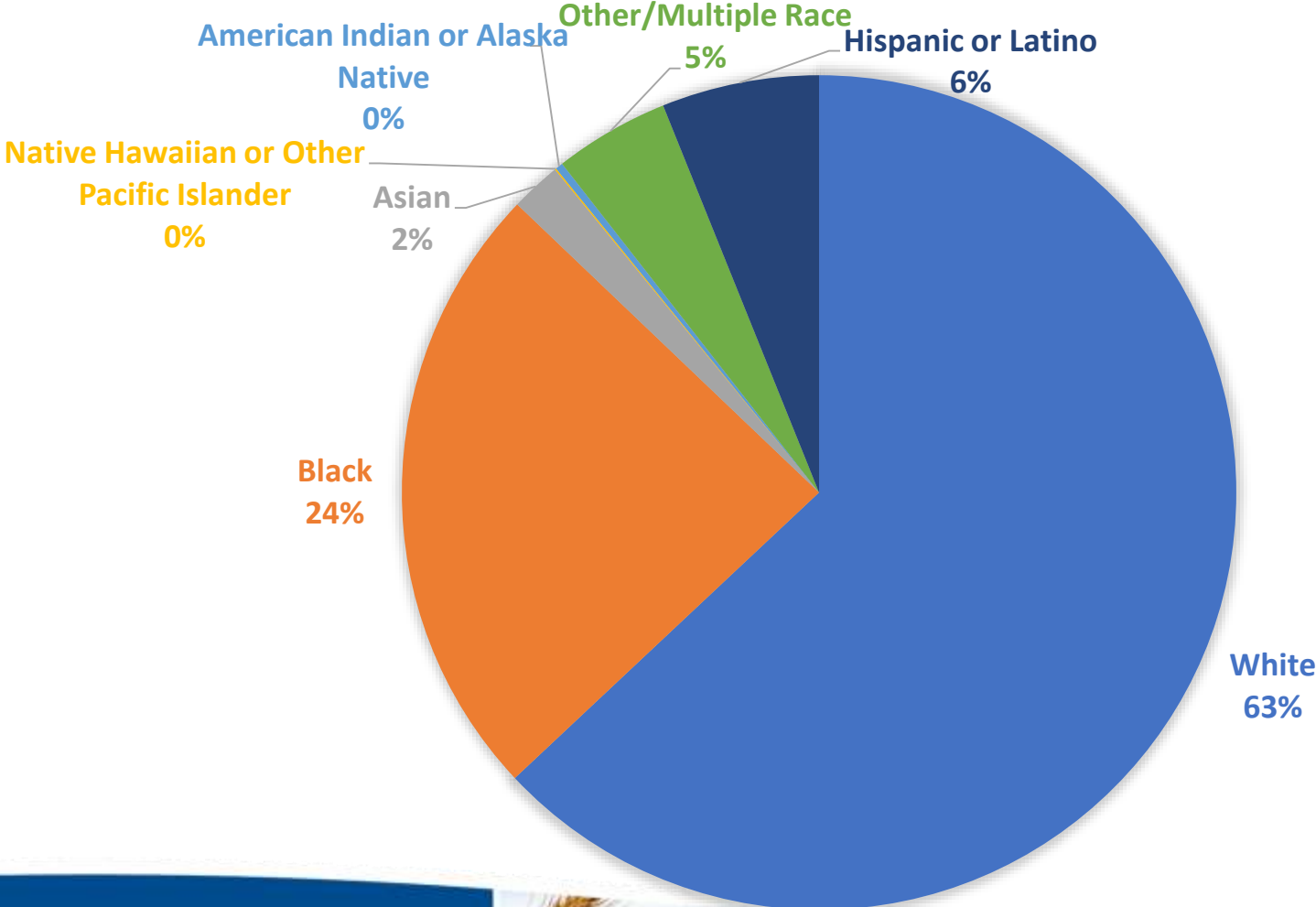
Share of population in LILA 1 and 10 miles census tracts by State, 2019



Share of LILA using vehicle access and 20 miles by State, 2019

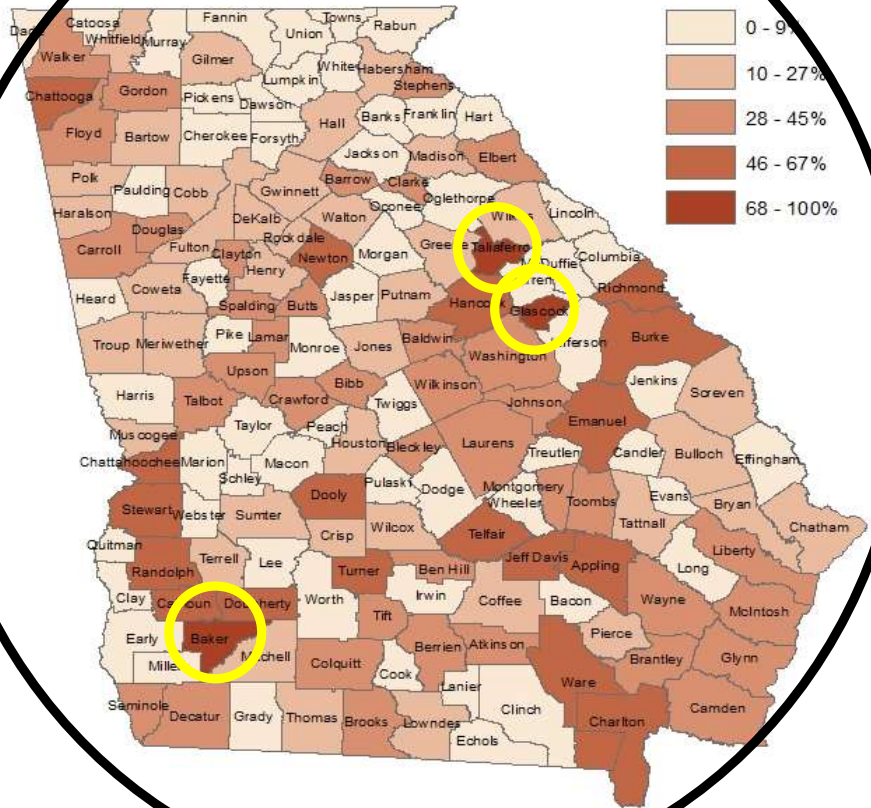


Percentage of Georgia population by race/ethnicity who live more than 1 mile from the nearest supermarket, supercenter, or large grocery store, 2019

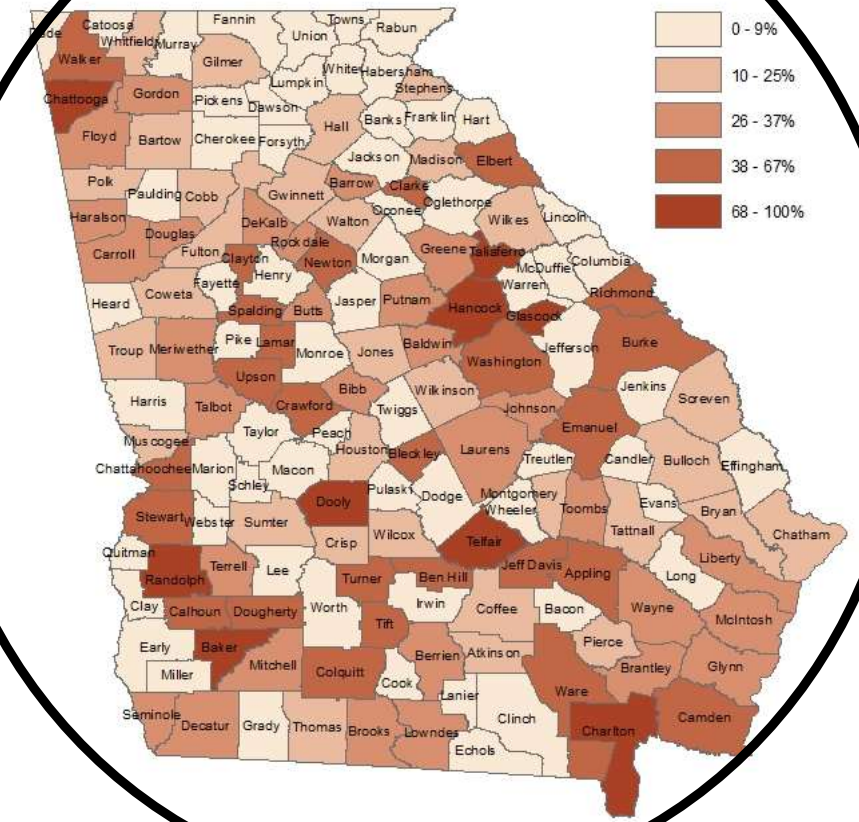


Share of LILA census tracts and the people in them by county in Georgia, 2019

Share of LILA 1 and 10 miles census tracts by county, 2019

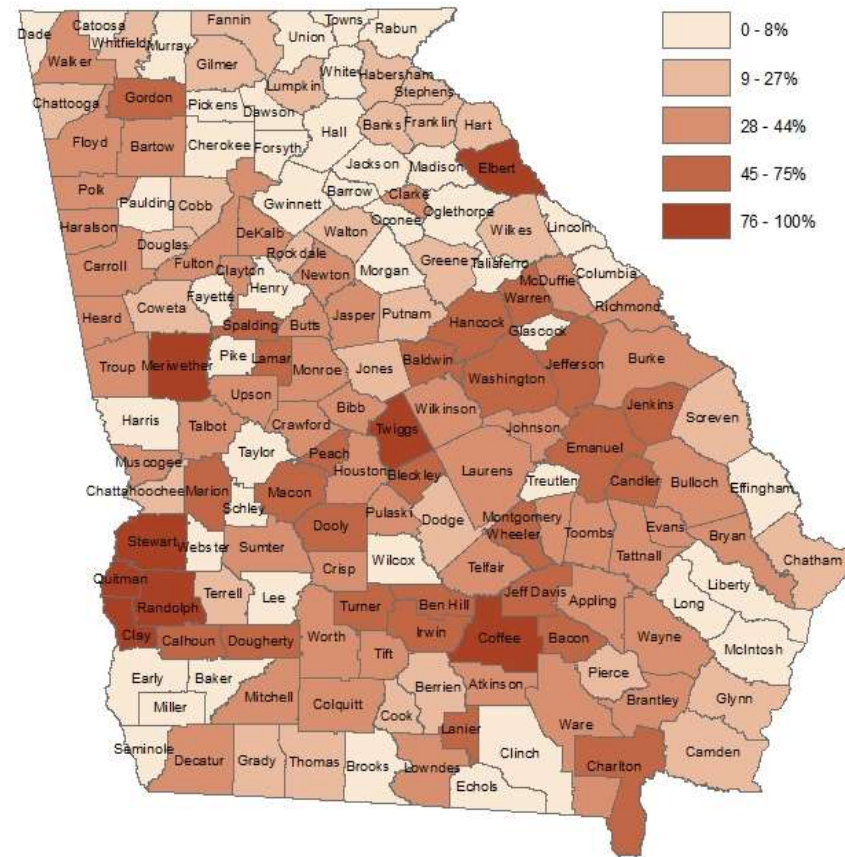


Share of population in LILA 1 and 10 miles census tracts by county, 2019

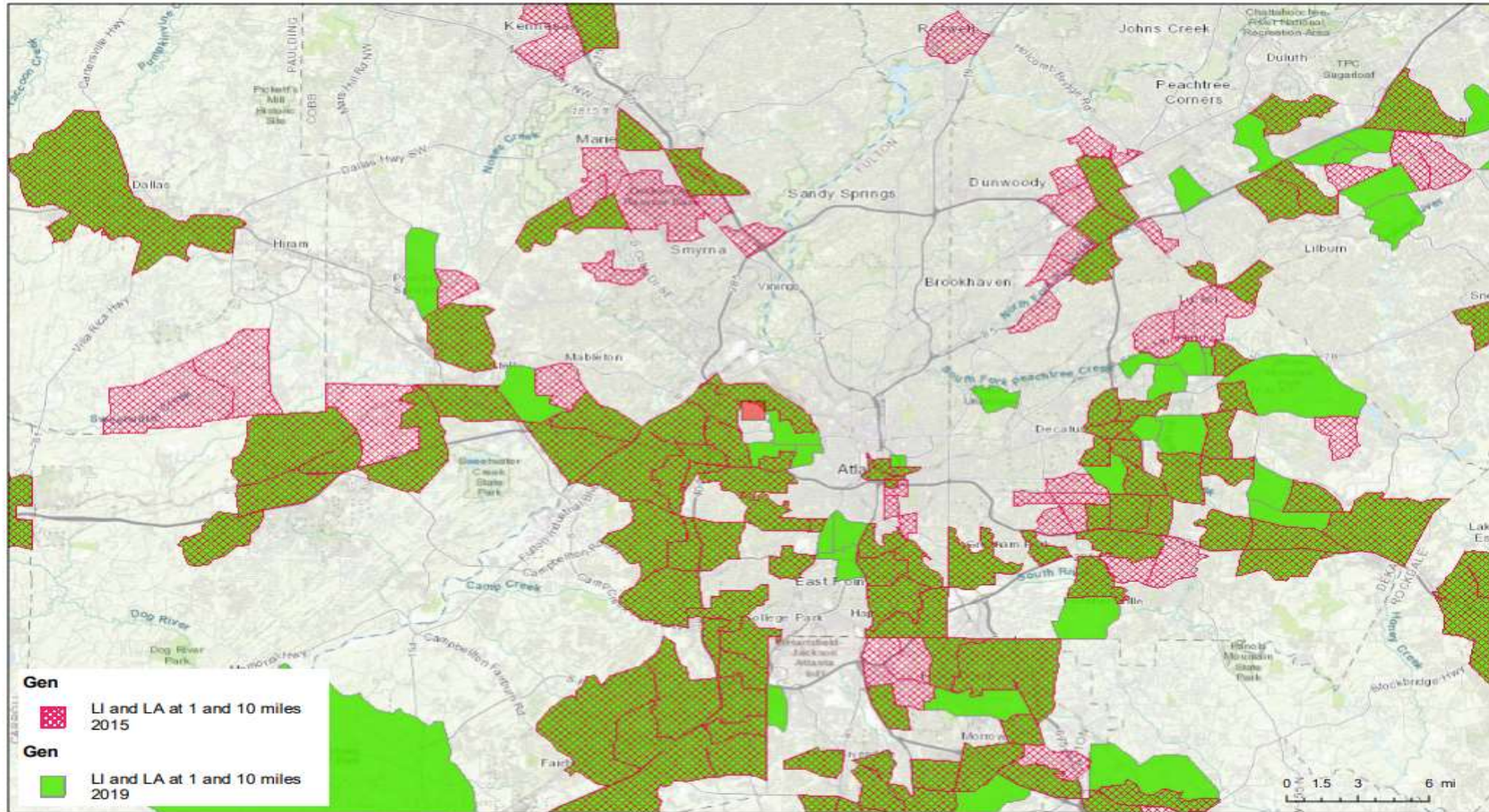


Share of LILA census tracts by county in Georgia, 2019

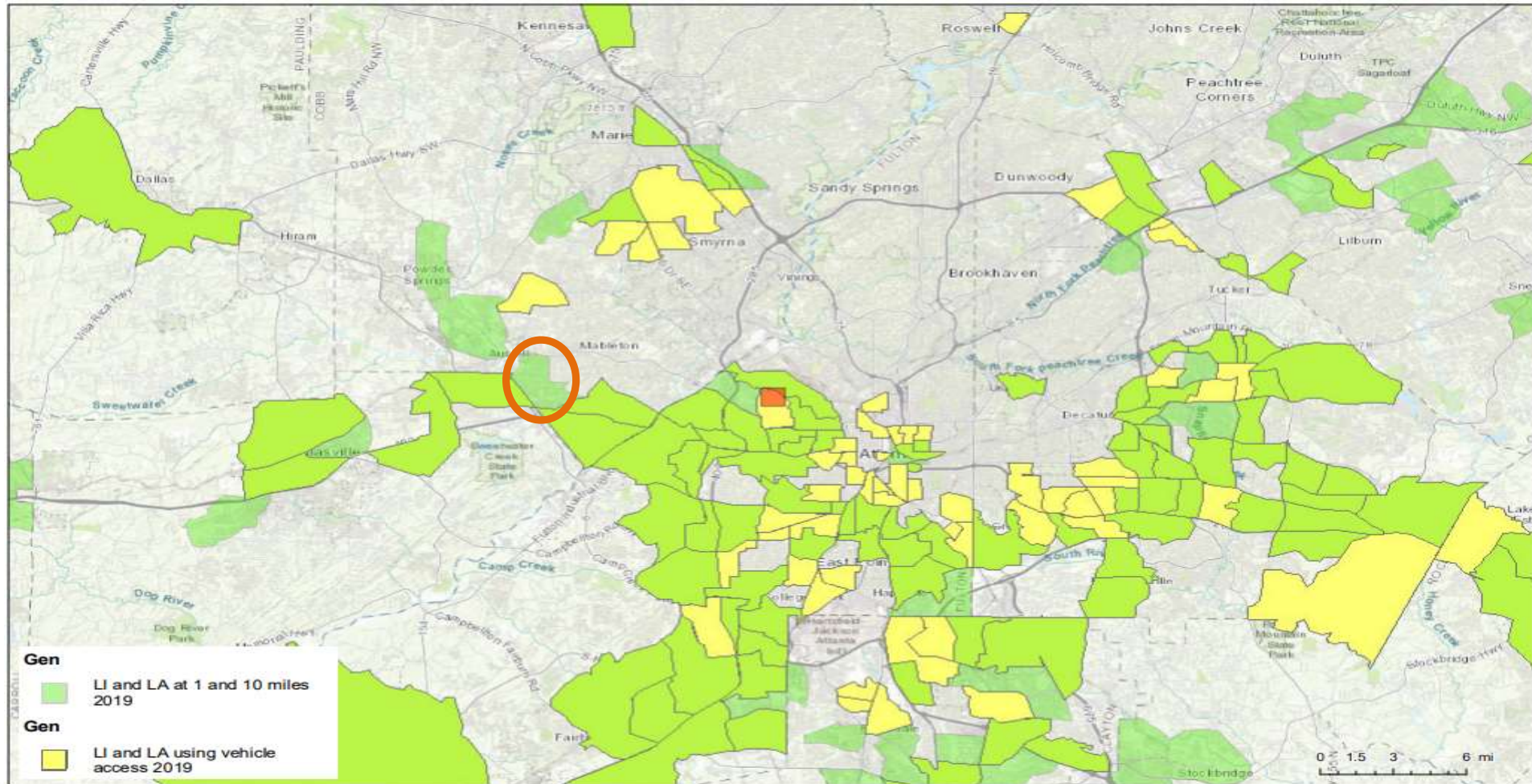
Share of LILA using vehicle access and 20 miles by county, 2019



LILA census tracts in Fulton County, GA, 2015-2019



LILA 1 and 10 miles and LILA using vehicle access census tracts in Fulton County, GA, 2019



Summary

- Limited access to a source of healthy & affordable food is a reality for some people and households.
- States with the highest share of LILA tracts are mostly in the southern part of the U.S.
- Georgia had the 6th highest share of LILA census tracts at the 1- and 10-miles measure.
- Georgia had the 5th highest share of population that live in LILA census tracts at the 1- and 10-miles measure.
- Georgia had the 2nd highest share of LILA census tracts using the vehicle access and 20 miles measure.
- Baker, Glascock, and Taliaferro County had 100% of their tracts classified as LILA at the 1- and 10-miles measure.
- Most counties with a high share of LILA vehicle access census tracts are in southwest GA.



Questions?

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