

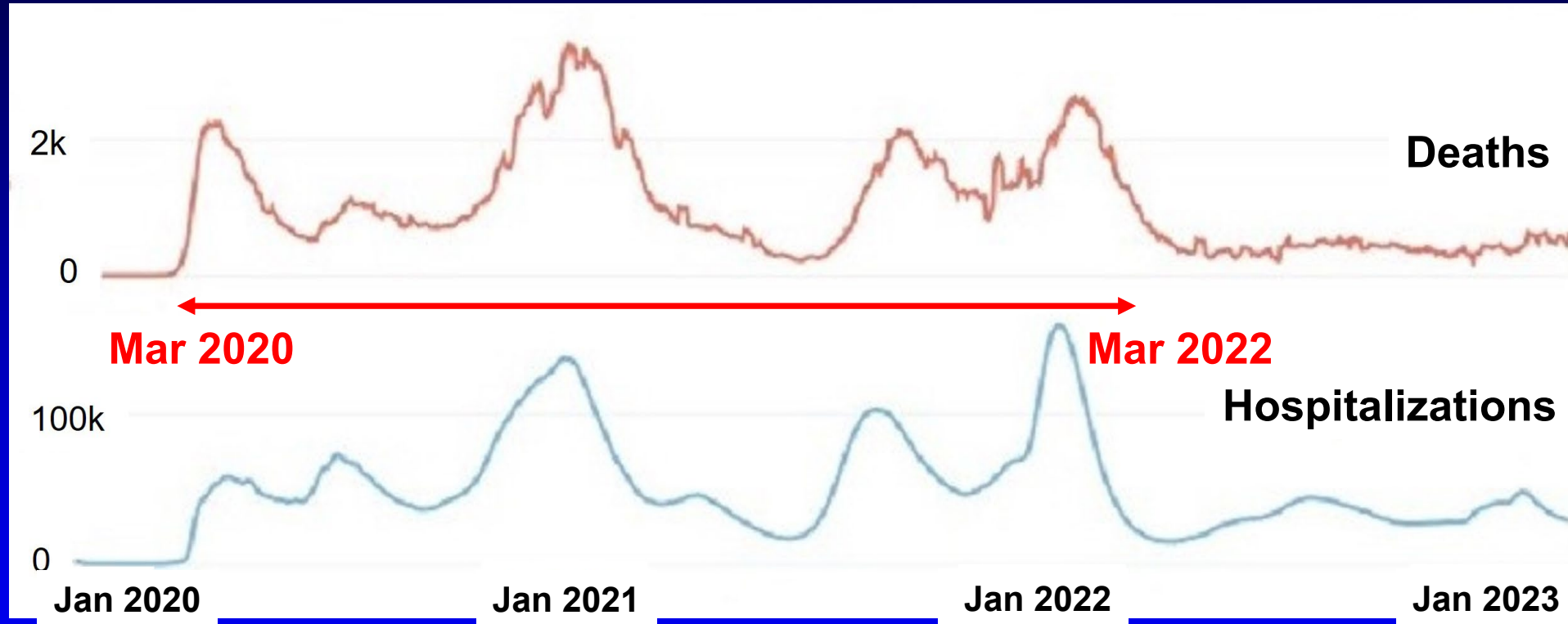
# The Value and Resilience of Beach Tourism During the COVID Pandemic



Clearwater  
Beach, FL,  
2020

*Shore and Beach (2023)*

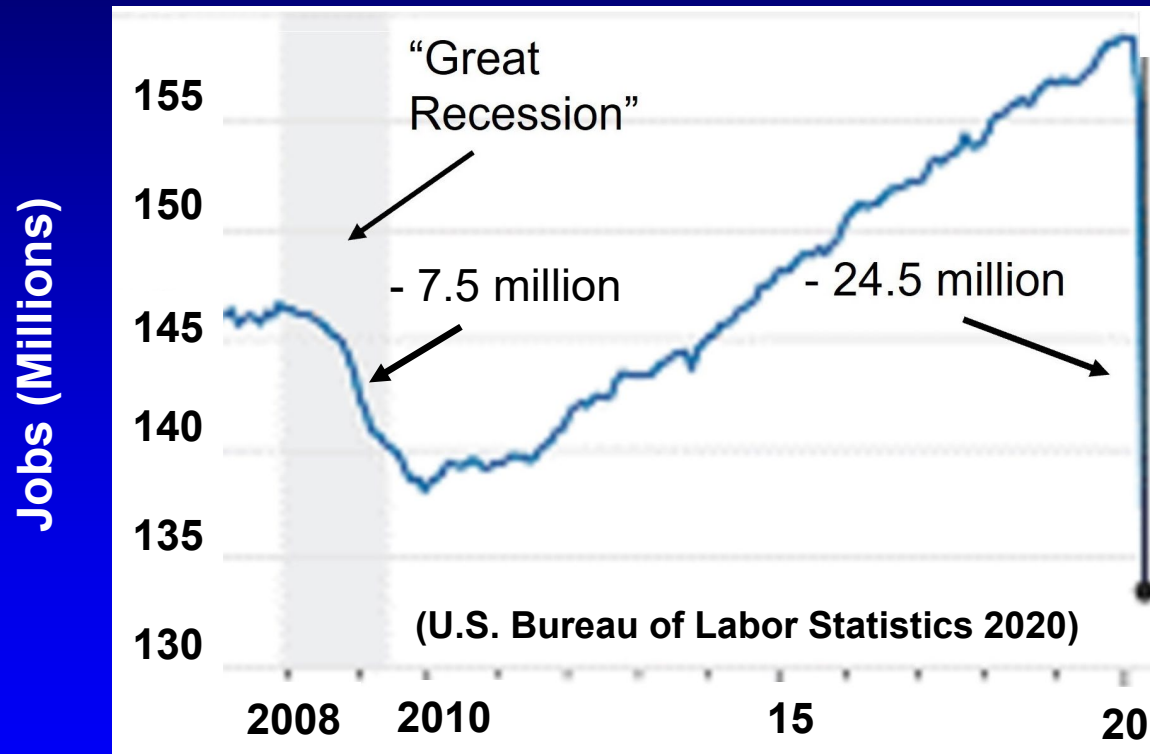
# Worst COVID (COronaVirusDisease) Period, March 2020 – March 2022



(Johns Hopkins 2023)

# COVID Greatly Impacted U.S. Economy

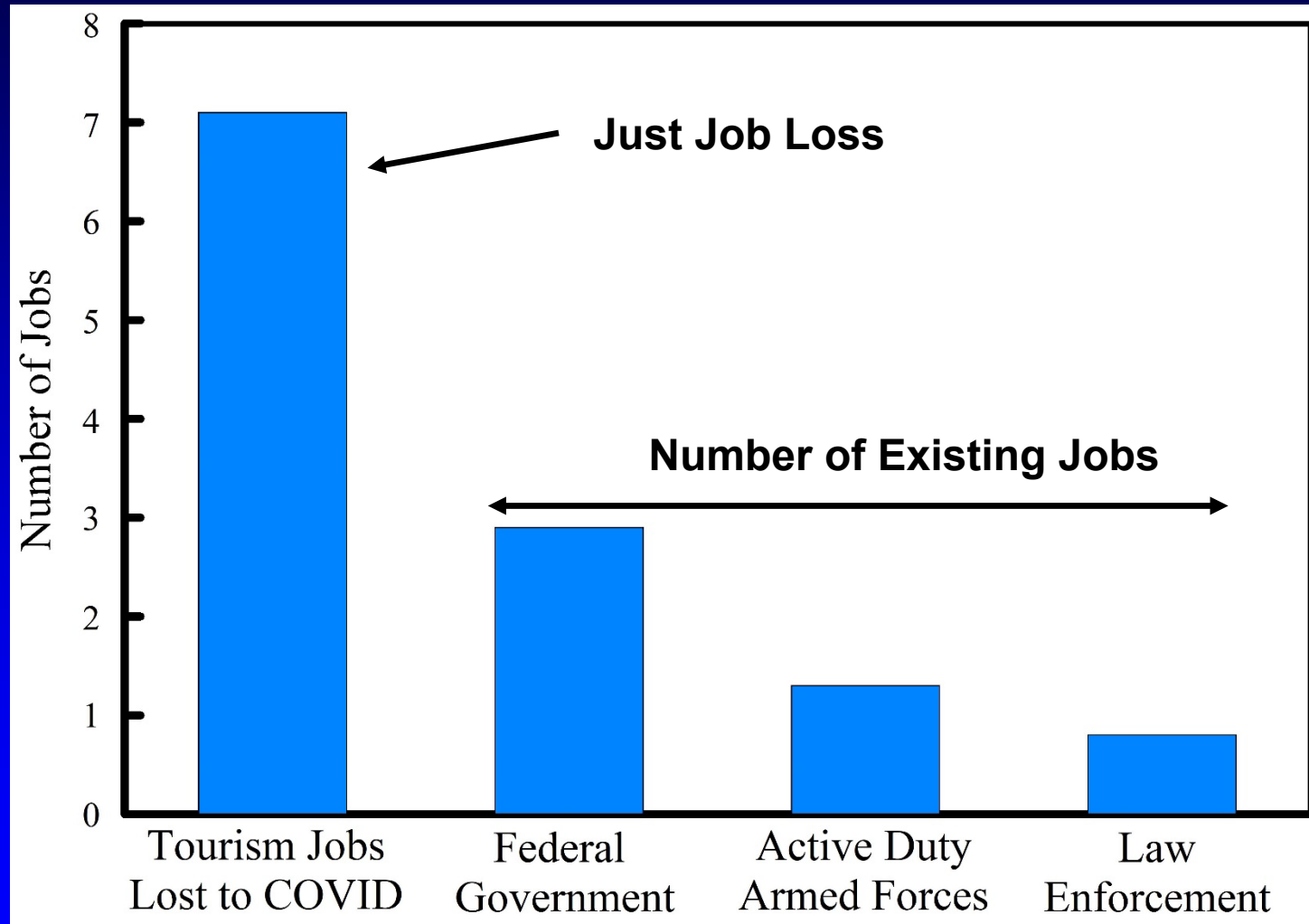
- Job loss in 2020 was the worst ever, exceeding the worst year of the “Great Depression” in the 1930s (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics 2020)



- Trillion-dollar programs pulled U.S. out of an abyss

# Tourism Was Impacted the Most

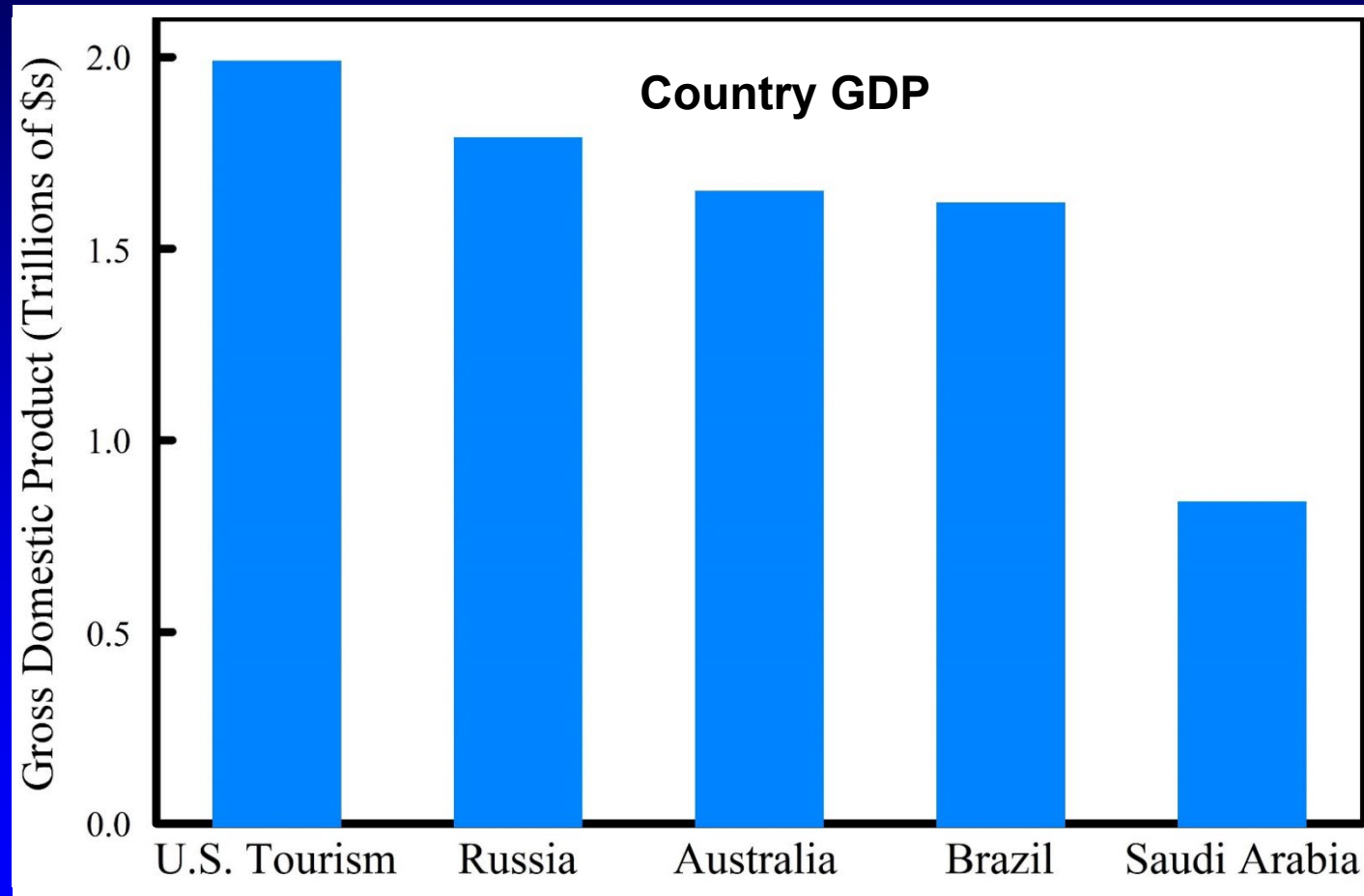
- Tourism accounted for about 40% of all job loss in 2020



(U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics 2020)

# Tourism Huge Contributor to Economy

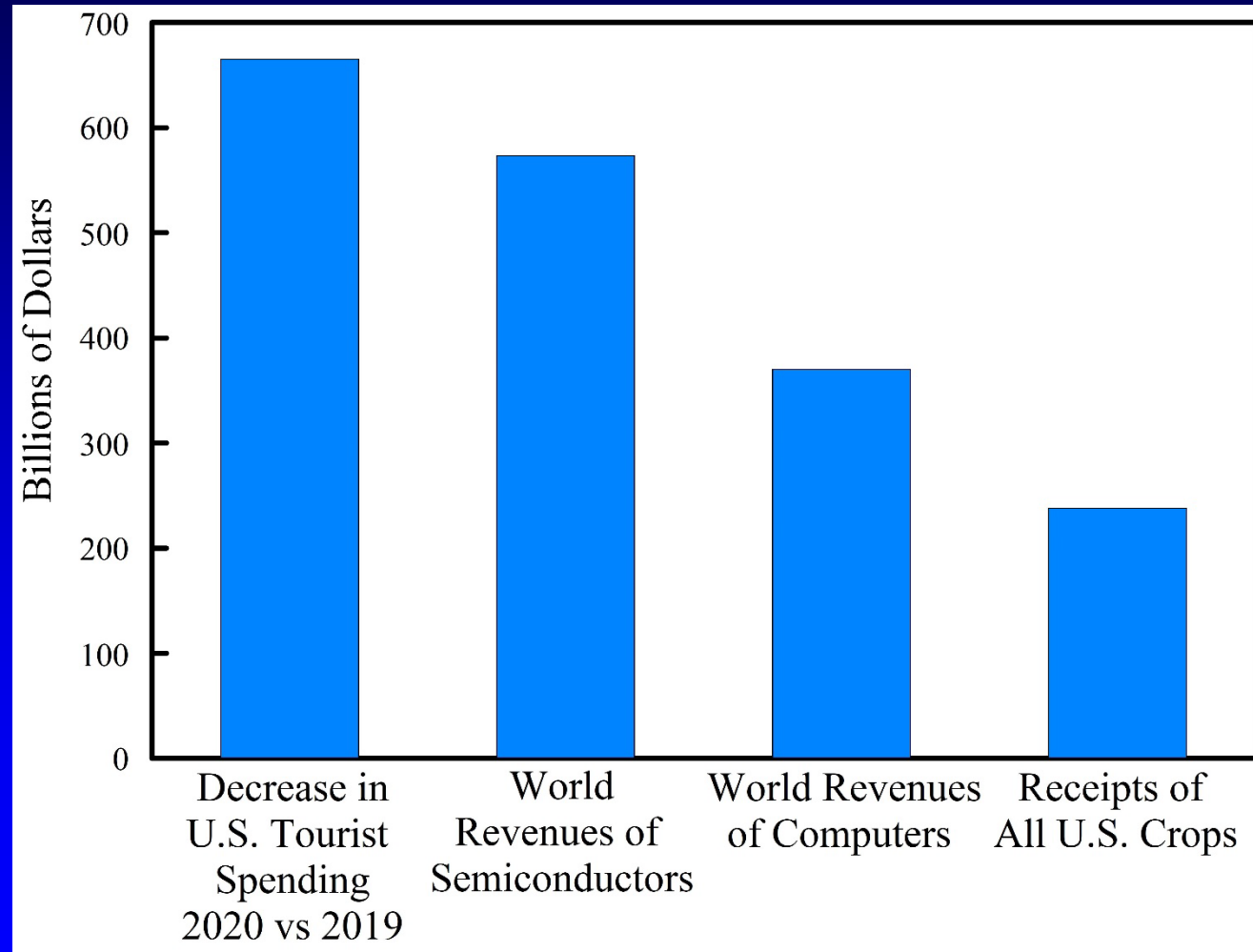
- Its contribution to the U.S. Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is greater than the entire GDPs of major countries



(Statista 2022; Statisticetimes 2022)

# COVID Tanked U.S. Tourist Spending

- Spending was down ~ 45% in 2020 and 25% in 2021 from pre-pandemic 2019



(WorldTravel&TourismCouncil 2022; Fortunebusinessinsights 2022; Businessresearchcompany 2022; U.S. Department of Agriculture 2022)

# Beach Tourism Fared Very Differently Booming During COVID



Clearwater Beach, Mar 2020

# In 2020 People Streamed to Beaches





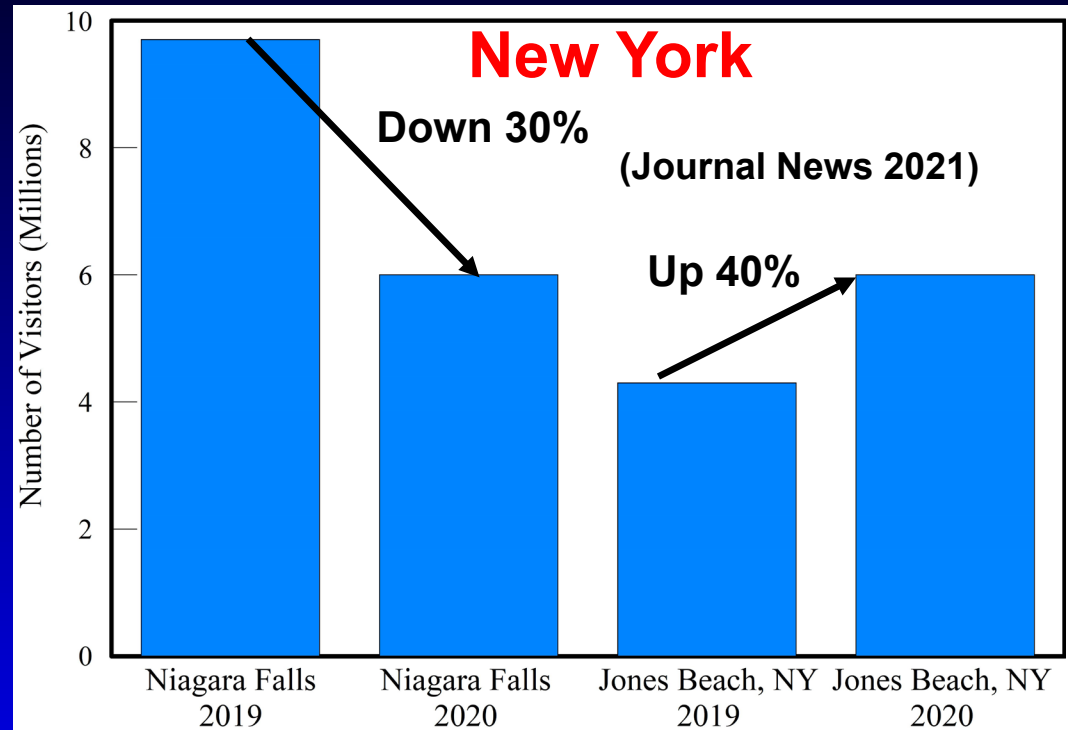
# Beaches 2020

- Governor of Rhode Island said, “I want you to go to the beach and enjoy that, but we are struggling to keep the crowds under control. We’re seeing really big crowds” (Wpri.com 2020)
- “Beaches in coastal Alabama are filling up. The roads are so choked with tourists that weekend traffic has become fully gridlocked” (Slate.com 2020)
- In Massachusetts, “Coastal counties reported sharp increases in park and beach attendance in 2020 with Barnstable County up 323%, Plymouth County 254%, ...” (The Patriot Ledger 2020)



M-Street Beach, South Boston

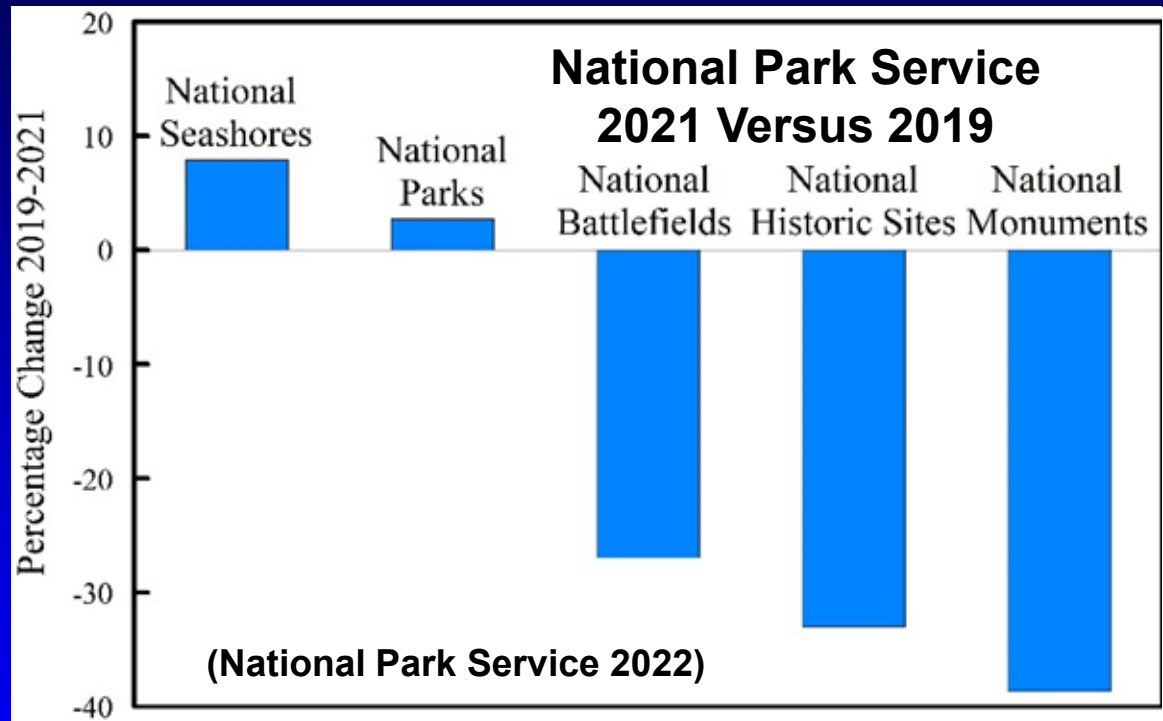
# Beaches in 2020



- Attendance at Disneyland in Orange County, CA, crashed, down over 80%, but Orange County beaches had record attendance (Statista 2022)

# Beaches 2021

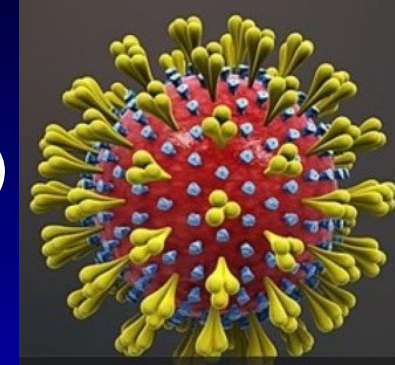
Despite more deaths in 2021 from COVID than any year, National Seashores boomed



- At South Padre Island, TX, tourist tax revenues smashed records - up 34% (Myspi.opengov.com 2022)

# People Were Correct - Beaches Safe

- **“Beaches and parks are some of the safest places you can gather”** (Professor Linsey Marr, expert, airborne virus transmission, Virginia Tech, 2021)
- **“Within minutes, the majority of the virus is inactivated on surfaces and in the air in direct sunlight”** (Dr. Paul Dabisch, Department of Homeland Security’s biodefense research laboratory, 2020)
- **“There has never been a COVID-19 outbreak linked to a beach ever, anywhere in the world”** (Dr. Mark Woolhouse, Professor, infectious disease epidemiology, Edinburgh University, 2021)
- **“Near-absent are examples of transmission at beaches”** (Washington Post 2021)

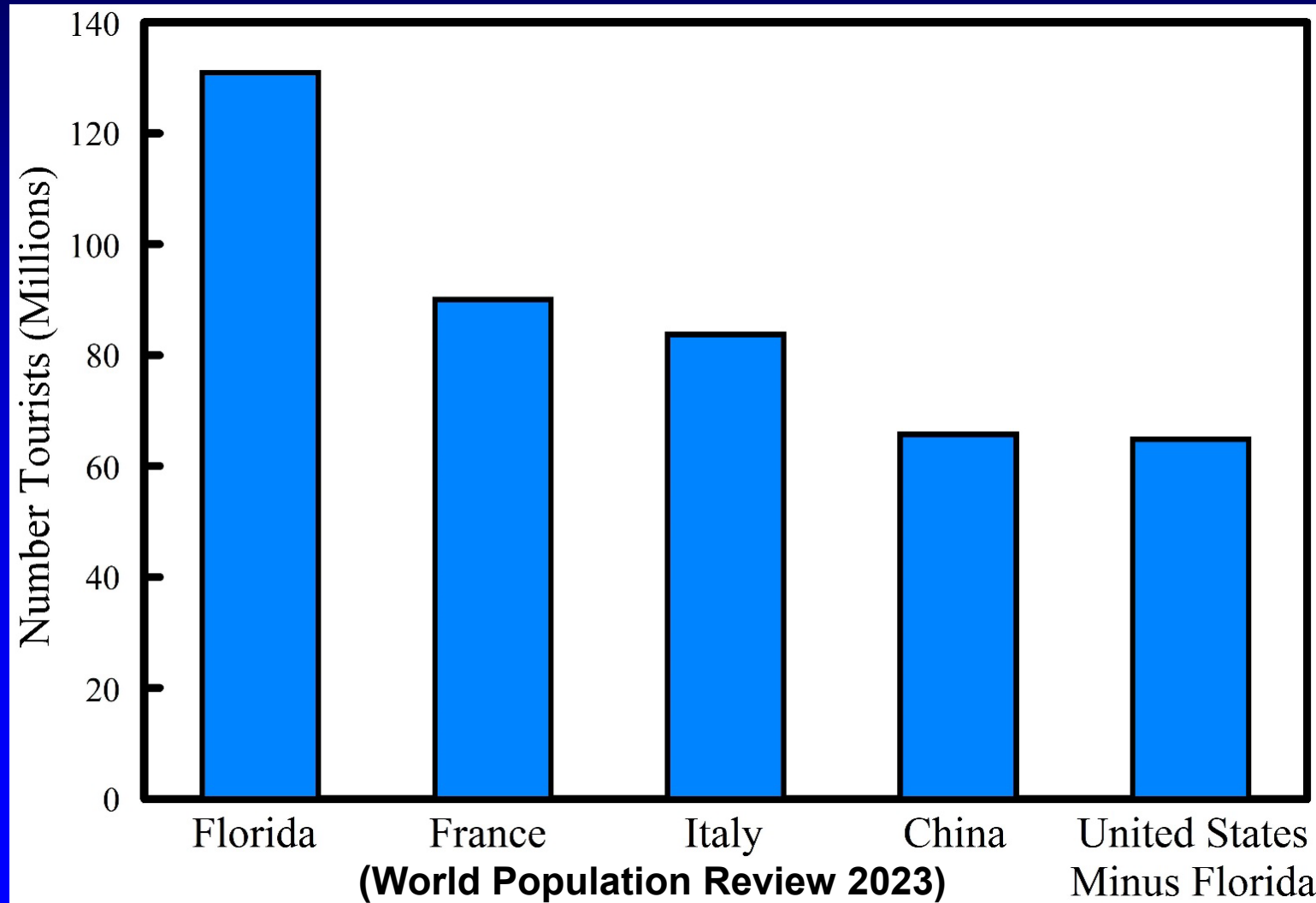


# What About Florida?



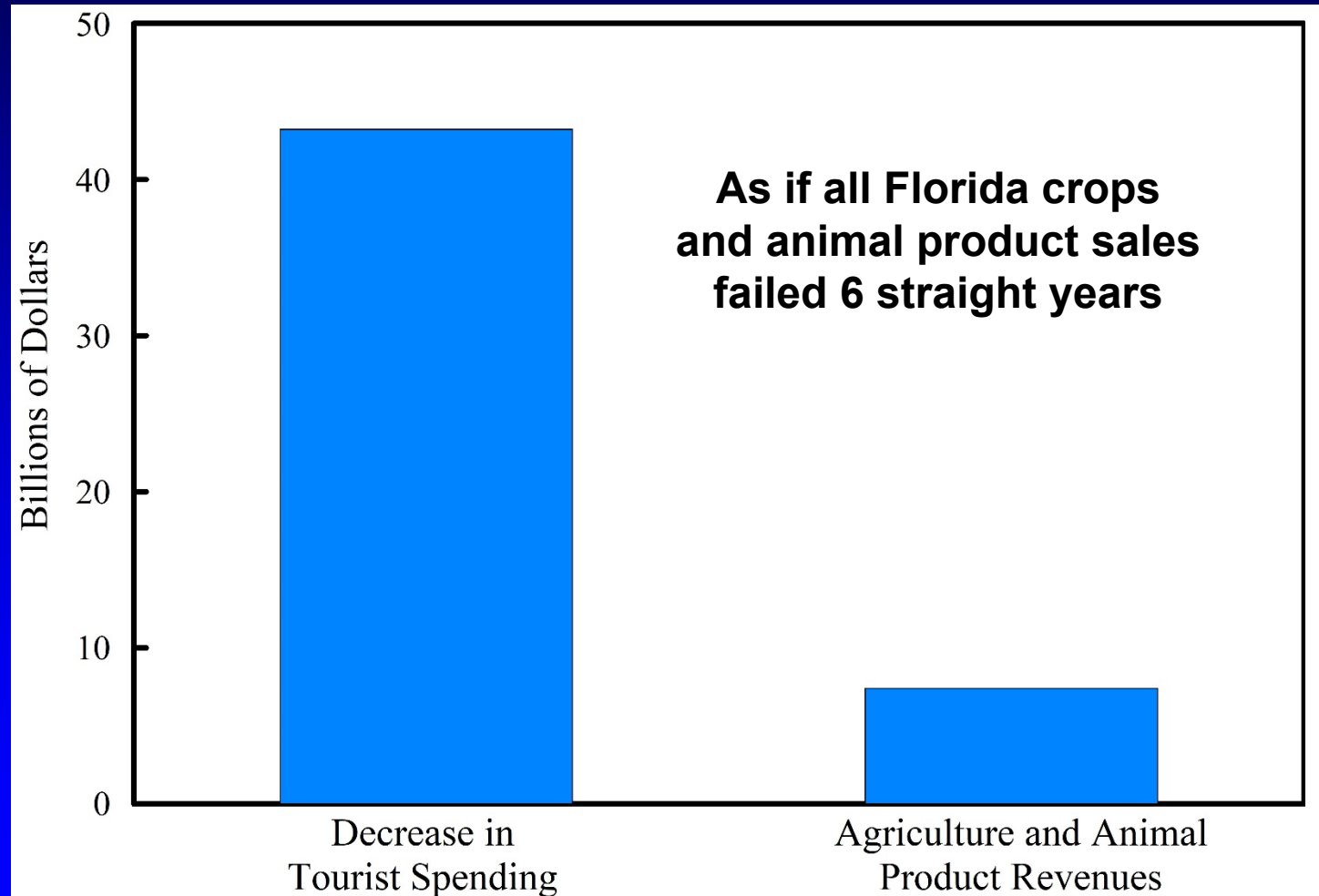
# Florida Tourism is Huge

- If Florida were its own country, it would have more tourist visits than any country on the planet



# Spending Decrease 2020

- Decrease in Florida tourist spending almost 6 times the value of Florida agriculture and livestock revenue



(VisitFlorida 2022; U.S. Travel Administration 2022; U.S. Dept Agriculture)

# Was All Florida Tourism Hit?

- Florida has interior attractions, cruises, and beaches





# Florida Non-Beach Tourism

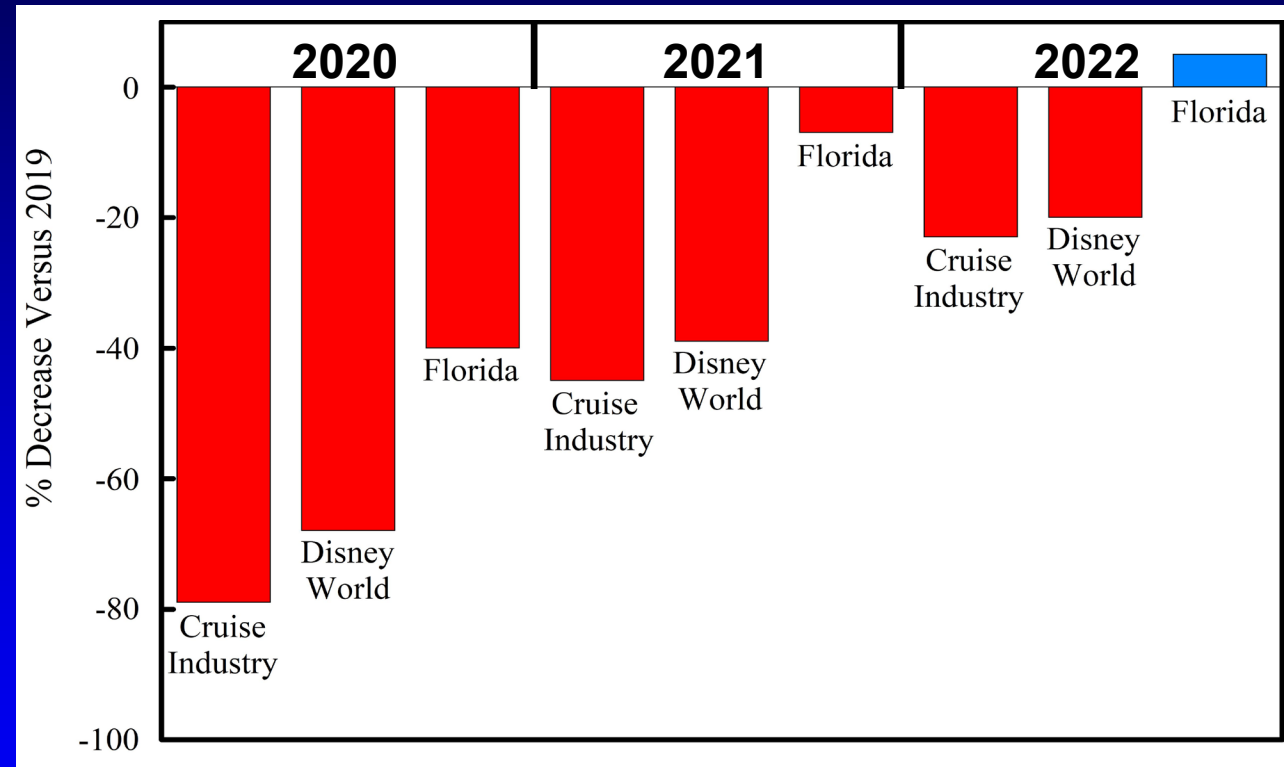
- Non-beach tourism collapsed in 2020, 2021, and 2022



Cruise Industry

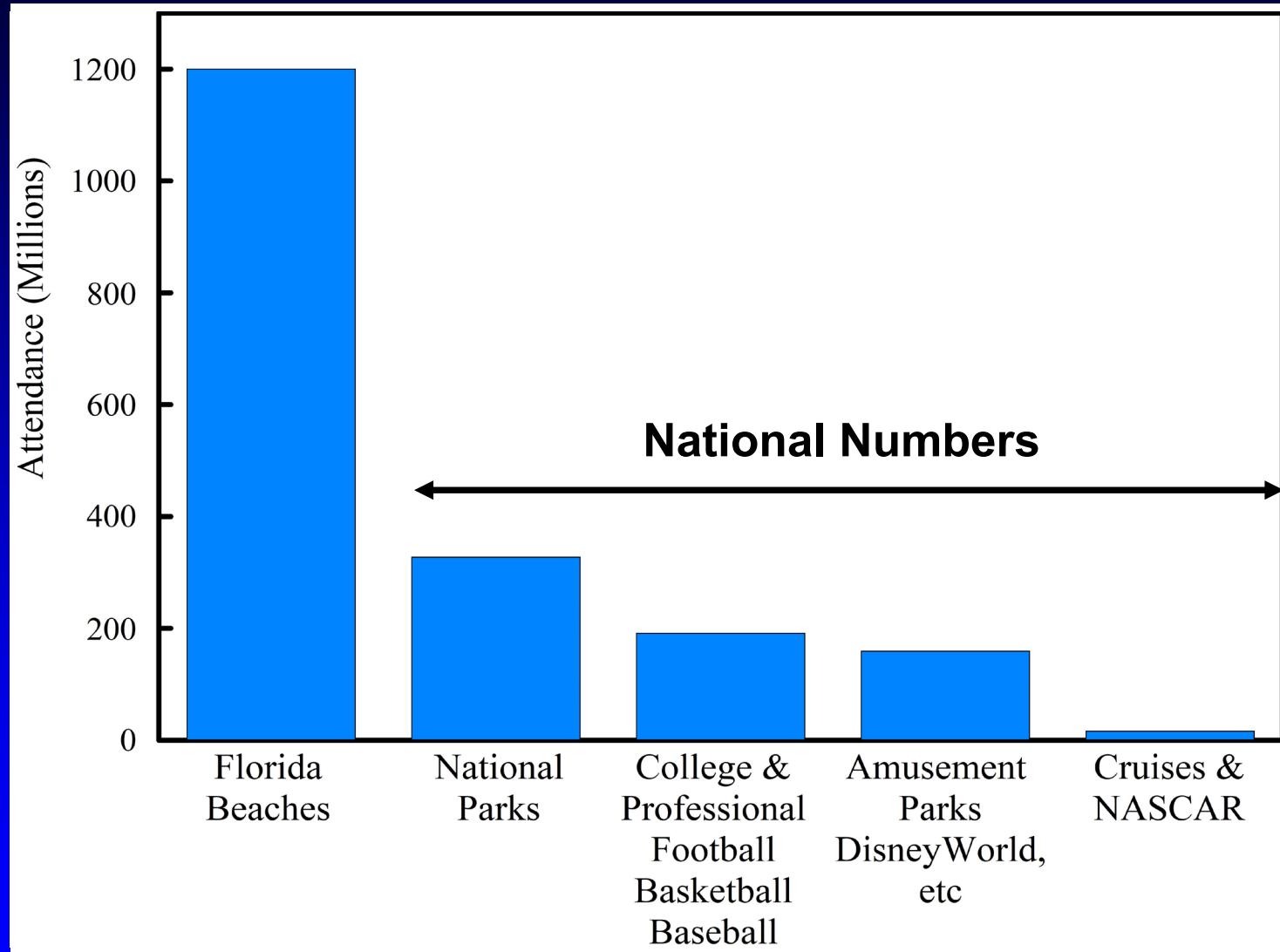


Disney World



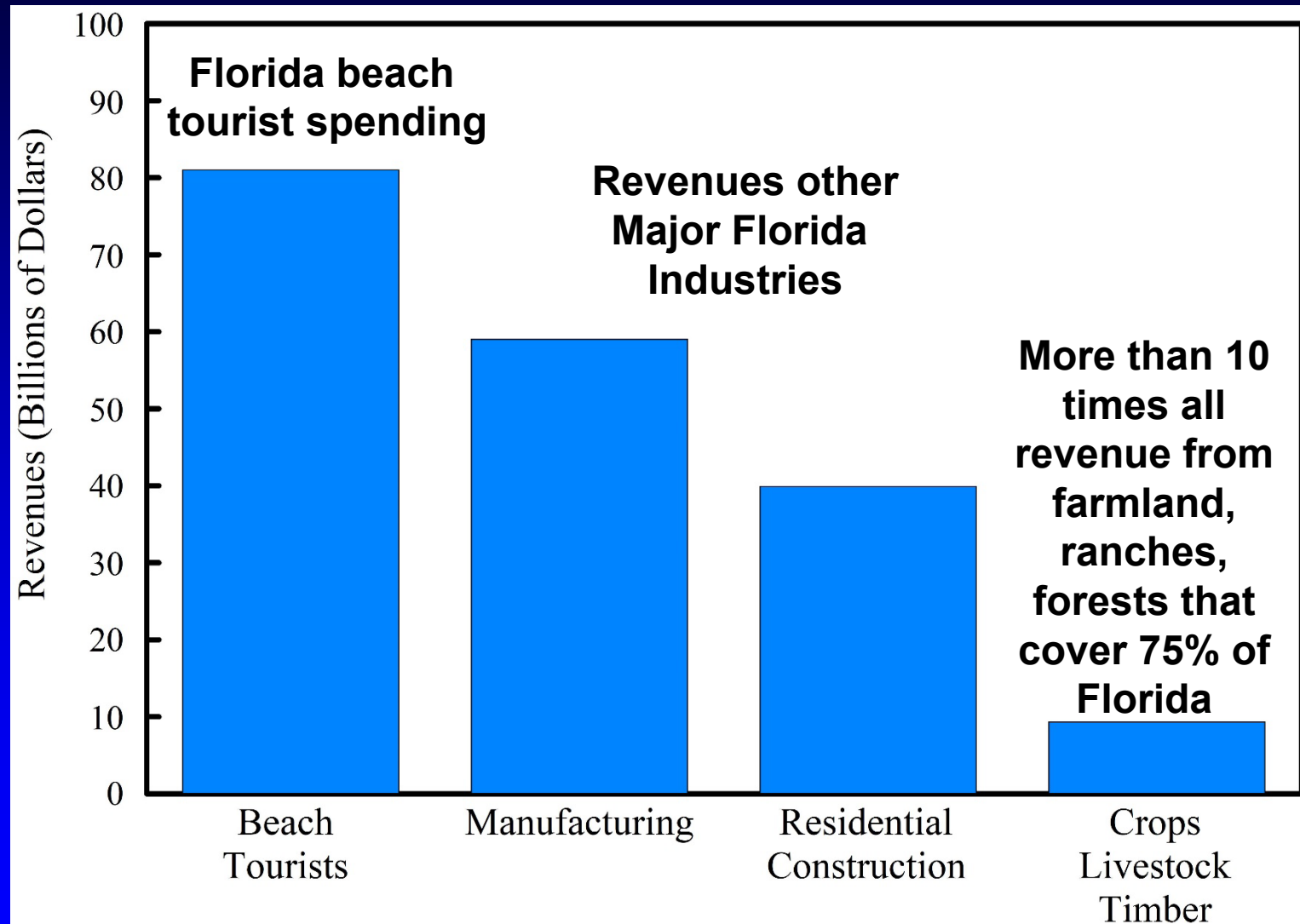
(Statista 2023; VisitFlorida 2023;  
Themed Entertainment Association 2023)

# Beach Tourism is Huge



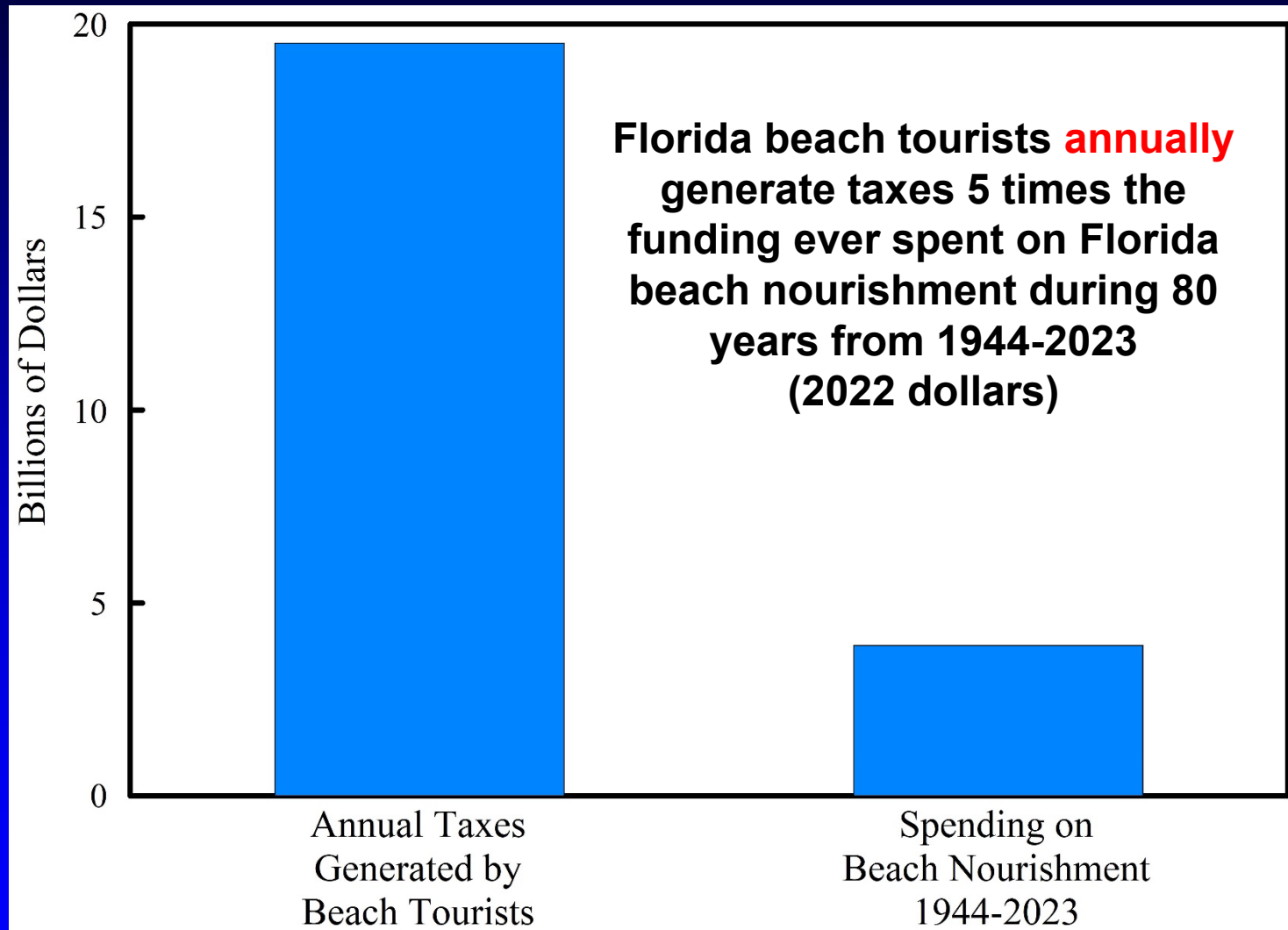
(National Park Service 2020; NFL 2023; NBA 2023; Baseball America 2023; NCAA 2019; Themed Entertainment Association 2019; Statista 2022; MotorracingSports 2023)

# Florida Beach Tourist Spending is Huge



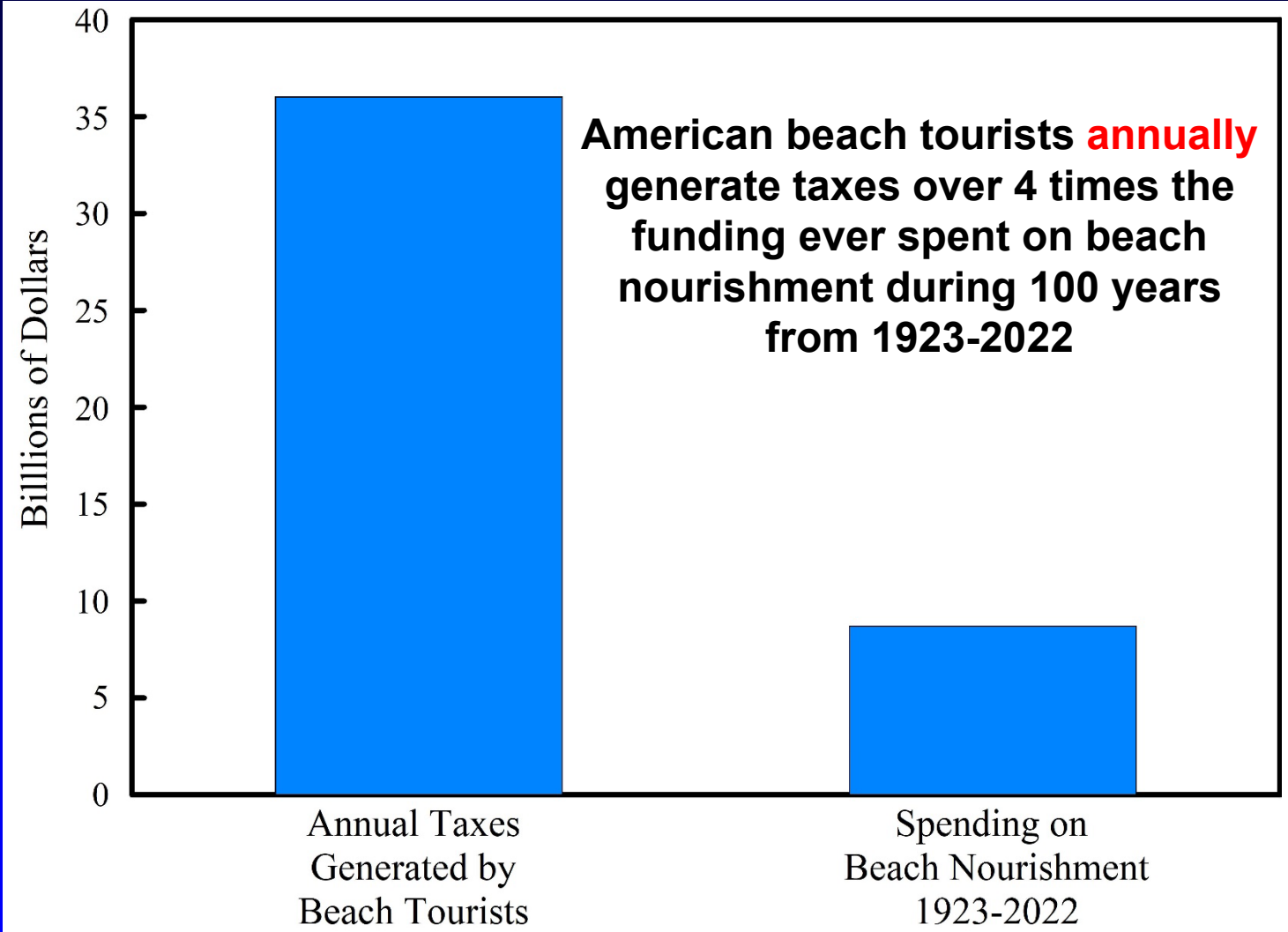
(National Association of Manufacturing 2022; Statista 2023; Florida Department of Agriculture 2023; U.S. Travel Organization 2023)

# Beach Tourist Tax Generation is Huge



(Rockport Analytics 2022; West Carolina 2024)

# Beach Tourist Tax Generation is Huge



(U.S. Travel Organization 2023; American Shore and Beach Preservation Association 2024)

# Beach Tourism and COVID

- The impact can be seen most readily at locations where beach tourism dominates tourism

Panama City Beach



Miami Beach



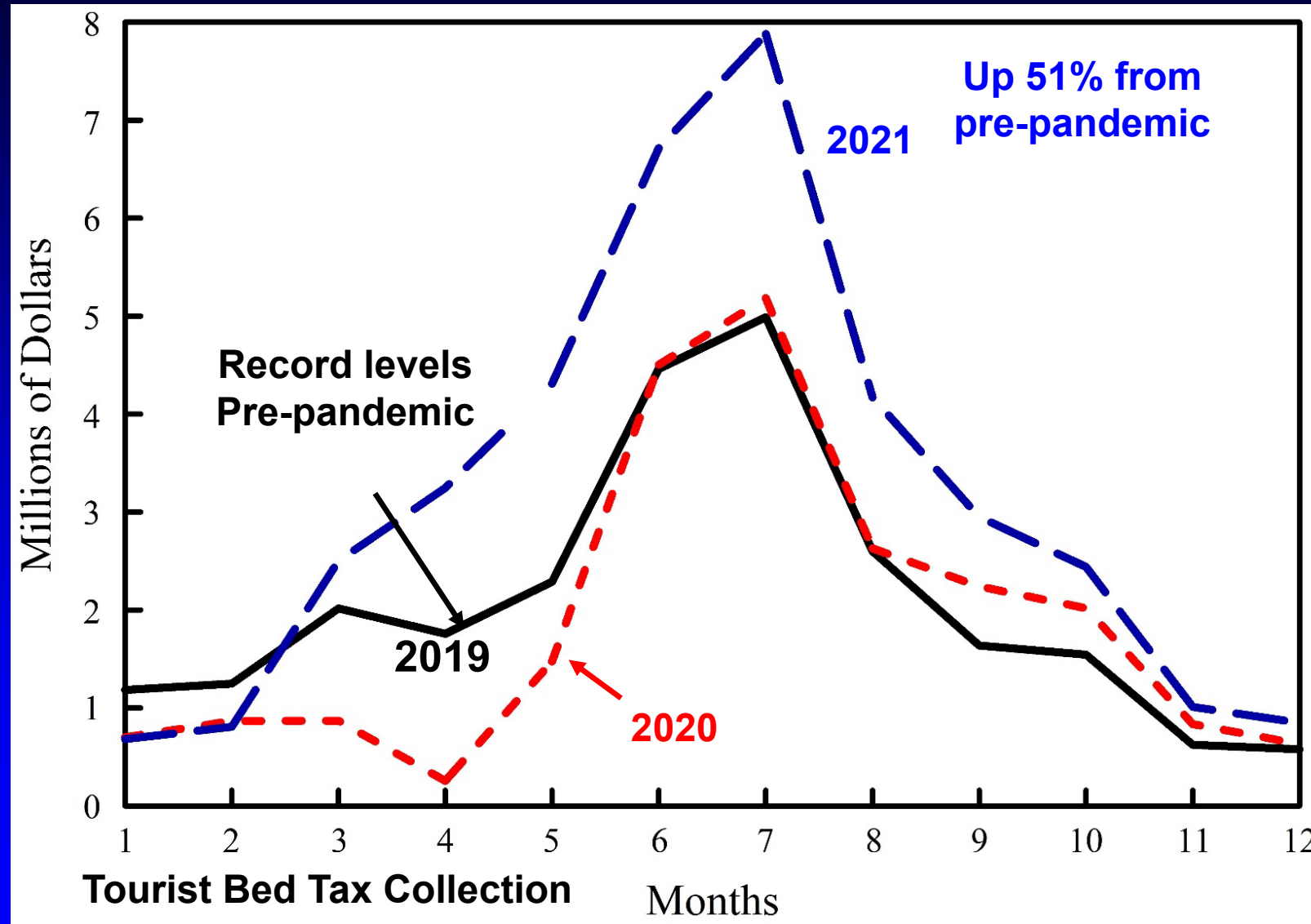
Daytona Beach

# Panama City Beach

- Panama City Beach has a population of 15,000, which increases to 100,000 during peak summer months (PanamaCityBeach.com, 2022)



# Panama City Tourism - COVID



(Bay County Clerk of Court and Comptroller 2022)

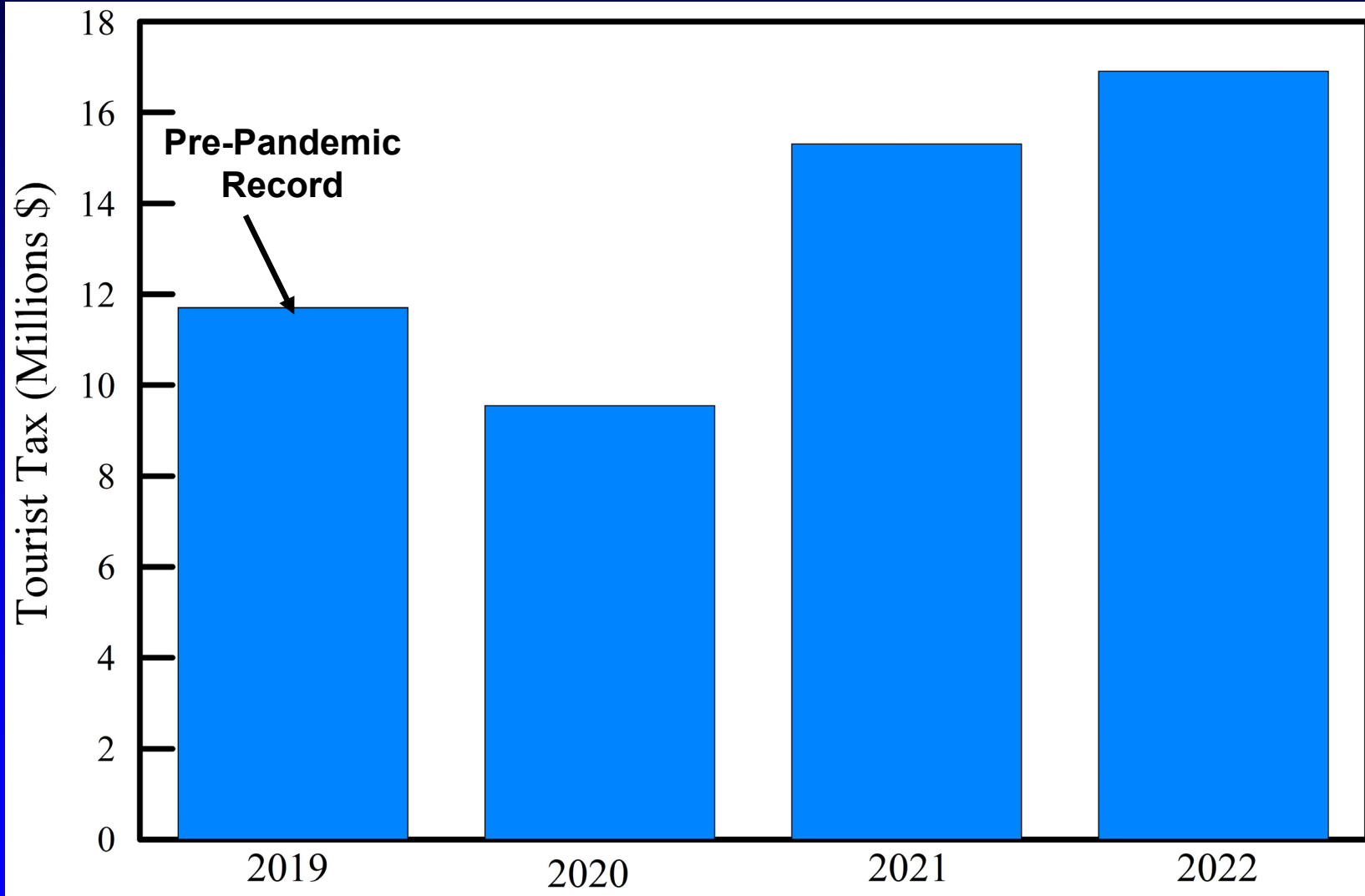


# Miami Beach

- In 2021, tourists swamped Miami Beach with numbers up a remarkable 63% relative to pre-pandemic 2019 levels (Miami and the Beaches 2022)



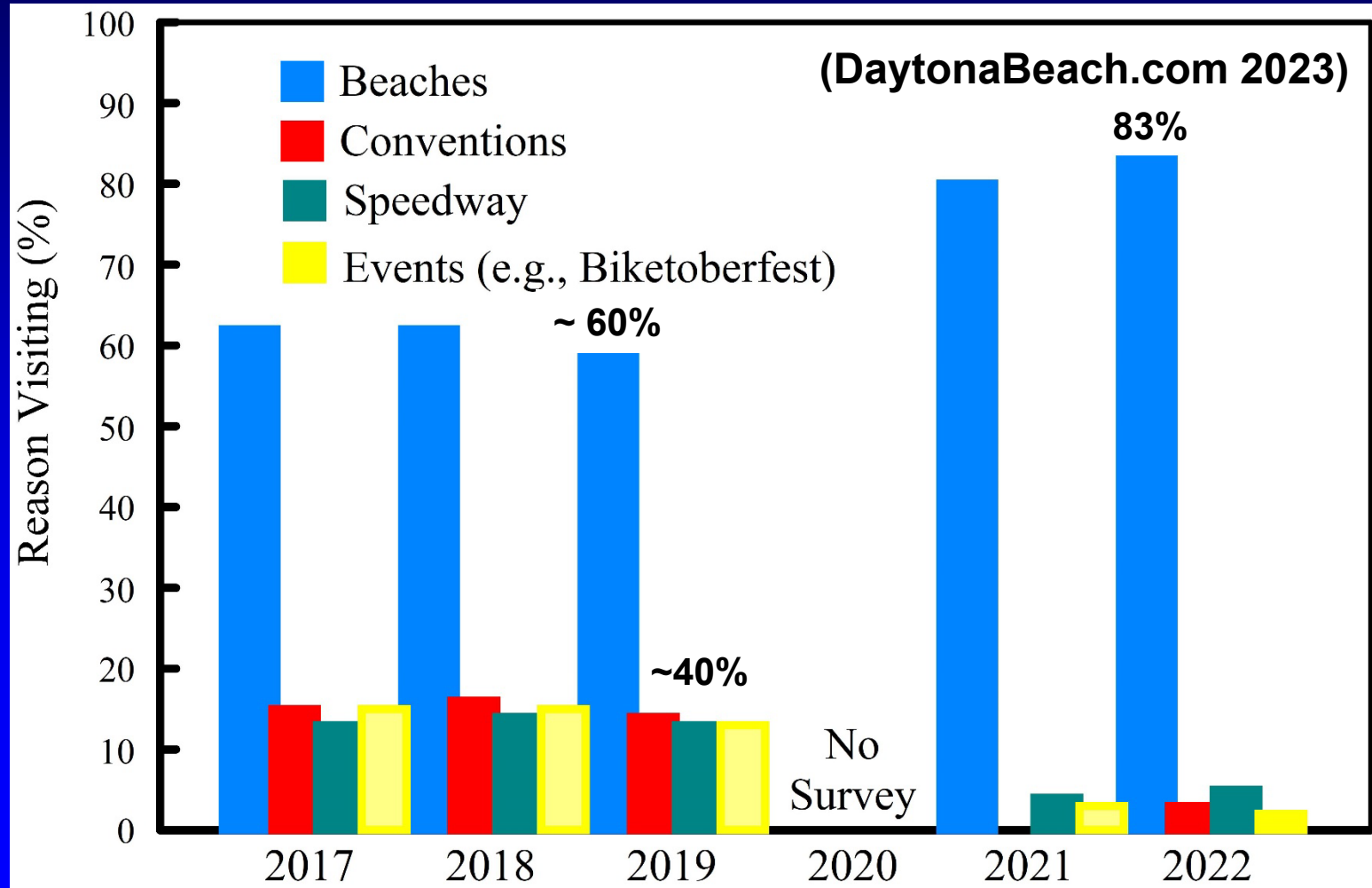
# Daytona Beach Tourist Tax



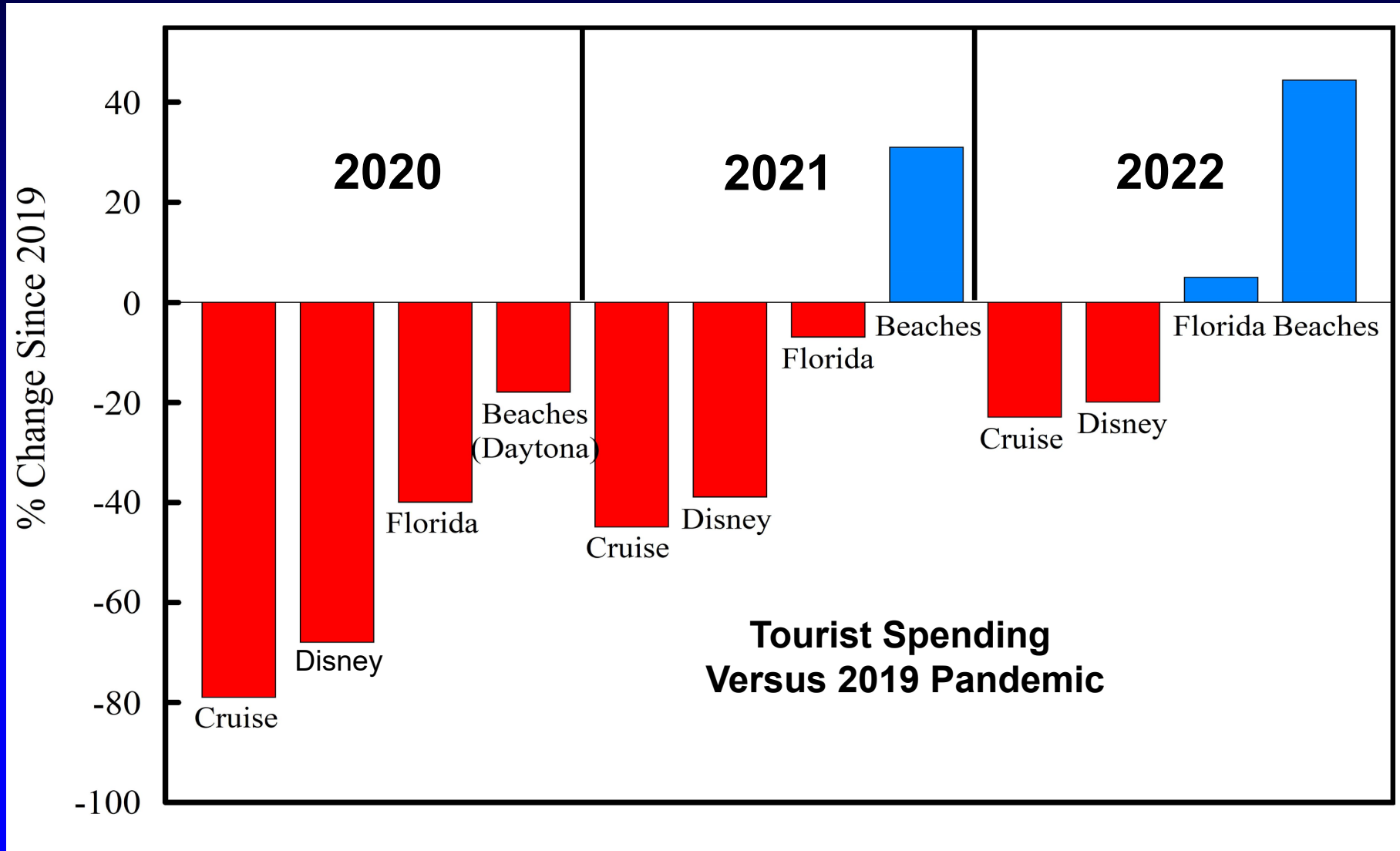
(DaytonaBeach.com 2023)

# Daytona Beach

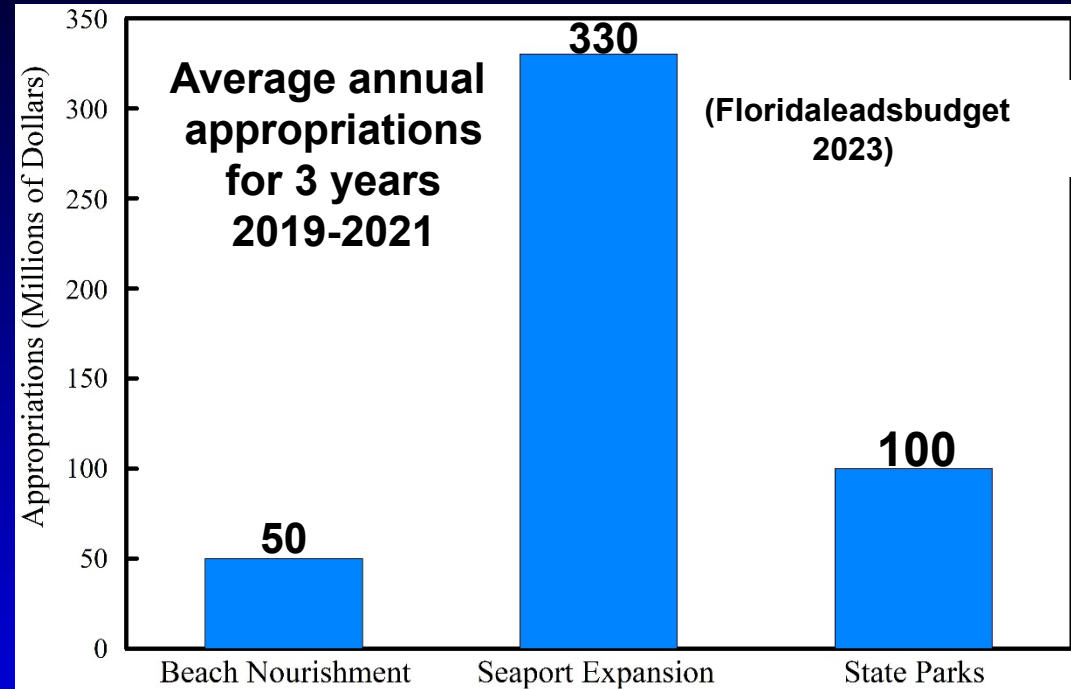
- The pandemic caused a great increase in the percentage of visitors going to Daytona Beach for its beaches



# Beaches Save the Day



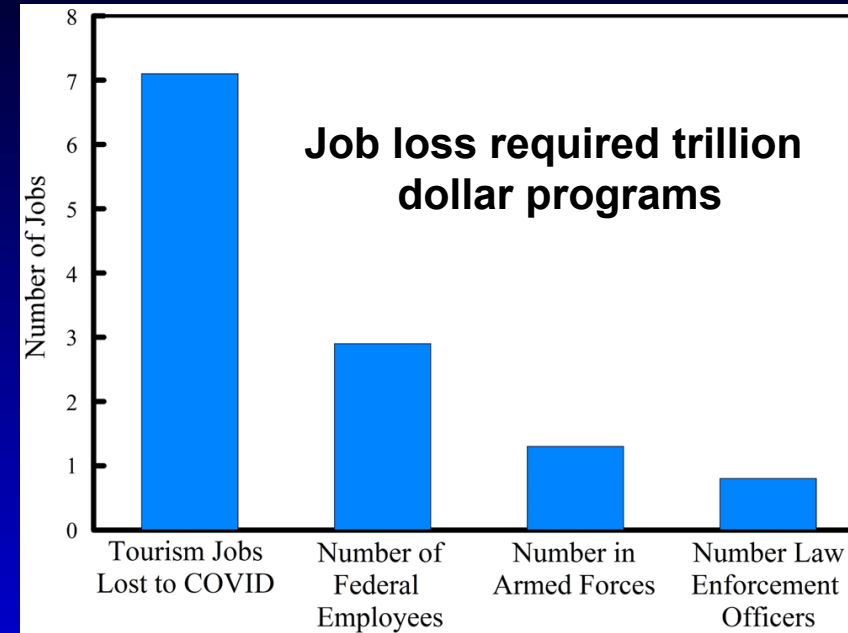
# Florida Legislature Support



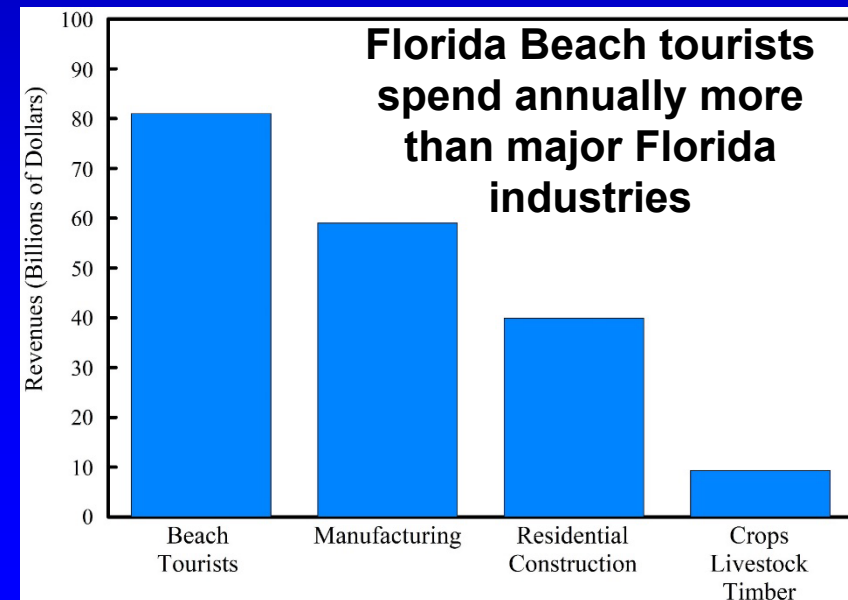
- Florida seaports have an annual trade deficit of \$44 billion, costing American jobs (EnterpriseFlorida 2023)
- Florida tourism brings in \$17 billion annually in foreign tourist spending, creating jobs (U.S. Travel Organization 2020)
- 40 times more people visit Florida beaches than Florida parks (Florida State Parks Foundation)

# Conclusions

- **Tourism important to the U.S. economy**

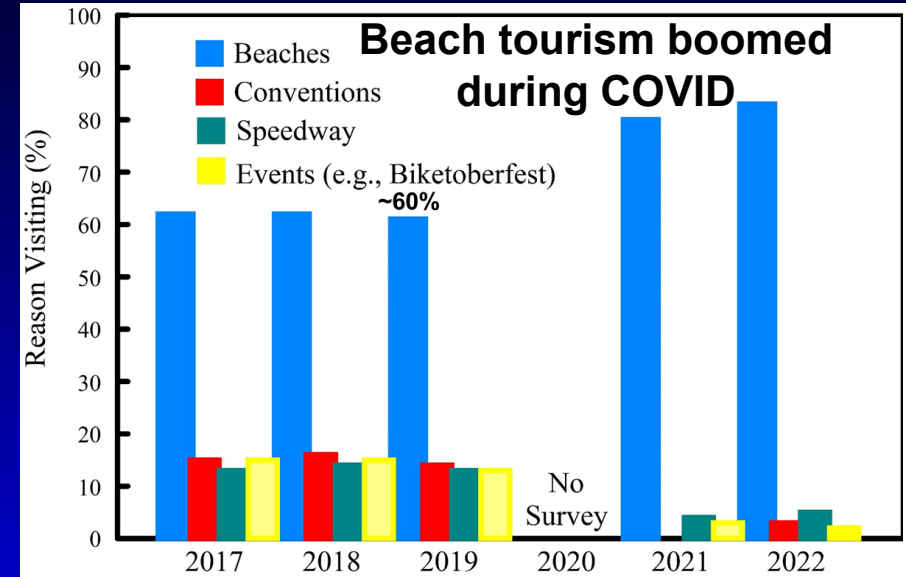


- **Beach tourism important to Florida's economy**

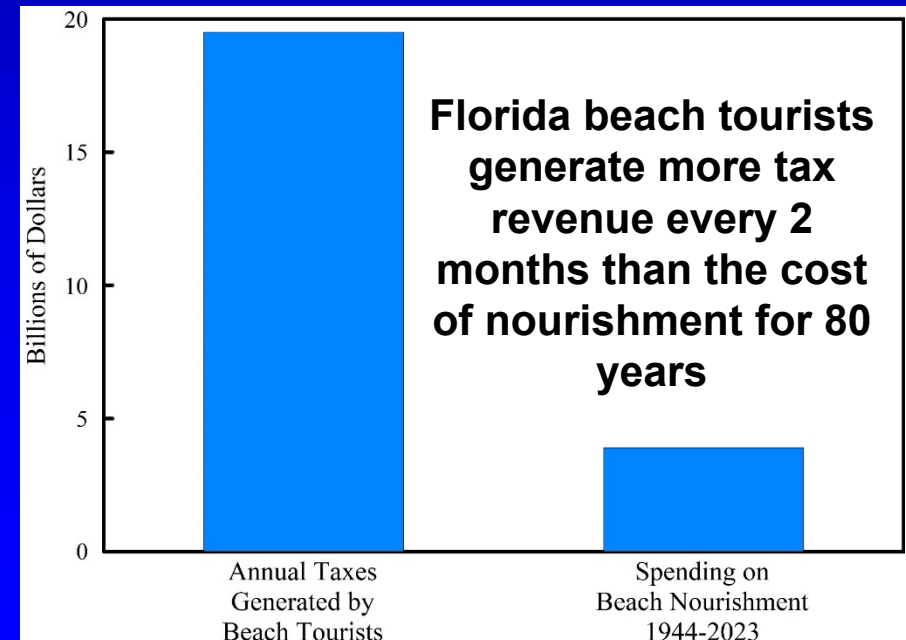


# Conclusions

- Beach tourism is resilient



- Beach nourishment is a bargain





**The End**

**Panama City Beach**