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S. Hrg. 110–834

# REDUCING THE UNDERCOUNT IN THE 2010 CENSUS

## HEARING

BEFORE THE

FEDERAL FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT, GOVERNMENT INFORMATION, FEDERAL SERVICES, AND INTERNATIONAL SECURITY SUBCOMMITTEE

OF THE

COMMITTEE ON
HOMELAND SECURITY AND
GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS
UNITED STATES SENATE

ONE HUNDRED TENTH CONGRESS

SECOND SESSION

SEPTEMBER 23, 2008

Available via http://www.gpoaccess.gov/congress/index.html

Printed for the use of the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs

U.S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE

45–579 PDF WASHINGTON : 2009

For sale by the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office
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# REDUCING THE UNDERCOUNT IN THE 2010 CENSUS

**TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 23, 2008**

U.S. SENATE,
SUBCOMMITTEE ON FEDERAL FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT,
GOVERNMENT INFORMATION, FEDERAL SERVICE,
AND INTERNATIONAL SECURITY,
OF THE COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY
AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS,
*Washington, DC.*

The Subcommittee met, pursuant to notice, at 10:34 a.m., in room SD–342, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Hon. Thomas R. Carper, Chairman of the Subcommittee, presiding.

Present: Senator Carper.

## OPENING STATEMENT OF SENATOR CARPER

Senator CARPER. The Subcommittee will come to order. I have just joined all of you from another hearing that is going on, a Banking Committee hearing. I serve on the Banking Committee, and we have before us there the Chairman of the Federal Reserve, the Secretary of the Treasury, and the Chairman of the Securities and Exchange Commission. I just spoke with Senator Coburn, who is on the floor of the Senate, and he going to join us in about half an hour or so. I told him that if the census operation continues to make progress, if we continue to make progress in addressing some of the woes that we learned about over the last year, we may detail both of you guys to go over and help Chairmen Bernanke, Cox, and Paulson with their duties.

In any event, on that note, let's go ahead and get started. I have a statement, and then if we are joined by others, we will offer them the opportunity to give a statement, too.

Today's hearing is the fourth, as you may recall, in a series of oversight hearings looking at the Census Bureau's preparation for the 2010 census. One of our responsibilities in the Congress is to conduct oversight. When things are going well, I think it is a good idea to do oversight and acknowledge that. When things are not going well, we have an obligation to find out why and to make sure that we put a spotlight on whatever is going badly in the hopes that we will find out ways to make it go better. And I think with respect to the census, I think we have rounded a turn, and we are heading in the right direction now. But today's hearing will evaluate the Census Bureau's plans to ensure the accuracy of the 2010 census.

On April 1, 2010, the Census Bureau will conduct its 23rd Decennial Census of our Nation's population. The decennial census is a constitutionally mandated activity that is designed to produce a baseline of information on the number of U.S. residents and their characteristics. Census results are used to apportion seats in the House of Representatives, where I once served. I represent a State, Delaware, where we only had one Representative. In fact, there is a total of seven States that have only one. And for us, the apportionment of seats in the U.S. House of Representatives is not a big deal. For other States, like California, where I think they have 53, and other States who have between 1 and 53, it can be a very big deal indeed.

But our census results are used to apportion seats in the House to redraw Congressional and State legislative boundaries and to allocate billions of dollars in Federal assistance to State and local governments.

Census data also provide information on population growth patterns and demographic information that are used by both the private sector and by Federal, State, and local officials.

With such substantial reliance on census data, accuracy is critical. Unfortunately, every census in the Nation's history has failed to count all of our residents, resulting in an undercount of the general population.

Looking back at the 2000 census, it was unprecedented in terms of its budget. More money was spent on it than any other previous census. As a result of the hard work of the Bureau, though, it was able to reduce both the number of Americans who went uncounted.

Despite the Census Bureau's success, undercounting still remained an issue for many communities throughout this country. In 2000, the official census count was 281.4 million, and the adjusted estimate was just over 284 million. The Bureau reported a net error of just under a half percent. And that sounds pretty good. The truth, though, is that there were large errors in 2000 that I do not believe we can afford to repeat this time around.

The Bureau's own Accuracy and Coverage Evaluation Survey revealed that 6.4 million people were missed and 3.1 million people were counted twice. In other words, the 2000 census produced a net undercount of some 3.3 million people.

The undercount would be less problematic if it were evenly distributed among all Americans. However, studies show that undercounting tends to have a disproportionate impact on racial and ethnic minorities, on children, and on immigrants. In 2000, Asian Americans were missed nearly twice as often as whites, African Americans nearly three times as often as whites, and Hispanics were missed four times as often as whites.

Although today's hearing is focused on the undercount, I do not think that we should minimize the overcount issues that exist. In past censuses, the Bureau reduced its net undercount by letting the people counted twice substitute for those who were missed. That may work for statistical purposes, but it is problematic for a number of reasons. The people counted twice are not like the people who were missed.

I will say that again. The people who were counted twice are not like the people who were missed. They are not the same race. They

do not have the same income. And they do not live in the same places. The importance of getting this thing right is striking when we think about the countless ways in which we depend on census data.

For starters, the undercount affects the distribution of Federal funds that are allocated on the basis of population. A study performed by PricewaterhouseCoopers found that the undercount in 2000 would cost States $4.1 billion. This loss of Federal funding taxes the resources of States and local governments and compromises the level of services provided to residents—the people that all of us work for.

Underenumeration in the census also has serious political implications. In political representation that is based on population, undercounted people get less credit for their population than they are due. This skews the make-up of the House and results in some communities being underrepresented, while others get more of a voice than they are due.

Reaching out to those who were historically hard to count is even more important when we consider that for every 1 percent of the population that does not respond to the census, we are going to have to spend about $75 million, I am told, to go door to door to get everyone counted, or just about everyone counted. As a result, it is vitally important that we do the necessary hard work now so that we can get an accurate, cost-effective count in 2010 that will serve us well into the next decade.

So as the Census Bureau begins its final preparation for 2010, we need to make sure that you are reaching out as aggressively as we can to historically undercounted groups. This Subcommittee looks forward to hearing from our witnesses today and gaining your perspectives as we work together to ensure that this happens.

We have two panels today. On our first panel of witnesses is Steve Murdock who serves as Director of the Census Bureau. Mr. Murdock officially became the Director of the Census Bureau on January 4, 2008. I do not know about you, but it seems a lot longer ago than that to me. It probably does to you, too. And you have the responsibility of overseeing the planning and implementation of the operation for the 2010 census. Prior to becoming Director, Mr. Murdock was a demographer for the State of Texas, and he played a leadership role in his State's coordination activities in the 1980, the 1990, and the 2000 decennial censuses.

Robert Goldenkoff is the Director of Strategic Issues at the Government Accountability Office, where he is responsible for reviewing the 2010 census and governmentwide human capital reforms. Mr. Goldenkoff has also performed research on issues involving transportation security, human trafficking, and Federal statistical programs. He received his Bachelor's of Arts in Political Science and Master's of Public Administration degrees from the George Washington University.

Gentlemen, we are delighted that you are here. We will ask that you keep your comments to about 5 minutes, and if you run a bit over, that is OK. If you run a lot over, that is not OK. The full testimony of both of you will be entered into the record, and I would just invite you to proceed as you see fit. Thanks so much for joining us.

Mr. Murdock, would you like to go first?

**TESTIMONY OF HON. STEVEN H. MURDOCK,[1] DIRECTOR, U.S. CENSUS BUREAU**

Mr. MURDOCK. Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Coburn, Members of the Subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to come before you again to discuss our ongoing efforts to address issues related to the undercount in the 2010 census.

Although in discussing our efforts to meet this goal, we rightfully stress our outreach and promotional efforts, including the advertising campaign and the Partnership Program, today I want to stress that the Census Bureau's commitment to improving coverage and addressing the undercount encompasses wide-ranging activities conducted before decennial field-based operations begin, during field operations, and after the conclusion of field operations.

The census is based on addresses from which we identify households in which we count individuals. Our goal is to count everyone once, only once, and in the right place. This begins by taking the address list, referred to as the "Master Address File," from the past census and updating it. For 2010, updates from the U.S. Postal Service have been obtained twice annually, and we improve that list by a process that allows local governments to review our address list for their areas in a process we call the Local Update of Census Addresses (LUCA).

In 2010, for the first time, this review included both addresses for individual households and for group quarters, which are housing arrangements such as college dormitories, nursing homes, military barracks, jails, prisons, and other facilities.

We also work with local communities to form Complete Count Committees, that operate during the census to ensure that residents of their communities respond to the census. Through our partnership and other programs described below, we establish with cooperating organizations Be Counted Centers that allow persons who believe that they have been missed to fill out and submit a census form and Questionnaire Assistance Centers that will help people to complete the census through assistance in multiple languages. The census questionnaire has also been designed with the goal of reducing undercount and overcount. Questions have been added to the 2010 form that can check for consistency in completing the census form and then improve our ability to identify both overcounts and undercounts. The questionnaire is available in five languages in addition to English, and for the first time, we will mail bilingual—Spanish-English—questionnaires to about 13 million households. Language guides are available for more than 50 additional languages.

Prior to beginning census operations, we make concerted efforts to hire local residents for census jobs because we know that people are more likely to respond to the census when local people are asking for their assistance and participation.

Our first extensive field operation in the decennial census is the formal address listing process which begins in 2009. It involves census employees in a process of verifying all existing addresses on

[1] The prepared statement of Mr. Murdock appears in the Appendix on page 31.

the Master Address File, adding new addresses identified, knocking on every door to determine, where possible, the number of households living at that address, and obtaining GPS coordinates for each household which expedites finding such households for future census operations.

In March 2010, the massive mailing of forms to households begins, and for the first time, we will employ a second mailing, which has been found in many surveys to increase response rates. We will also employ strategies that differ by type of area so that in rural and other areas that do not have the city style addresses that are most convenient for mail delivery, we can obtain a good count as well.

When the non-response follow-up process used to obtain data from households that did not respond to the census by mail begins, we complete numerous operations that result in making a minimum of six attempts to obtain data from households. During this period, we also conduct enumeration of service-based programs, such as shelters, soup kitchens, and mobile food vans. Regional offices develop and implement hard-to-enumerate programs specifically designed to reach specific hard-to-count groups, and coverage follow-up operations are conducted that involve telephone and other contacts with households where inconsistencies were found in their questionnaires.

Finally, after the major decennial census operations are nearly complete, we will initiate and complete a census coverage measurement process through which we measure the extent to which we have over- or under-counted various population groups.

Beginning in 2008 and running through the census operations described above is the 2010 communication program that integrates a mix of mass media advertising, targeted media outreach to specific populations, as well as national and local partnerships, grass-roots marketing, the Census in Schools program, and special events.

Members of the Subcommittee, be assured that everything we do in the 2010 census is aimed at improving accuracy and coverage with an eye toward reducing undercounts and counting everyone. Whether the challenges are in remote Alaska, in densely populated urban areas like New York or Chicago, or in the colonias in South Texas, the Census Bureau will marshal the efforts necessary to include their residents in the 2010 census. To us it does not matter how hard it is to reach everyone. It matters that we reach everyone. I am happy to take questions.

Senator CARPER. Say that last sentence again.

Mr. MURDOCK. OK. To us it does not matter how hard it is to reach someone. It matters that we reach everyone.

Senator CARPER. That is pretty good. Who writes your stuff? [Laughter.]

Did you write that yourself?

Mr. MURDOCK. Not that one, no. The gentleman is here that wrote that, though.

Senator CARPER. Will that gentleman raise his hand? All right. You may have a second career. Thank you for that testimony.

Mr. Goldenkoff.

**TESTIMONY OF ROBERT GOLDENKOFF,[1] DIRECTOR, STRATEGIC ISSUES, U.S. GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY OFFICE**

Mr. GOLDENKOFF. That is a tough act to follow, but, Mr. Chairman, thank you for the opportunity to be here today to discuss reducing the undercount in the 2010 census. As you know, an accurate enumeration is a daunting task as the Nation's population is growing larger, more diverse, and increasingly reluctant to participate in the census.

An undercount occurs when the census misses an individual. An overcount occurs when an individual is counted in error.

What makes these errors problematic, as you have already noted, is a differential impact on various sub-groups. Minorities, renters, and children, for example, are more likely to be missed by the census, while more affluent groups, such as people with vacation homes, are more likely to be double-counted. As census data are used to apportion seats in Congress and a number of other important purposes, improving coverage and reducing the differential undercount is critical.

As requested, my remarks today will focus, first, on key activities the Census Bureau plans to use to reduce the differential undercount in 2010; and, second, the various challenges and opportunities that might help or hinder these efforts. Importantly, in my remarks this morning I want to stress the following: Although the Bureau has developed a range of activities aimed at reducing the differential undercount, these activities are generally in the planning or early implementation stages, and a variety of uncertainties and challenges lie ahead.

Reducing the undercount begins with a complete and accurate address list. The Bureau develops its address list over the course of the decade using a series of operations that include partnerships with the Postal Service as well as with State, local, and tribal governments. One such operations is address canvassing where thousands of temporary Bureau employees known as "listers" verify the addresses of all housing units by going door to door across the country. To help find hidden housing units, such as converted basements where hard-to-count groups might reside, the Bureau trains listers to ask if there is more than one residence at a particular address or to look for clues such as an outbuilding or two doorbells that could indicate additional living quarters.

Another effort aimed at reducing the undercount is the Bureau's Integrated Communications Campaign that consists of paid advertising, earned media and public relations, Census in the Schools, which is a program aimed at reaching parents through their school-aged children, and partnerships with key national and grass-roots organizations that have strong ties to their communities.

The Bureau also operates a range of special enumeration programs that target hard-to-count populations. They include the Be Counted Program, Questionnaire Assistance Centers, and Service-Based Enumeration, which aims at including the homeless and other individuals without conventional housing. Other activities, such as offering in-language questionnaires, can help improve coverage among people with limited English proficiency.

[1] The prepared statement of Mr. Goldenkoff appears in the Appendix on page 42.

While each of these activities can help the Bureau improve the differential undercount, they also face open questions that, if not resolved, could reduce the effectiveness of the Bureau's efforts. For example, with respect to address canvassing, the Bureau plans to provide listers with GPS-equipped handheld computers to verify and correct addresses. However, the companies have experienced shortcomings such as freeze-ups and data transmission issues, and the reliability has been problematic. The Bureau plans to conduct a limited field test of the handhelds this December. However, if the performance issues persist, the Bureau will have little time to make any refinements as address canvassing is scheduled to start early in 2009.

Another challenge is that several operations aimed at hard-to-count groups, such as the Be Counted Program, Service-Based Enumeration, and Group Quarters Enumeration, were not tested during the dress rehearsal of the 2010 census, which was held earlier this year. Consequently, the Bureau missed an important opportunity to see how they might perform in concert with other activities planned for 2010 as well as identify the need for any improvements that might enhance their effectiveness.

In summary, if the various activities aimed at the hard to count are implemented as planned, they will help the Census Bureau achieve its goal of improving coverage. At the same time, a number of uncertainties and challenges lie ahead, and the success of the Bureau's efforts to reduce the undercount will depend in large part on the extent to which the activities are adequately tested, start and finish on schedule, get implemented in the proper sequence, and receive appropriate staffing and funding.

It will also be important for the Bureau to develop effective monitoring programs to ensure the various operations are on track and enable the Bureau to quickly respond to any contingencies that might arise. In the months ahead, it will be important for the Census Bureau and Congress to focus on these issues as well as be alert to newly emerging challenges. And, as always, we look forward to assisting the Subcommittee in this regard.

Mr. Chairman, this completes my prepared statement, and I would be pleased to respond to any questions that you might have.

Senator CARPER. You used exactly 4 minutes and 58 seconds. That is pretty good. You could have slowed down there right at the end and just nailed it right at 5 minutes. [Laughter.]

The first series of questions I am going to ask actually flow from the two charts that are to my right,[1] to your left. But before I do that, I will just mention something. Another subcommittee I chair deals with clean air and nuclear safety. And I am forever encouraging the nuclear industry to focus on safety, to adopt at every one of our 104 nuclear power plants a culture of safety. One of our core values in our Senate office is "If it is not perfect, make it better."

These first three columns—this goes back to the census from 1940, 1950, 1960, 1970, 1980, 1990, and 2000, and the darker line, actually the blue line, blue column, reflects the undercount for black Americans, African Americans, and the total undercount is reflected here I guess in the gray. You see the total undercount

[1] The charts referred to appears in the Appendix on page 168.

from 1940, it looks like about 5 million people. Compared to 2000, the total undercount was essentially null and void, which is a great improvement. Unfortunately, there is still a significant undercount among African Americans of about—I think it is about 3 million people. So if it is not perfect, make it better.

I would just ask, Mr. Goldenkoff, you just ran through a series of things, steps that the Census Bureau has taken to make it better; if not make it perfect, at least to make it better. Are you encouraged that we are going to see—for the most part the improvement, if you look at these numbers here for undercount of African Americans from 1940, 1950, 1960, bounced up a little bit in 1970, dropped way down in 1980, bounced up a little bit in 1990, and then dropped down again in 2000.

Are you encouraged that the Census will, if not make it perfect, make it better in 2010?

Mr. GOLDENKOFF. We are certainly encouraged from what we have seen so far in terms of the level of effort that the Bureau has put forth. The good news is that they are applying a lot of the lessons learned from the 2000 census. A lot of what they are doing is data driven. They are taking information, demographic information, to target their resources, which is extremely important now that the budget is constrained. They also recognize the importance of working with local members of the community. So for all those reasons, we are certainly encouraged by what we are seeing.

What we do not know is how well these various operations will work once they go live, and what we have seen, for example, in 2000 that a lot of the plans on paper, they look really good on paper, but things happen. And so one of the things that concerns us is that some of these activities were not tested during the dress rehearsal. And while it is true that the Bureau has performed a lot of these activities before, some of them encountered glitches in 2000. Also, the dress rehearsal provides an opportunity to make improvements as another data point there. Every census is different, so even if the Bureau has performed these operations before, they have to be—we do not know how they are going to perform in 2010 because the environment is different. And there are a bunch of new operations that, again, while good—and we certainly commend the Bureau and give them a lot of credit for things like the bilingual questionnaires—the census has a lot of moving parts. It is a big, complex machine, and without testing these different operations, it is unclear whether they are going to work in concert with one another.

Senator CARPER. All right. Thank you.

Dr. Murdock, why don't you just briefly respond to some of the comments that Mr. Goldenkoff has just made?

Mr. MURDOCK. Well, we certainly appreciate the comments regarding the additional efforts that we are making because there are an extensive number of those. And as he has pointed out, the census is a very complex process. We have attempted in every way that we could to discern how well operations will work. We did have to curtail some things in terms of the dress rehearsal because of rescoping efforts, because of some funding issues last year. But we are making every effort possible to assess how these various ac-

tivities will do, and we are using our databases from previous censuses to look at where we are going.

One of the things we have from that is a very good idea in most of these operations from looking at the past how a change in those will likely affect the response we get because many of these are spin-offs of programs and ideas that we have been following for some time.

So, yes, we did not in all cases have the full dress rehearsal kind of event that we would have liked, but these activities are ones we feel confident that we are going to be able to perform well within all of the constraints and all of the issues that are involved in a decennial census and all of the imponderables, the economic, social, and other circumstances that may exist at the exact time when the census occurs.

Senator CARPER. All right. Thank you.

Dr. Murdock, can you tell us, if you will, the Bureau's specific plans for reducing both the net and differential undercounts now that you will not have the handheld computing devices to conduct non-response follow-up?

Mr. MURDOCK. Well, in large part, we believe that the program that we have instituted will get us an adequate undercount; that is, we would, of course, like to have no undercount, but we do have a wide variety of things that we are doing that are new. And let me just for a minute mention those, because I think what tends to happen is to look at just a few operations. But let me just give you an idea of some of the things we are doing this time that we did not do last time.

We have been using more frequent updates of USPS information to update our mailing lists. We are using a GPS during the address canvassing that will help us locate households and go back to households who do not participate. We have had a much more consolidated and much more activistic LUCA program. That is the Local Update of Census Addresses. And we have had very good participation in that. We estimate that about 85 percent of all the addresses in the country are involved in LUCA governmental entities that have agreed to cooperate and look at our address lists, see if they are right, make corrections, tell us where we are wrong, help us adjust those.

We have an address canvassing process this census that involves knocking on every door. The last census we knocked on every third door in terms of verifying where we were at. We have a coordinated Communications and Partnership Program. Last time, we had a program—two different programs that sometimes meshed and sometimes did not mesh, meaning that things sometimes were not available on time or were available in large quantities after they were needed. The new questionnaire, with the questions that we have put on there specifically to help us identify undercount and overcount, to look for consistencies or inconsistencies in the responses. And very important, we believe, is the multiple language, not only the bilingual questionnaire that we make available, but we are making questionnaires readily available in five languages. And we are making questionnaire assistance guides available in over 50 languages.

So as we look at the diversity of the U.S. population and the challenge that creates for work in terms of counting the hard to count, we believe we have initiated a large number of activities this census that are better than last census that should help us address these needs.

That is not to say that this is not a tremendous challenge, because the increasing diversity of the United States—I should say it this way: The diversity of the United States has increased substantially from 2000. And as a result, the challenges for us in terms of making sure we count all of the individual population groups is extensive.

Senator CARPER. That is a pretty impressive list that you just ran through for us.

Let me stick with, if I can, the handheld computers for maybe one more minute. I am going to ask you to be brief in responding to this, and this will be for both of you. And, Mr. Goldenkoff, why don't you go first? But just how confident are you in the functionality of the handheld computers for the upcoming address canvassing operations?

Mr. GOLDENKOFF. Well, I think it remains to be seen. The key event is what happens in the test in December. So far, as I said, they have had a bunch of technological problems that have reduced their reliability, reduced the productivity. So what happens in December, that I think will be key to what we can foresee for when the address canvassing actually starts in the spring. So we will be there. We are planning to observe the field tests.

Senator CARPER. All right. Good.

Mr. GOLDENKOFF. But right now it is a big unknown.

Senator CARPER. All right. Thank you.

Dr. Murdock, same question. How confident are you?

Mr. MURDOCK. Well, as you know, when we began the process of rescoping early this year, we had found a number of difficulties. We have instituted a much more complete and comprehensive management program and a testing program so that we have, for example, during September and October of this year, we are doing some product integration testing. During October and November, we will be doing validation system testing. And we have scheduled for December an operational field test, and that will be a case where we will take the handhelds into the field to be used exactly as they will be used in the 2010 decennial census.

When you look at census operations, one of the things that we recognize is that the census remains a high-risk activity. It always is, and there is no way to reduce all of that risk. Nothing is going to change this. But I believe the program of oversight that we have instituted, the program of testing that we have instituted, which is much more rigorous than what existed previously, we are confident that those sets of procedures put in place will lead us to a good result related to the 2010 census.

Senator CARPER. All right. OK. Thanks to both of you for your responses there.

I am going to telegraph a pitch. I am going to ask you just before we conclude this portion of the hearing, so that the folks who are with you can be thinking about this, and maybe if you need some information, they can be pulling it together. But I am going to ask

you right before we excuse this panel, Dr. Murdock, I am going to ask you a question in conjunction with the continuing resolution that we will adopt here in probably the next several weeks, and maybe even several days. To what extent are the needs of the Census Bureau reflected or likely to be reflected? What are your needs going to be? And so just be thinking about that as it pertains to the continuing resolution. Don't answer the question now, but just know that before I excuse you, I am going to ask you to give us some thoughts on that. And if you are not comfortable in answering it right now on the record, then we will just ask you to respond in writing.

OK. In its final report to Congress, the U.S. Census Monitoring Board in 2000 made several recommendations that were offered in an effort to improve future censuses. And one of those recommendations was that gross error rather than net error should be used as the primary basis for evaluating the accuracy of the census.

For example, the net undercount in the 2000 census, I think it was about 3.3 million, but the number of people missed is, I think, 6.4 million, while the number of people counted twice was around 3 million. At first glance, it may seem that the people counted twice cancel out those that were missed. And while that may work for statistical purposes, it just does not work out when we are trying to understand the characteristics of the population that we are counting.

The people who were missed, as I said earlier in my opening statement, are unlike those who were counted twice. They live in different places. They may speak different languages. They come from different socioeconomic backgrounds. And I think both of you have mentioned it, the idea that folks who are fortunate to own vacation homes may get counted twice. Families that are fortunate enough to be able to send their children to school away from home, in some cases those students get counted twice. This can be problematic for State and local governments that rely on Federal funds that are allocated on the basis of population estimates.

Has the Bureau decided to implement the board's recommendations and use gross error as its standard measurement of census error?

Mr. MURDOCK. We have not really made a decision in terms of how that will specifically be reported, but historically, although it is the net that tends to get the attention, the Census Bureau's reports have indicated both, so that we have looked at both in our ongoing operations because we are very aware that there are groups that we have overcounted, and that has been reported, and there are groups that we have substantially undercounted. So we look at both of these as we look at our census and evaluate how well we have done.

Senator CARPER. Mr. Goldenkoff, do you have any comment on that?

Mr. GOLDENKOFF. We would agree with the Census Monitoring Board. Since the early 1990s, we have been recommending that the Bureau calculate gross error as that is a better measure of the actual amount of error in the census. Just because you count some-

body twice, that does not compensate for missing one person because of the demographic differences between the two groups.

Senator CARPER. I do not underestimate how difficult it is to count everybody. And I appreciate all the efforts that are ongoing, that are undertaken and ongoing to do a better job. But just in terms of basic equity, the folks that we are counting or overcounting are really people that are more privileged than those that we are undercounting. And that violates my sense of what is fair and equitable, and I am sure that it does that of almost everybody, maybe everybody in this room. So I would ask that we just keep focusing on that.

Mr. Goldenkoff, GAO has done several studies on how inaccurate census data can affect Federal funding to States and to local governments. What was the estimated impact of the projected census 2000 undercount on the allocation of Federal funds to State and local governments? What was the estimated impact of the 2000 census on the allocation of Federal funds to State and local governments? That is the first question. The second one is: Which States were expected to receive the biggest dollar losses as a result of incorrect population estimates?

Mr. GOLDENKOFF. Sure. What we did was we did not look at all grants. What we did was we looked at social services block grants because that grant program relies exclusively on population to allocate funds, and so it would be the most sensitive to any changes in population. And what we found, there would have been a total of—I think it was a $4.1 million shift. Some States, a group of States—and I forget the exact proportion—would have gained $4.1 or $4.2 million, and another set of States would have lost $4.2 million. So it was pretty much—it was a wash from that perspective, and I think the District of Columbia would have lost the most. And I have some information in my formal statement. We have a graph there that shows more of the details.[1] So it would have had a modest impact.

Senator CARPER. All right. Thank you.

Let me sort of pivot here and go in a little bit different direction. Maybe I will ask two more questions, and then I am going to excuse this panel and bring on our next panel.

I think we all agree that having a complete and accurate address list is the cornerstone of a successful census. Nearly half of the undercount arises from missed housing units and households. As a result, we need to know every address in the country—a daunting task. We need to get a questionnaire to each address. That is not easy either. We need to have them return it, and then we need to be able to capture that information provided accurately.

Again, for Dr. Murdock, just to start here, how does the Bureau plan to develop a complete mailing list so that a mail survey can reach each household? You have spoken to this a little bit, but I just want to ask you to go back and pick it up again.

Mr. MURDOCK. OK. Certainly. There are several activities involved in this. One is that we start with the address list from the last census, but twice a year since then, we have obtained from the U.S. Postal Service their delivery sequence file, which gives us an

[1] The chart referred to appears in the Appendix on page 60.

update of addresses. And in the last couple of years, as a result of a process called the Local Update of Census Addresses (LUCA)—we have shared our information on addresses with local communities—cities, towns, etc., and with States, who have reviewed those data and are telling us of addresses that they have that we do not have on our list, providing information on new subdivisions that may have come into place. So with a combination of our ongoing efforts and theirs, we are building this list.

We also have an ongoing effort on census address update which involves all of our other field activities that are non-decennial, and as we locate addresses that are not on our Master Address File, those are added as well.

So we are using the best, if you will, palette that we can start out with, with the U.S. Postal Service data. And then we are adding to it what we think is the best of all in many ways, and that is locals' information about their own communities and their own cities about where addresses are and where the new developments have begun. And we will be including that, continuing that throughout this decade. And, in fact, we will, even in 2010, be getting some materials on new additions from local communities.

So it is really a very good partnership, if you will, between us and other Federal agencies and local governments in assisting us, and their assistance has been instrumental to having a good address list. In addition, as we indicate when we go out to do address listing, which is this massive effort that we will begin next year, our people, our listing people, will find addresses. They will note those addresses that will go onto our list. And even during the nonresponse follow-up, which is the part that occurs after the 2010 response to the mail questionnaire has occurred, we will be identifying addresses and ensuring that households at those addresses get census forms to complete.

So we have an ongoing set of field operations combined with, we think, a quite good base from the Postal Service combined with assistance from local jurisdictions.

Senator CARPER. Well, I am encouraged to hear about the cooperation of the local jurisdictions, the State and local governments. But when you think about it, they do have a dog in this fight, and they do have some skin in the game. They have an obligation to help, but they also have a special interest in helping. And I am glad to hear that they are meeting that obligation, or at least a bunch of them are.

A question really for both of you, and then I am going to go back to that question I telegraphed earlier. But what additional measures, Dr. Murdock, is the Bureau taking to ensure hard-to-count populations in communities affected by a bunch of hurricanes—Katrina, Rita, Ike, and the list goes on—are counted given that many residents are displaced from their homes in various States of rebuilding? And your comments—I am just going to ask you to comment on that.

Mr. MURDOCK. Well, these incidences we really have to take on a case-by-case basis. But what we have found, for example, in Katrina-impacted areas is that we are going to use somewhat different procedures than we used there. We cannot simply rely on Postal Service addresses. So we will be using a combination of Up-

date/Leave, and that is where we go in and find a housing unit, leave a questionnaire to ensure that they get it. And in other cases, in other places, we will use an Update and Enumerate, which means that we will actually locate the housing unit, come back and do an enumeration of that. So it will be a much more intense kind of effort and a recognition that standard addresses and standard address lists will not work necessarily in such areas. So we are giving them very special attention.

For example, the Dallas office that covers both the Hurricane Katrina- and Hurricane Rita-impacted areas and now the Hurricane Ike-impacted area are working with local jurisdictions to discern how best to ensure that all persons are counted.

Obviously, given the recency of Ike, we are developing those procedures right now for those areas, and we will do those over the next few months. But we recognize that these raise unique challenges, and it means that we are going to have to put more people in the areas doing door-to-door kinds of work than we would in an area that had not experienced such devastating circumstances.

Senator CARPER. Mr. Goldenkoff, you may have a comment on that. You may not. If you do——

Mr. GOLDENKOFF. I think that what the Bureau is doing is very encouraging. They know what needs to be done. They have done it before. They recognize that the housing stock is not stable. And I think most importantly is that under the Bureau's protocols, they always err on the side of inclusion. So even if something does not look inhabitable, even if it just looks like a concrete slab, it will still be included in the address list because a mobile home or a house can be built on that slab come census day. So I think that we can be encouraged by the efforts the Bureau is putting forth.

Senator CARPER. All right. Thank you.

As I said earlier, Dr. Murdock, as you know, we are working on a continuing resolution that is likely to take us some time into the first part of next year, maybe as far as into March. We have been told that the Census Bureau will be taken care of, but you may want to take this opportunity to tell me just what that means to be taken care of and what are your needs likely to be, an interim funding measure that will carry us, we will say, through March? What do you need to get through until then? Do you think you will get what you need in terms of recommendations from the Administration? I know you are working with the Commerce Secretary and with OMB.

And, last—and you may want to answer this for the record, but what happens if you do not get what you believe you need?

Mr. MURDOCK. Well, let me answer it, first of all, that we have received good support from the Administration in recognizing that the Census Bureau will need an anomaly in order to go forward, and that is because if we were to have to continue at our budget, which we have for this year, which is about a third of what we need for next year, it would have devastating effects on the 2010 census. We would, for example, not be able to open all of our local census offices, the first 150 that are critical for the address canvassing operation. If it were delayed long enough, it could impact the very address canvassing process itself that begins early next year.

So it is very critical that we not operate under a circumstance of continuing resolution.

Senator CARPER. All right. OK. I think that does it for this panel for now. Thank you for an encouraging report. If it is not perfect, make it better. Keep working hard.

Mr. MURDOCK. We will.

Senator CARPER. And maybe someday we will have a hearing and say you got it perfect. I hope to still be around. I hope you will be, too. Thank you both.

Mr. GOLDENKOFF. Thank you very much.

Senator CARPER. I will just invite the second panel to go ahead and take your seats, if you would, please, and I will begin introductions.

I am going to start with the introduction of the Hon. Kenneth Prewitt. Mr. Prewitt served as the Director of the Census Bureau from 1998 to 2001. As Census Director, Dr. Prewitt managed decennial operations in the 2000 census. Dr. Prewitt is now the Vice President and Carnegie Professor of Public Affairs at Columbia University. Is that true?

Mr. PREWITT. Of course.

Senator CARPER. Is it Dr. Prewitt?

Mr. PREWITT. Yes.

Senator CARPER. Congratulations. And I understand you have served on many professional advisory committees, and you are currently most active on the Committee on National Statistics of the National Research Council. Welcome.

Mr. PREWITT. Thank you.

Senator CARPER. Good to see you.

Next, Roderick Harrison is a Senior Fellow at the Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies, a research and public policy institution that focuses exclusively on issues of particular concern to African Americans and other people of color. Mr. Harrison was the founding Director of DataBank, an online clearinghouse of data on African Americans and other ethnic populations. Previously, I am told, Mr. Harrison served as Chief of the Census Bureau's Racial Statistics Branch. When did you serve in that role?

Mr. HARRISON. From 1990 to 1997.

Senator CARPER. OK. And in that role you helped to expand the content and number of the Bureau's publications and releases on racial and ethnic populations. Mr. Harrison, we are glad you are here. Thank you.

And Karen Narasaki, the President and Executive Director of the Asian American Justice Center, one of the Nation's leading voices advocating for the rights and interests of Asian Americans. I understand you serve in a number of leadership positions in the civil rights and immigrant rights community, and that you are Vice Chair of the Leadership Council on Civil Rights.

Ms. NARASAKI. Correct.

Senator CARPER. In addition, I am told that Ms. Narasaki is the Chair of the Rights Working Group, a coalition of human rights, civil rights, civil liberties, and immigrant rights groups, and working to address a variety of issues important to our immigrant community in this country. Welcome. We are happy you are able to join us.

And Joseph Salvo, Director of the Population Division of New York City's Department of City Planning. The Population Division serves as the city's in-house demographic consultant and provides expertise in the development of population estimates, projections for infrastructure and capital planning. The division is also working closely, I am told, with the Census Bureau on the tactical preparation for the 2010 census and evaluation of the new American Community Survey. Mr. Salvo currently serves on the Census Advisory Committee of Professional Associations.

And, finally—last, but not least—Mr. Arturo Vargas is the Executive Director of the National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials, a national membership organization of Latino policymakers and supporters. Prior to joining NALEO, Arturo was Vice President for the Community Education in Public Policy at the Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund, where he supervised and directed the organization's community education and leadership development programs. Mr. Vargas is a nationally recognized expert in Latino demographic trends, electoral participation, voting rights, the census, and redistricting.

We are delighted that each of you made time to be here today. I just want to thank a number of you who have been working for years to make sure that we do, as best as we can, count everyone in this country, count them accurately. And so thank you for those past efforts and thank you for your willingness to be with us here today.

Mr. Salvo, I am tempted to put you at the front of the line so you can be our "opening Salvo." [Laughter.]

But I am going to withhold from that temptation, and we are going to turn to Dr. Prewitt and ask him to lead us off. Mr. Prewitt.

**TESTIMONY OF HON. KENNETH PREWITT, PH.D.,[1] FORMER CENSUS DIRECTOR, COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY**

Mr. PREWITT. Well, of course, what that means is that Mr. Salvo can correct me when it gets down to his turn.

Just a quick prefatory comment, if I might, Mr. Chairman, since you raised the issue of the CR in talking to the last panel. There are three dimensions to the CR that really matter. One, is it adequate? Second, is it timely,? Is it going to be—because if it is adequate but late, it is the same consequences for the census. And I hope it has some flexibility. Certainly in 2000, if we did not have some budget flexibility, we could not have responded to unexpected circumstances which happened. So as the Congress deliberates about the CR, I would hope all three of those dimensions are attended to.

Senator CARPER. Good. That is good advice, and I did not say this but I am going to say it now. Your comments do not count against your 5 minutes that we have asked you to use, so we will start the clock over again. But I would ask everybody to try to stick to the 5 minutes if you could. That would be a big help.

Thank you.

Mr. PREWITT. OK. Thank you very much.

[1] The prepared statement of Mr. Prewitt appears in the Appendix on page 62.

The word "accuracy" has been around in census conversation since the beginning. In 1790, Thomas Jefferson gave the first count to George Washington, and the President was unhappy with that count because he said it was too low. This was not an idle concern on Washington's part. He felt like the European powers would think that we were weak, that our independence was fragile. So he actually instructed Jefferson to report higher numbers, and Jefferson did some complicated arithmetic and actually sent out the diplomatic corps, and he actually adjusted the census in 1790 upward to try to compensate for the undercount.

Senator CARPER. So that is how we ended up with 72 million people that year? [Laughter.]

Mr. PREWITT. And then as late as the most recent census, the 2000 Census, it was Commerce Secretary Evans who described it as "the most accurate census this Nation has ever conducted."

Well, based on your opening remarks, and I think my own judgment of the Census 2000, I think that is—I appreciate what Commerce Secretary Evans said, but I think it is an inaccurate statement itself about accuracy because of your focus on the gross error. Anytime you have a census which overcounts and undercounts in the magnitude that we do it, it is not fair to call it "the most accurate census ever conducted."

I want to try to focus on—you have talked about the undercount. You understand it. But I think it would be very helpful if the full Congress understood that you can have a very good census down to the last 1 percent, and that is when the undercount kicks in. But you can also have a very good census all the way from top to bottom, but if the address file leaves out those households which are disproportionately undercounted, you can go in at the top level and get an undercount or you can wait until the last 1 percent and get an undercount. So the problem with the census is you have got to get each one of those steps, from the address file all the way down to counting that last 1 percent, if you want to try to do something about the differential undercount.

Now, of course, in that last 1 percent, you can also get your overcount because that is when you are counting, double-counting the college kids and so forth and so on.

So the important thing, it seems to me, is to understand the distributional accuracy and numerical accuracy are two dimensions of the accuracy conversation. And numerical accuracy is how close do we get to the true count, but distribution accuracy is the proportionality, of course. And anytime things are being allocated on a share basis, as congressional seats, of course, and as Federal funding, then distributional accuracy is the name of the game. Because in some fundamental sense, you could undercount; but if you undercount evenly across all geographic areas and across all demographic groups, then you would not be as unfair as you are in trying to get a better census, a more numerically accurate census, but one which builds in distributional inaccuracies. And it is extremely difficult for the Census Bureau to manage the tension between trying to reach everybody and yet worrying about getting distributional inaccuracies in that. So I just want to focus the Subcommittee's attention, if I can, on constantly as you do your oversight,

your question has to be about distributional accuracy, not just accuracy.

I would like to conclude by saying that the Census Bureau takes much pride in finding its mistakes as it takes in not trying to make the mistake in the first place. It is a scientific organization. It is in its DNA to be self-correcting, self-improving. And the most important report card that it produces is its Coverage Evaluation report card. It wants to know how it did. I certainly strongly concur with your judgment about the gross error. I do think we ought to be basing this on gross error, not net error. But I would just again urge the Subcommittee to pay attention to how well the Coverage Evaluation Survey is funded, is designed, is timely, and so forth. It is the only report card. There is nobody else to tell the Census how poorly it did other than the Census Bureau itself and, therefore, to tell the American people. So focus on distributional accuracy, and the net error matters but so does the gross error, and worry about the Coverage Evaluation as a measure.

Finally, I would like to say that we actually did do well in 2000 on many dimensions. Oddly, we gave back almost half a billion dollars to the Federal Government. We came in under budget.

Senator CARPER. Did you ever get a thank-you note for that?

Mr. PREWITT. Well, can I take a few more seconds? Or I will not stop on time.

Senator CARPER. All right.

Mr. PREWITT. What was really interesting is no one wanted to admit it because no one wanted to 'fess up that somebody had not sort of gotten this down to the right last penny and so forth. It is what gave us the flexibility. I would much rather have given money back and had flexibility to cover some of the problems we ran into. But that is obviously not the way the government normally thinks.

Thank you, sir.

Senator CARPER. Thank you so much. Mr. Harrison.

**TESTIMONY OF RODERICK HARRISON, PH.D.,[1] SENIOR FELLOW, JOINT CENTER FOR POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC STUDIES**

Mr. HARRISON. Yes, I am going to begin by quoting Dr. Prewitt's comment before the 2000 census. The 2000 census was the first that the Bureau planned to actually use all this technical apparatus that it has for estimating the undercount after the census is conducted, to do a one-count census where it would adjust—it would use the surveys that it uses to estimate the undercount to adjust the numbers to be more statistically accurate. And the Supreme Court ruled in 1999 that this would not be constitutional for purposes of meeting constitutional requirements for apportioning the Congress. And the Bureau had to change, within a year, years of planning for the one-count census.

Dr. Prewitt said at the time that using traditional counting methods, the Bureau must run harder to stay in place. It will run harder. It hopes to stay in place. I think you did much better than staying in place. And, actually, I think during the questioning one thing that you might ask is about the very specific steps—again,

[1] The prepared statement of Mr. Harrison appears in the Appendix on page 68.

I think the testimony earlier today that this is a very complex sequence of events that build upon each other, of operations that build upon each other, and it requires success at any stage. If you start failing with the address list, with the canvassing, the probability of undercounts growing will accumulate and your likelihood of overcoming them in later stages.

So I think you want to pay particular attention to the test in December, to the results of the handhelds, and, if the test suggests that everything is not resolved, to alternatives for making sure that the address list is as complete as possible.

That said, a few points that have come up. Yes, the undercount/overcount, the net undercount is a poor measure. The thing that is important to note is that the undercount and overcounts for the small geographies for which they are calculated in the estimates of the undercount, or for geographies small enough that it does not affect apportionment, so what it does affect is all the other uses of the census. So if you are switching off individuals, you still are counting the same number of people, roughly, for purposes of apportionment and redistricting. It is when you get to the characteristics of those people, what their needs are, the planning that is built upon that, that this matters.

The block grants mentioned, the difference is about a quarter of a percentage point in funds, and the amounts involved—this is heretical to say, but I think we must realize that to get greater accuracy to correct those errors might not be possible and might not be cost-effective. You are talking about something like $67,000 in the district's budget. You could allocate this by other means much more effectively than getting a more accurate count.

So I do think, however—I think we should not overestimate the degree to which—we should not underestimate the consequences, but we should not overestimate it either. Some of these issues would be more directly and effectively dealt with as social policy issues than as census count issues.

That being said, clearly one thing that contributes to the undercount, and these hard-to-reach populations particularly, is distrust of the government, feeling that the government is not necessarily fair. And the census, it is absolutely essential, I think, that people participate in the census and leave it feeling that the count has been fair, that they have counted equally with everyone else. And that is something that I do not think you can put a price tag on. I think the entire integrity of the Nation, its commitments from the very beginning of the census, does depend on that, and that is priceless.

Senator CARPER. Thank you. You were exactly 5 minutes.

Ms. Narasaki, I do not know how you top that, but good luck.

## TESTIMONY OF KAREN K. NARASAKI,[1] PRESIDENT AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, ASIAN AMERICAN JUSTICE CENTER

Ms. NARASAKI. Thank you for inviting the Asian American Justice Center to testify on an issue that is one of the top priorities for the civil rights community over the next 2 years. And I have

[1] The prepared statement of Ms. Narasaki with an attachment appears in the Appendix on page 75.

longer testimony that I am asking for it to be submitted for the record.

Senator CARPER. Your entire testimony will be part of the record.

Ms. NARASAKI. In 2000, we helped lead a census outreach campaign with our partners—the Asian Law Caucus the Asian Pacific American Legal Center, and Asian American Institute. And over the next 2 years, we will be working with the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights Education Fund, NALEO, the NASP, and the National Congress of American Indians to really help reduce that differential undercount.

Many civil rights laws, as you know, rely on the census data for their enforcement and implementation, and one of the keys for the decennial is the enforcement of the Voting Rights Act. This is what makes it even more critical, as you point out, that the right people are counted in the right places.

For these reasons, we think it is particularly important to make sure that there is going to be adequate resources and strategies to try to reach the growing minority and other historically undercounted populations. I am going to focus on language barriers, fears, and concerns about privacy. In addition, as we saw, as you noted in Hurricane Katrina and now Hurricane Ike, many immigrants and minorities live in non-traditional households and are more likely to be displaced. So we are very concerned about what the Bureau will be doing to address that.

In 2006, almost 55 million persons spoke a language other than English at home. Almost half have a difficulty speaking English well, and this lack is one of the biggest barriers for immigrant households.

In addition, many immigrants have fled countries with corrupt or oppressive governments. Moreover, the hostile rhetoric of some elected officials in the heated immigration debate we hear and the institution of some hostile policies and widely publicized raids on the local level of homes as well as of businesses is going to discourage immigrant participation.

Finally, concern about privacy overall, confidentiality, and misuse of data is held by many Americans, but particularly, as Mr. Harrison notes, minority communities. This concern has increased because of the controversial post-September 11, 2001 policies and practices, and the Bureau's 2004 provision to the Department of Homeland Security of Arab American data at the zip code level reinforced this concern.

The communications plan, the partnership plan, and the language assistance plan, therefore, are really critical to overcoming these challenges and reducing the differential undercount. Also, these policies, though, have to be put in place early to enable the Bureau to hire people locally to the communities and with the needed language skills.

The Bureau has wisely sought to integrate the partnership, outreach, and paid marketing campaign in one communications strategy. However, the plan is not yet final, and it is not clear to us yet whether there will be sufficient resources targeting each minority and hard-to-count community.

In 2000, the Partnership Program is credited for having reduced the differential undercount. It has empowered locally known and

trusted messengers to be able to speak knowledgeably and persuasively. And because of this lack of trust, it is very important to have locally known people be able to tell their communities why it is important and safe to participate.

The partners also helped the Bureau to hire a diverse talent pool with the needed skill and local knowledge of their communities. And we believe to maximize the effectiveness of this program the Bureau needs to mandate that regional offices share and consistently use best practices, and certainly more resources are needed for this program.

Chairman Carper, we very much appreciate your commitment to ensuring that we achieve an accurate count, and we are counting on your leadership in ensuring that there will be sufficient funding for the census, particularly in this critical year that is coming up.

We also commend the Bureau's work to date to ensure that Spanish speakers are adequately assisted, but we are concerned about the other language minorities that need to be counted, particularly the smaller Asian American ethnic communities who have the highest levels of linguistically isolated households.

Finally, we think the Bureau needs to begin to work with the necessary agencies to set citizenship and retiree exemption hiring policies in place as soon as possible. Without the citizenship exemption, the Bureau may not have a sufficient pool of bilingual community partner specialists and enumerators who can overcome the language barriers and the fears of census in these immigrant communities.

Finally, while this hearing is focused on the preparation of 2010, I would be remiss if I failed to urge the Subcommittee to review the implementation of the American Community Survey, which is, as you know, replacing this year the traditional decennial long form. We have concerns about the accuracy of data for small and particularly migrant populations.

Thank you.

Senator CARPER. Thank you very much, Ms. Narasaki. Mr. Salvo.

## TESTIMONY OF JOSEPH J. SALVO,[1] DIRECTOR, POPULATION DIVISION, NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT OF CITY PLANNING

Mr. SALVO. Thank you, Chairman Carper. It is a pleasure to be here. On behalf of Mayor Michael Bloomberg, I want to thank you for the opportunity to speak about issues affecting undercount in the 2010 census.

Regardless of your political leanings or assessments about past performance of the Census Bureau, I think we can all agree that the Bureau is struggling right now with the daunting task of trying to engineer a successful 2010 census within a very tight timeline. At this point, those of us who are on the outside looking in are very concerned. We are concerned because we would not like to see the census reduced to making a census happen as opposed to creating a high-quality enumeration, of course, that counts all Americans.

We have heard the Census Bureau's pledge that the 2010 census will fully enumerate the population of the Nation. I am here today

[1] The prepared statement of Mr. Salvo with attachments appears in the Appendix on page 140.

to ask the Subcommittee to hold the Census Bureau to its pledge in two areas of concern to those of us who are avid users of the data.

The first relates to the fact that the Census Bureau needs to provide us with their plan regarding how it intends to mail questionnaires to millions of housing units that lack apartment information—information that links a questionnaire to occupants of a specific housing unit. Remember, when questionnaires are delivered, there are no names on those questionnaires. This goes to the heart of what you just heard about how the address list is the foundation for the census. From a local community standpoint, which is where I stand, March 2009 is as important as April 2010.

This problem affects many communities in the Nation because there are problems with addresses in many communities—addresses that, frankly, may not cut it for census delivery purposes. So I would like to refer you to a series of photos that I have in the back of my written testimony. Chairman Carper, do you have my——

Senator CARPER. I do.

Mr. SALVO. At the end my written testimony, there are four pictures of two buildings that contain housing units without apartment numbers.[1]

Senator CARPER. Yes, got them.

Mr. SALVO. OK. The first two pictures show a building with three apartments, each with its own separate entrance. Since there are no apartment numbers, the Census Bureau needs to have a procedure to create labels when the building is examined in the 2009 address canvass so that each questionnaire can be attached to each individual apartment. These need to be labels that the Postal Service can use to deliver questionnaires, for example, Apartment 1R, for one right; Apartment 2, upper, lower, basement.

In the second example, we see two pictures of a larger building with five doorbells and one mailbox, which is common in places where people sort or retrieve their own mail by name of occupant. Putting all five census questionnaires into a single mailbox with apartment designators can cause confusion when trying to attach a questionnaire to each apartment, especially when non-response follow-up is required. The Census Bureau can avoid this problem by issuing specific instructions to field workers in the address canvass operation on how to label each apartment using descriptors.

To its credit, the Census Bureau has undertaken extensive research in the post-2000 period to explore the best ways of dealing with apartments like these that are not labeled in preparation for the address canvass. Indeed, I have had conversations with the New York Regional Director Lester Farthing, regular discussions about the frustration that this can produce in address canvassing.

A resolution is at hand. The Census Bureau has done research, but they have yet to formally adopt a procedure to handle this problem. Right now the danger is that with all the pressure on the Bureau to keep its time frame and with the block canvass of the Nation fast approaching, this innovative work may fall by the wayside; therefore, having a serious ripple effect on the enumeration itself.

[1] The pictures referred to appears in the Appendix on page 147.

A recent GAO report points out that the cost of the address canvass can dramatically increase if the Census Bureau cannot accurately anticipate the number of housing units per hour that can be examined. The problems that exist in small, multi-unit buildings can complicate the address canvass and greatly increase costs in many areas if the Census Bureau fails to implement a strategy that deals with these problematic addresses.

Therefore, I would like to request that the Subcommittee ask the Census Bureau if they plan on implementing a procedure in the block canvass to label problematic housing units in these buildings and, if so, when the details of this plan will be released.

Can I run over a little?

Senator CARPER. I am going to ask you to go ahead and wrap it up, please.

Mr. SALVO. OK. The other point I wanted to make is that the Census Bureau needs to make good on its promise to form meaningful partnerships with local governments. It is hard to overstate the importance of proactive community involvement in the census. The only way to produce what would be considered a good enumeration, as we actually have heard, is that local residents need to produce messages for the people in their own neighborhoods. And the Census Bureau needs to reach out to the locals in a way that is, frankly, going to be more difficult than in the past because of all the issues involved in privacy and everything that has happened since 2000.

So as a second point, I would like to ask the Subcommittee to require that the Census Bureau provide in detailed terms their plans for the outreach and to consult with organizations that deal with the local communities so that they can report to the Subcommittee exactly what those plans are and how they are manifesting themselves at a local level.

Thank you very much.

Senator CARPER. Those are two reasonable requests. I am going to ask at the end of the hearing if you will spend a little time with the folks on our Subcommittee who work with me on the Census Bureau and just discuss those requests further.

Mr. SALVO. A pleasure. Thank you very much.

Senator CARPER. We will see what we can do. Thank you for bringing them to our attention, and thanks for the pictures, too. Pictures are worth a thousand words, and these are good ones. They help make your point well.

Mr. Vargas, you are our last witness today. Thank you. Please proceed.

**TESTIMONY OF ARTURO VARGAS,[1] EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF LATINO ELECTED AND APPOINTED OFFICIALS (NALEO) EDUCATIONAL FUND**

Mr. VARGAS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The NALEO Educational Fund is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization that facilitates the full Latino participation in the American political process, and we are the leading census policy development and public education organization in the Latino community. Since 2000, we have

[1] The prepared statement of Mr. Vargas appears in the Appendix on page 151.

been working with the Census Bureau as a member of the Census Advisory Committee on planning for Census 2010, as well as the American Community Survey. Next year, we will transition our award-winning campaign "Ya es hora"—which means "It is time"—to educate Latinos about the importance of being counted in the 2010 census. We will devote the full weight of our capacity and influence to help make the 2010 census a success because we know that the Latino population, the Nation's second largest population and fastest growing, is at greater risk than ever before of being undercounted in the next census. An undercount of the Latino community will mean a failed census, and to avoid such a disaster, we offer the following recommendations:

First, Congress must fully fund the Census Bureau. The groundwork done in the final year before the census will determine its success. Any delay in these activities, as we have heard this morning, will undermine the count. The Bureau faces a daunting challenge with respect to its decision to abandon the use of the handhelds. The Bureau must now undertake intensive and more costly preparations to switch back to the traditional enumeration method, such as hiring more enumerators than originally planned. We urge Congress to fund the administration's revised fiscal year 2009 request of approximately $3.1 billion. We are concerned that if full funding is not provided, other critical programs will be shortchanged, such as partnership programs or the paid media outreach.

Two, the Census Bureau must implement a communications and outreach plan that uses culturally appropriate outreach materials and takes into account the special challenges in reaching Latino sub-groups. Earlier this month, the NALEO Educational Fund helped the Census Bureau convene several other Latino national organizations to meet with the communications vendor, GlobalHue Latino, to help coordinate these efforts. These firms need to continue to meet with us to create a wide range of promotional materials in language appropriate for Latino audiences, and utilize print, broadcast, and digital media in their efforts.

Three, special strategies and preparations will be required to enumerate the Nation's immigrant population. Our Nation's current debate about immigration as well as actions by State and local governments have created a climate which has exacerbated immigrants' distrust of Government, including the Census Bureau. It will be formidable challenge to convince immigrants, legal permanent residents, and U.S. citizens who live in households where family members have varying immigration status to answer the census and that the census is, in fact, safe and confidential.

Four, the Census Bureau must ensure that its Census 2010 workforce reflects the diversity of the Nation's population, from its highest managerial position to its field enumerators. The Bureau must strengthen its existing efforts to increase the number of Latinos at the Census Bureau where they are currently the most underrepresented population group among the workforce. We also urge the Bureau to implement a waiver in its hiring practices to allow the hiring of work-authorized non-citizens to ensure that there are sufficient enumerators with non-English-language speaking abilities. This will be especially critical in areas that have expe-

rienced population increases of the non-English-speaking population.

Five, the Census Bureau must quickly adjust its plans based on the outcomes of the 2008 dress rehearsal. As we heard earlier today from the GAO, they are offering several recommendations. We are concerned that many aspects of the 2010 plan were not included in the dress rehearsal, which raises so many uncertainties.

Six, Congress must reject any proposals which would prevent the full enumeration of every person living in the United States on census day. There have been a number of legislative and policy efforts to exclude the undocumented from the census enumeration. These proposals are contrary to one of the fundamental precepts of our Constitution. We urge the Administration and all Members of Congress to reject these flawed proposals and to go about the business of promoting a full enumeration of all persons living in the United States, as required by the Constitution.

And, seven, the U.S. Senate must support a seamless and expeditious transition in the leadership of the Census Bureau once a new Administration takes place in January. It is critical that there be no disruption in census operations with the advent of a new administration. Although various components of these operations will be overseen and carried out by career employees who will stay on regardless of changes at the White House, the head of the Census Bureau plays a key role by inspiring confidence and trust in the Bureau. Any delay in the Bureau's leadership transition will impair the Agency's ability to keep its 2010 operations completely on track.

We are devoted to working closely with the Subcommittee, with the Administration, and with the Census Bureau in ensuring a full count come Census 2010.

Senator CARPER. Mr. Vargas, thank you. This is a really good panel, and each of you have given valuable testimony. We thank you for that.

Sitting here listening to you—and some of you know each other and have worked together before. Mr. Vargas, do you know this cast of characters? Have you worked with these people before?

Mr. VARGAS. Yes, I do, sir.

Senator CARPER. All of them?

Mr. VARGAS. I think this is the first time I have met Mr. Salvo and Mr. Harrison, but I have worked with Mr. Prewitt, during the 2000 census, when he was the Director there. And Ms. Narasaki and I have a long history of working together on a variety of civil rights issues.

Senator CARPER. All right. Mr. Salvo, do you know these other folks?

Mr. SALVO. Well, I certainly know Ken Prewitt and Roderick Harrison from his days at the Census Bureau.

Mr. VARGAS. Have we met?

Mr. SALVO. You know, I am not sure. Mr. Vargas and Ms. Narasaki I have not met.

Senator CARPER. All right. Ms. Narasaki, recognize these guys?

Ms. NARASAKI. Yes, and it is a great team and cast. The Census Bureau—and the people who work on the censuses—is actually a fairly small family in terms of who works on it all 10 years and

not just when the actually decennial is happening. So I am pleased to be up here with my colleagues.

Senator CARPER. Mr. Harrison, how about you?

Mr. HARRISON. Yes, I know everybody by name. I am terrible by sight. And we know half the people in the audience, too.

Senator CARPER. Good. All right. I saw a bunch of them nodding their heads yes or no.

Dr. Prewitt, let me come back to you, if I could. My colleague Dr. Coburn has been detained over in the Senate chamber, unfortunately, but one of the issues that he has been very much interested in, as have I, has been our ability to use technology to enable us to do a better job in conducting our census in 2010 as compared to 10 years earlier.

One of our questions we have asked of the Census Bureau and Dr. Murdock and the Secretary of Commerce over and over again is why are we not able to make some greater use of the Internet. And the question, rather than—let me just add, going back 8 years when we were doing the 2010 census, did you have an expectation, kind of looking ahead from that point up to now, that we would be able to use the Internet more broadly than we are planning to do?

Mr. PREWITT. Yes. I will preface it by saying that the Bureau has been a technological innovator for a very long time. The huge technological innovation in 2000 was data capture, intelligent character recognition, enormously sophisticated, and we did extremely well with our contractors on that.

So I certainly think the mood going into preparation for 2010 on the basis of that success was that it would be a technologically more based, if you would, census especially because it is the short form only. It is much more complicated if you are carrying the long form. But only with the short form—I myself in 2000 answered by Internet. It was an option presented but not publicized. But since I knew it was there, I recognized it, I did it immediately, and it must have taken me 10 seconds. I got just the short form.

So, yes, I think the expectation was we would be using the Internet by now, and I have not followed the pros and cons, although I have followed the handheld issue. I would like just quickly to say on the handheld, using the handheld in address canvassing is itself a technological breakthrough innovation. So, in some respects, we will look back on 2010, if it is successful in the address listing thing, as another technological step forward. It is too bad it cannot be used in non-response follow-up, but that is what has happened.

With respect to the Internet, I personally am disappointed. On the other hand, I am certainly not second-guessing the decision of the current management at this stage of the game. At this stage of the game, the strongest thing I can urge is do not try to put in any new procedures. We already have procedures that are going to go out on the field untested, as you heard from GAO, and we simply cannot burden it with any untested procedures.

Senator CARPER. All right. Thank you.

I have one question that I am going to ask all of our witnesses to respond to, if you would. And then I am going to promise you some follow-up questions and ask for you to respond to those in writing. Much of the Bureau's success in 2000 was attributed to its partnerships with community-based organizations. Let me just ask

you to describe the value of the Partnership Program, the value of that Partnership Program or those Partnership Programs, and to assess its overall effectiveness in ensuring full participation of hard-to-count groups.

Mr. Vargas, would you like to lead us off?

Mr. VARGAS. Thank you, Chairman, for that question. The Partnership Program is absolutely critical to the success of the census because, in essence, what happens is that the Bureau counts on local organizations, local leaders to become the messengers for the census that the census is safe and confidential. In many ways, we put ourselves on the line relying on the Census Bureau's faith that they will, in fact, keep this safe and confidential. So not only does there need to be a partnership at the Bureau, but a level of trust and working relationship. And in order for that to happen, it needs to be developed over time. We cannot have the Census Bureau show up in January 2010 saying, "OK, it is time for the census." We need to develop that trust beginning today, which is why funding for the Partnership Program is so critical so that we develop those relationships over time, so that come April 2010 we can stand up and, with a certain amount of certainty, tell our people, our constituents, "Fill our your census form. It is safe and confidential."

Senator CARPER. Mr. Salvo.

Mr. SALVO. I am in a position where almost on a daily basis people come to me for their numbers. And these are the people that know that numbers matter, and these are the people that need to communicate the message within their own communities that the census message or the census process actually could be very invigorating and exciting. I know it sounds strange when you talk about numbers, but the fact is that once people understand the linkage between their own destiny, living within their own communities, and the numbers that are produced in the decennial census—and also, I might add, in the American Community Survey—once they get it, then response rises. And the only way to get it is to have it delivered by one of their compatriots right in their own community.

All of the national media attention that the Census Bureau wants to generate, all those TV ads at a national level will not work unless that connection is made.

Senator CARPER. Good point. Thanks. Ms. Narasaki.

Ms. NARASAKI. Yes, I would like to start out by commending the Census Bureau who, over the last 10 years, has done a lot in terms of doing focus groups of many different new or emerging communities to really understand what the barriers are and working much more closely with the advisory committee in trying to work on what the outreach and advertising campaign is going to be.

Last time around, for example, the Bureau came out with a very catchy slogan: "It's our future. Don't leave it blank." But it turned out not to translate very well into many Asian languages.

So it is that partnership at the national level and at the local level that will help make sure that the money that the Bureau is investing in the advertising is actually going to effectively reach our communities.

But as Mr. Salvo notes, some of the strongest persuaders are going to be not the government, and not the paid advertising. It is the earned media who is going to turn to people in the community, the faith-based leaders, the small business owners, the teachers and others—they are the people who are going to be most effective in reaching out to those in our community who are afraid and do not understand what the census is about.

Senator CARPER. Thank you, ma'am. Mr. Harrison.

Mr. HARRISON. I think the major points have been well made. The partnership is perhaps the only way that many of these hard-to-reach populations get the message of the importance of answering the census, how it pays off. And, yes, some of the people who know the concerns of the communities, what issues, the education, if we have undercounts of children and do not plan our schools, etc., for the population that has grown, where it is. So it is that, the importance of answering the census.

Second, particularly now in the post-PATRIOT Act environment and in many immigrant communities, the reassurance that, in fact, answering the census will not lead to any kind of difficulties with government agencies at the national or city—Federal, city, local, that is absolutely essential in many communities.

And then, third, I am not sure that this has been mentioned, but there are—answering the census is not simple, particularly if you do not speak English. There are complex issues of who belongs in the household, who does not. Partners need to learn—I think the Bureau is going to have to rely more in 2010 than even in 2000 on partners to be able to convey some of the complexities of residence rules to households that might not know whether they count this child as part of the household or not. And these are often, again, more complex households than the standard nuclear two-children/two-adult family.

Senator CARPER. I am reminded of in our State, when I was governor, we launched an effort to recruit 10,000 mentors to work with kids who just needed an extra person in their life. The young man I have mentored for the last 10 years does not live with his nuclear family, either his mom or dad, but he bounces back and forth between a great aunt and a grandparent.

Mr. HARRISON. Very likely to be undercounted.

Senator CARPER. Yes. He is just a prime example of the kind of person that can slip through the cracks.

Dr. Prewitt, you have the last word. I am going to ask you to just use it briefly.

Mr. PREWITT. Certainly, I think the odds of accurately or reasonably accurately counting the new immigrant population, especially the undocumented, is zilch without a good Partnership Program. The Bureau itself cannot do that population group at all. And other population groups are equally important, but not like—we are going to have a huge undercount in that population in 2010.

On the other hand, what I would quickly say about the Partnership Program is that from the point of view of the Census Bureau Director, when you really are exhausted in Washington, being beaten up by the Subcommittee and having a GAO——

Senator CARPER. Not by this Subcommittee.

Mr. PREWITT. No. Let me do a detour here. Oddly, the Senate forgot us after I was confirmed. I did not have Senate hearings. I had some 23 House hearings, but the Senate just let the census go.

Senator CARPER. Wow.

Mr. PREWITT. Yes, it is interesting. But the whole IG, GAO, the whole apparatus, it was an unusual census environment politically. You cannot imagine how nice it was to go out to the partnership meetings where people were excited about the census, cared about the census, making noise about the census, understood the census, and so forth.

The thing I would most hope to happen in 2010 with respect to partnership is a different kind of partnership with the U.S. Congress, which was a bifurcated—individuals very good on both sides of the aisle, but as an entity it was not very good.

Just imagine the following: April 1st, live feed, 535 Members of Congress sitting at their desks filling out the census form as a statement to the country. Or just imagine April 1st, the President and his Cabinet and the leadership of the Congress on the steps of the Thomas Jefferson Memorial filling out their census forms. Some statement like that by the Congress and the Executive Branch would be enormously important for the census. And I hope something like that can happen.

Senator CARPER. Thank you.

When I look at this panel—well, let me back up a little. When I put together my staff in the Senate, when I put together my administration as governor, and in teams that I led before that, I always tried to put together a team that was reflective of my State in terms of its age, its gender, its ethnic background. And I look at this panel, this is a pretty diverse panel, and I think one that has provided excellent testimony for us today. And I thank you very much for that. And for those of you who have been working in these vineyards for a while, to try to make sure that we do come as close as we can to counting everybody, I thank you on behalf of all those people who did not know you were working for them. But you are doing the Lord's work there.

We are going to leave the hearing record open for about 2 more weeks, and that will enable some of my colleagues who have statements that they wanted to give or will give, and also to ask a couple of questions. And I would just ask if you do receive some post-hearing questions—you will probably get one or two from me as well. But I would ask that as you receive those, you try to come back with your responses in a timely way.

I want to thank the Members of my Subcommittee staff, some of whom are here today, and Dr. Coburn's staff, for helping put together, I think, a very good hearing. With that having been said, I have two other hearings that are underway right now, and I am going to head back to them and see if we cannot figure out how to get our Nation's economy and our banking system and our financial and credit systems functioning again.

Mr. PREWITT. We do not want to hold you up.

Senator CARPER. But I feel better about the work that we are doing to address the undercount in the census.

Thank you all. This hearing is adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 12:10 p.m., the Subcommittee was adjourned.]

# APPENDIX

**PREPARED STATEMENT OF**
**STEVE H. MURDOCK**
**DIRECTOR**
**US CENSUS BUREAU**

***Reducing the Undercount in the 2010 Census***

**Before the Subcommittee on Federal Financial Management, Government Information, Federal Services and International Security of the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs**
**U.S. Senate**

**23 September 2008**

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Coburn, Members of the Subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to come before you again to discuss our ongoing efforts to address issues related to the undercount in the 2010 Census.

One of the primary goals of the 2010 Decennial Census is to improve the accuracy and coverage of the population, particularly with respect to the differential undercount. In discussing our efforts to meet this goal, we rightly stress our outreach and promotional efforts, including the advertising campaign and the partnership program. But it is important to understand that these efforts complement a series of operations specifically designed to address accuracy and coverage. Many programs from prior censuses are well in place to more effectively reach hard-to-count populations. We will be enhancing these programs in 2010. Without these efforts our partnership program and advertising campaign would not be effective.

**Decennial Census Operations that Address the Undercount**

The Census Bureau's commitment to improving coverage and addressing the undercount encompasses wide-ranging operations that can be thought of in four broad categories:

*Address List Development*
*Group Quarters*
*Field Activities*
*Languages*

In today's testimony, I wish to briefly describe each of these categories. As you will see, together they provide the foundation for our efforts to include everyone, particularly hard-to-count populations, in the 2010 Census. Our communications and partnership program also is fundamental to this effort, so I will be discussing the components of that program as well. My goal today, though, is to help the Subcommittee understand that this operational framework provides the structure to ensure that our communications program results in the accurate inclusion of the people we reach.

*Address List Development*

To ensure the accuracy of the census, we must ensure that we have each address, and that all of them are in the right place. If we do not know someone's address, it is much harder for us to know whether we have received his or her census questionnaire. Our address list, or what we call the Master Address File (MAF), covers all levels of geography throughout the country and Puerto Rico, including American Indian reservations, states, counties, cities, towns, census tracts, and census blocks. The MAF is integrated with our digital mapping system, the Topologically Integrated Geographic Encoding and Reference System—better known as TIGER.

The maintenance of the MAF between censuses is critical to the accuracy of the address list. Throughout the decade we have been updating the MAF with records from the U.S. Postal Service. We also developed and implemented the Community Address Updating System, during which field representatives updated the address list in specific rural areas where we could not make use of information from the U.S. Postal Service. We then partnered with tribal, state and

local governments in the Local Update of Census Addresses (LUCA) program. In the LUCA program we provided government officials all over the country with access to our address lists so they could compare them with their records to verify our accuracy.

We will conduct the address canvassing operation in the Spring of 2009, when census employees will canvass every block in the country to verify or update address information against the address information on the Census Bureau's address lists and maps. This includes verifying the information provided by tribal, state, and local governments as part of LUCA. Our employees also are instructed to add addresses not listed. Address list maintenance operations like address canvassing are especially important in rapidly changing areas like the Gulf Coast that were damaged by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. In the case of more recent dislocations such as those caused by Hurricane Ike, we are increasing outreach to local governments to understand special circumstances that might affect the upcoming Address Canvassing operation.

After Address Canvassing, we will continue to update the address list in other ways. We will continue to receive updates from the U.S. Postal Service up through the spring of 2010. Also, in the spring of 2010, in areas where we mail out the questionnaires, we will give state, local and tribal governments one final opportunity to provide us information about newly constructed housing units.

*Group Quarters*

It also is vital to ensure we have an accurate, up-to-date list of group quarters (GQ), including college dormitories, nursing homes, military barracks, jails, prisons, and other facilities. We have been working to improve our methods for identifying, locating, and enumerating these facilities. For the first time, group quarters will be included in the Address Canvassing operation. Our goal is to locate and properly identify or determine whether the address is, in fact, a group quarters location. By including the group quarters in the address lists we sent to governments as part of the LUCA program, we encourage local governments to verify or update the group quarters locations. We also reached out to stakeholders, including members of the Federal-State Cooperative Program for Population Estimates (FSCPE), to give us GQ updates. All of this will help ensure our list of group quarters is as accurate and complete as possible.

It is the Census Bureau's goal to include any and all housing units, including Group Quarters, in the Master Address File.

*Field Activities*

It is important to understand that every decennial census field operation is designed to achieve maximum coverage. This begins with a recruiting strategy based on hiring employees from the communities where they live. We will recruit nearly 3 million people to fill 750,000 temporary census jobs, making every effort to find people who have the language skills and cultural understanding of the communities they will be enumerating. Our pay rates will be competitive at the county level in every state, and we will conduct extensive advertising in local media outlets to inform people about census jobs. We also will work closely with our partner organizations conducting outreach in hard-to-count populations, and with local and tribal governments. A household is far more likely to respond to a census enumerator if that enumerator speaks their language and understands their culture.

We also implement a wide range of field operations designed to enhance our strategy for reaching everyone. We mail a form to 80 percent of the population because we have a distinct, city-style mailing address for them. For the remaining 20 percent who do not have a mailable city-style address, generally those who live in more rural areas, we either leave a form at their doorstep while simultaneously updating our address list (an operation we call update/leave). Alternatively, we actively canvass the area and conduct interview with the households we find and identify those we need to return to (an operation we call update/enumerate). These operations are chosen because they give us the best chance for getting a complete and accurate count in those areas.

Our largest field operation is the Nonresponse Follow-up operation (NRFU) in which we interview all households that have not returned their census forms. Our nonresponse follow-up is conducted in all areas of the country by local enumerators who make extensive efforts to obtain information from all households.

In addition, the Be Counted program will make questionnaires available to people who did not receive a questionnaire, or who feel they are not being included in the census count. Be Counted questionnaires will be available in up to 40,000 public places where people congregate (e.g. stores, churches,

government offices, libraries, gas stations, etc.). Our research shows that Be Counted forms are more likely to include members of minority groups and children – two traditionally undercounted populations – when compared to the traditional mail forms. We also will establish 30,000 Questionnaire Assistance Centers (QAC) where people can pick up Be Counted forms or get help filling out their questionnaires, which is particularly important for people with language difficulties.

We also conduct the Coverage Follow-up Operation, where we re-contact certain households by telephone if we have an indication that someone may have been missed or counted in error. This work is based on research we conducted throughout the decade, and it is linked to two new questions on the form specifically focused in improving coverage within households. Further, even during the Nonresponse Follow-up operation, enumerators are asked to look for newly constructed units that may not be on their address lists.

Specific enumeration strategies will complement these efforts. Officials in each region will develop specific plans for areas designated as being "hard-to-enumerate." These plans are based on their knowledge of the areas as well as on data from Census 2000. They include but are by no means limited to:

- Team, or "blitz" enumeration, in dangerous areas where it's unsafe for enumerators to work alone;

- "Urban Update Leave" operations for multi-unit housing in cities where the Post Office may not deliver to each household;

- A program designed specifically for remote Alaska;

- The Service-Based Enumeration Program, which involves visiting selected service locations that serve people without conventional housing such as shelters, soup kitchens and regularly scheduled mobile food vans in which we work closely with local governments and advocacy groups, and do Internet research, to identify and update our roster of these locations;

- Active engagement of partner organizations in areas where few people speak English well; and,

- Targeted outreach and communications efforts in areas with lagging response rates.

The list goes on and on, and it reflects the multi-faceted approach we take in our field operations to ensure that we're reaching everyone.

*Languages*

The Language Program is another major initiative to enhance our accuracy and coverage by ensuring we reach as many people as possible. We will mail about 13 million bilingual Spanish/English questionnaires targeted to areas with high concentrations of Hispanic populations who don't speak English very well. Questionnaires will be available in five languages in addition to English (Spanish, Chinese, Vietnamese, Korean and Russian), and we plan to provide language assistance guides in 59 languages. These in-language questionnaires and materials will be available at approximately 30,000 Questionnaire Assistance Centers located throughout the country, which will be staffed by people fluent in the languages spoken in their communities. A telephone assistance program will be available so respondents can receive assistance in the five major non-English languages. In addition to foreign language assistance, there will also be a TDD program for the hearing impaired, and Braille and large print questionnaire guides will be available upon request.

Together, these operations provide the strongest possible infrastructure for conducting the census. With these operations in place, we ensure that when we reach hard-to-count populations with our partnership, outreach and communications programs, we have mechanisms in place to effectively and accurately include them in the 2010 Census count.

**The 2010 Census Communications Program**

The 2010 Census Communications Program builds on the success of the Census 2000 partnership and marketing campaign, which helped to reverse a two-decade decline in the national mail response rate. For 2010, the Census Bureau is using an approach that integrates a mix of mass media advertising, targeted media outreach to specific populations, national and local partnerships, grassroots marketing, and special events. By integrating these elements with each other and with the Census Bureau's 2010 Census operations, the campaign will help ensure that everyone, especially those hardest to count, is reached.

In September 2007, the Census Bureau awarded its 2010 Communications Contract to DraftFCB of New York. DraftFCB is a full service marketing communications agency that will team with other companies that specialize in reaching minority audiences.
The current team members include:

- Global Hue (Black audiences)
- Global Hue Latino (Hispanic audiences)
- IW Group (Asian audiences)
- G&G (American Indian and Alaska Native audiences as well as Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander audiences)
- Allied Media (Arab, Russian, Central European and other emerging audiences)

DraftFCB has developed a plan that is being finalized this week after input from our Advisory Committees and all of our regional office staff. Comments from these stakeholders were taken seriously and are incorporated into the final plan.

The communications campaign will be integrated with the Census Bureau's decennial census operations, the partnership program, and our own media and public relations activities to ensure that consistent messages are delivered and reinforced at every stage of the process.

The success of each component is vital to achieving a complete and accurate count.

*Media and Outreach*

There are two components to the media and outreach effort. DraftFCB will mount a national media campaign in every broadcast medium to advertise our messaging for 2010. We will advertise on network television and radio, sporting events, local and cable television, ethnic programming and the Internet. Negotiations for this advertising will be underway early next year. The national media campaign will kick-off in January 2010 and build through each phase of the census.

The second key component of the media campaign will focus on the specific minority populations I mentioned earlier. Ethnic media advertising will

complement the national campaign, bringing the message to hard-to-count populations. Each of DraftFCB's contractors has proven experience reaching their target communities, and their efforts will be instrumental in addressing the differential undercount.

*Partnership Program*

The Partnership Program is another key component of our communications program. Partnership has been a vital part of the census since 1990, and it is the foundation of our outreach efforts. In Census 2000 more than 140,000 organizations partnered with the Census Bureau. These included state, local and tribal governments, community and faith-based organizations, schools, media and businesses.

The program in 2010 will be even more robust. Our partners, who have great credibility in their communities, will vouch for the importance of completing the 2010 census to people in inner cities, Indian reservations and rural America. This will be particularly important in areas isolated by language or geography. Our partnership materials will be available in at least 20 languages, and they will be customizable so that partners can tailor the message to their specific communities.

Unlike Census 2000, when all promotional materials were only available through a Census Bureau partnership specialist, 2010 materials will be easily accessed through the Internet or as printed copy. We also will provide needed resources to committed partner organizations through the Partner Support Program as we did in 2000. These resources will include specially printed promotional materials, customized banners, special event promotional items that encourage participation in the census, and in-language materials that help reach the hardest-to-count populations served by specific local organizations.

Partnership efforts will:

- Utilize community stakeholders who are known and trusted locally;
- Motivate partner organizations (governmental and non-governmental) to implement effective strategies to improve mail response;
- Identify mechanisms for enhancing our training efforts;
- Provide outreach for recruiting efforts into communities that are most difficult to recruit; and,

- Identify organizations that are willing to host Questionnaire Assistance Centers and provide volunteers to staff and publicize these centers.

The program is well underway. As of May 2008, the Regional Census Centers (RCCs) have hired and trained 120 partnership specialists who are now actively developing local partnerships with key stakeholders. In January of 2009 the regions will add 560 more partnership specialists to achieve the full staffing level, which is comparable to Census 2000 partnership staffing levels.

The RCCs also are fine-tuning partnership plans using their local expertise and information from the Decennial Census Planning Database (which was originally based on Census 2000 data and is now updated with information from the American Community Survey to make it more current). The regional offices are charged to focus on hard-to-count populations such as immigrants, those who have difficulty speaking English, single-parent renters, urban core areas, and those living in poverty.

The RCCs are actively engaging local leaders including government officials, community and tribal leaders to form local and statewide Complete Count Committees (CCCs). CCCs incorporate local knowledge, influence, and resources to educate residents and promote the census through a locally based and targeted outreach effort. CCCs provide a vehicle for coordinating and nurturing a cooperative effort between local governments, communities and the Census Bureau. Residents are more likely to participate when locals they know and trust endorse our efforts.

The Census Bureau held two national-level partnership conferences that involved approximately 250 leaders from State Data Centers, Census Information Centers, and Governor's Liaisons to spearhead partnership efforts in each of the fifty states, DC and Puerto Rico. Since 2007, the Census Bureau has met with Federally and State Recognized Tribes, with more meetings planned for 2009. And next spring, we will promote the partnership program during a conference with national governmental and non-governmental partner organizations.

*Census In Schools*

Another key component of the Integrated Communications Plan is the Census in Schools (CIS) program. DraftFCB has awarded a contract to Scholastic, Inc. to develop the CIS program. The goal of CIS is to target strategies, messages, and

materials to reach parents through their children. Scholastic developed our program for Census 2000, and they will be building on their successes for 2010, educating children on the importance of participating in the census. We have been working throughout the decade to implement a CIS program, and developing a Website with interactive activities and "kid-friendly" fact sheets. The CIS program will identify the most effective way to reach hard-to-count households with school-age children.

*Integration*

The 2010 Census Communications Campaign integrates all campaign elements to:

1) Provide better branding of the 2010 Census among all segments of the American population;
2) Improve delivery of promotional materials for regional and national partnership efforts in a concerted time-specific delivery plan; and,
3) Provide tighter messaging with the help of communications professionals.

We believe that by integrating all campaign elements (partnerships, Census in Schools, media relations, publicity events, and paid advertising) through a more concerted and coordinated plan, the public campaign among all population groups will be more effective, efficient, and instrumental in reaching the campaign's goals of improved response rate, better quality of data, and heightened public cooperation.

Taken together, each component of the communications program will reinforce the others to maximize outreach and participation in the 2010 Census. By the time the census questionnaires are mailed out in March 2010, people living in the United States, Puerto Rico and the Island Areas will have seen and heard (often in native languages) advertisements in national and local media, and heard about the census in their communities and faith based organizations. Children will learn about the census at school, and promotional materials will be posted throughout every community and circulated by partner organizations. The communications effort will continue through each phase of the census, encouraging people to respond to the replacement questionnaire, and then to cooperate with census enumerators walking through every neighborhood in the country.

**Conclusion**

Members of the Subcommittee be assured that everything we do in the 2010 Census is aimed at improving accuracy and coverage with an eye toward reducing undercounts and counting everyone. All decennial census operations are based on the recognition that we must work harder to count people in areas that are difficult to reach. Whether the challenges are in remote Alaskan rural areas, densely populated urban areas like New York or Chicago, or the Colonias in South Texas – the Census Bureau will marshal the efforts necessary to include them in the 2010 Census. To us it does not matter how hard it is to reach someone – it matters that we reach everyone.

I'm happy to take your questions.

United States Government Accountability Office

GAO

Testimony

Before the Subcommittee on Federal Financial Management, Government Information, Federal Services, and International Security, Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, U.S. Senate

For Release on Delivery
Expected at 10:30 a.m. EDT
Tuesday, September 23, 2008

# 2010 CENSUS

# The Bureau's Plans for Reducing the Undercount Show Promise, but Key Uncertainties Remain

Statement of Robert Goldenkoff
Director, Strategic Issues

GAO-08-1167T

September 23, 2008

GAO
Accountability · Integrity · Reliability

# Highlights

Highlights of GAO-08-1167T, a testimony before the Subcommittee on Federal Financial Management, Government Information, Federal Services, and International Security, Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, U.S. Senate

## 2010 CENSUS

## The Bureau's Plans for Reducing the Undercount Show Promise, but Key Uncertainties Remain

### Why GAO Did This Study

An accurate decennial census relies on finding and counting people—only once—in their usual place of residence, and collecting complete and correct information on them. This is a daunting task as the nation's population is growing steadily larger, more diverse, and according to the U.S. Census Bureau (Bureau), increasingly difficult to find and reluctant to participate in the census. Historically, undercounts have plagued the census and the differential impact on various subpopulations such as minorities and children is particularly problematic.

GAO was asked to describe (1) key activities the Bureau plans to use to help reduce the differential undercount and improve participation, (2) the various challenges and opportunities that might affect the Bureau's ability to improve coverage in 2010, and (3) how different population estimates can impact the allocation of federal grant funds. This testimony is based primarily on GAO's issued work in which it evaluated the performance of various Census Bureau operations.

### What GAO Recommends

At this time, GAO is not making any new recommendations.

To view the full product, including the scope and methodology, click on GAO-08-1167T. For more information, contact Robert Goldenkoff at (202) 512-2757 or goldenkoffr@gao.gov.

### What GAO Found

The Bureau's strategy for reducing the undercount and improving participation in the 2010 enumeration appears to be comprehensive, integrated, and shaped by the Bureau's experience in the 2000 Census. If implemented as planned, the various activities the Bureau is developing should position the agency to address the undercount. Key operations include building a complete and accurate address list, implementing an Integrated Communications Campaign to increase awareness and encourage participation, and fielding special enumeration programs targeted toward historically undercounted populations. For example, the Bureau develops its address list and maps over the course of a decade using a series of operations that sometimes overlap to ensure all housing units are included. Among other activities, temporary census workers go door to door across the country in an operation called address canvassing to verify addresses. To help find hidden housing units, the Bureau's workers look for clues such as two mailboxes or utility meters that could indicate additional households. Likewise, the Bureau's communications campaign includes paid media, public relations, and partnerships with national and grassroots organizations, among other efforts, some of which will be targeted toward hard-to-count groups.

Despite the Bureau's ambitious plans, a number of challenges and uncertainties remain. For example, the performance of the handheld computers that is critical to address canvassing has technical shortcomings, while the communications campaign faces the historical challenge of converting awareness of the census to an actual response. Further, success will depend in large part on the extent to which the various operations (1) start and finish on schedule, (2) are implemented in the proper sequence, (3) are adequately tested and refined, and (4) receive appropriate staffing and funding. It will also be important for the Bureau to have a real-time monitoring capability to track the progress of the enumeration, target its resources to where they are most needed, and to quickly respond to various contingencies that could jeopardize the accuracy or cost of the count.

Our past work indicates that the accuracy of state and local population estimates may have an effect, though modest, on the allocation of grant funds among the states. Many of the formulas used to allocate grant funds rely upon measures of the population, often in combination with other factors. For example, we analyzed the sensitivity of Social Services Block Grants (SSBG) to alternative population estimates, rather than the actual census. We selected SSBG for our analysis because the formula, which was based solely on population, and the resulting funding allocations were particularly sensitive to alternative population estimates. Based on our simulation of the funding formula, 27 states and the District of Columbia would have gained $4.2 million and 23 states would have lost $4.2 million of the $1.7 billion in 2004 SSBG funding.

Mr. Chairman, Senator Coburn, and Members of the Subcommittee:

Thank you for the opportunity to be here today to discuss the challenges the U.S. Census Bureau (Bureau) faces in improving the accuracy and coverage of the 2010 decennial Census, and the strategies the Bureau plans to employ to reduce the undercount. An accurate decennial census relies on finding and counting people—only once—in their usual place of residence, and collecting complete and correct information from them. This is a daunting task as the nation's population is growing steadily larger, more diverse, and according to the Bureau, increasingly difficult to find and reluctant to participate in the census. Coverage improvement involves reduction in overcounting and undercounting. An undercount occurs when the census misses an individual who should have been enumerated; an overcount occurs when an individual is counted in error.

What makes these errors particularly problematic is their differential impact on various subgroups. Minorities, renters, and children, for example, are more likely to be undercounted by the census while more affluent groups, such as people with vacation homes, are more likely to be enumerated more than once. As census data are used to apportion seats in Congress, redraw congressional districts, and allocate billions of dollars in federal assistance to state and local governments, improving coverage and reducing the differential undercount[1] are critical.

The Bureau has long recognized the importance of reducing the undercount and, in previous enumerations, has included operations and programs designed to improve coverage. As the Bureau moves toward 2010, however, besides such long-standing challenges to an accurate enumeration as the nation's linguistic diversity and privacy concerns, it also faces newly emerging issues such as local campaigns against illegal immigration and a post-September 11 environment that could heighten some groups' fears of government agencies.

Today's hearing is particularly timely because, in the months that remain until Census Day, April 1, 2010, the Bureau will launch a series of operations aimed at reducing the differential undercount including building a complete and accurate address list, launching an Integrated Communications Campaign to increase awareness and encourage participation in the census, and implementing special enumeration

[1]Differential undercount describes subpopulations that are undercounted at a different rate than the total population.

programs targeted toward undercounted groups. Although not an exhaustive list, I am highlighting these actions in my statement to help illustrate the range of activities the Bureau employs to improve coverage at different phases of the census.

As requested, my testimony will describe (1) how the Bureau plans to use these operations to help reduce the differential undercount and improve participation, (2) the various challenges and opportunities that might affect the Bureau's ability to improve coverage in 2010, and (3) how different population estimates can impact the allocation of federal grant funds.

My remarks today are based primarily on reports we issued from 2000 through 2008 on the planning and development of the 2010 Census, lessons learned from prior censuses, and the impact of population measures on federal funding allocations. Please see the final page of this testimony for related GAO products. Further, we reviewed recent documents on the Bureau's outreach and promotion plans as well as other efforts to reduce the undercount and interviewed Bureau officials about undercount challenges, plans to improve coverage among hard-to-count populations, and progress made towards addressing undercount issues from the 2000 Census.

We conducted our review in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain sufficient, appropriate evidence to provide a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives. We believe that the evidence obtained provides a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives.

In summary, the Bureau has developed a wide variety of plans and programs to position it to address the differential undercount. Further, the Bureau's efforts are designed to reinforce one another, so that a household missed in one operation—say, address canvassing—can be picked up in a subsequent activity such as nonresponse follow-up. At the same time, the Bureau's plans reflect lessons learned from the 2000 Census.

Still, a number of hurdles and uncertainties remain, and success will depend in large part on the extent to which the various operations (1) start and finish on schedule, (2) are implemented in the proper sequence, (3) are adequately tested and refined, and (4) receive appropriate staffing and funding. It will also be important for the Bureau to closely track the progress of key census-taking activities, target its resources to where they

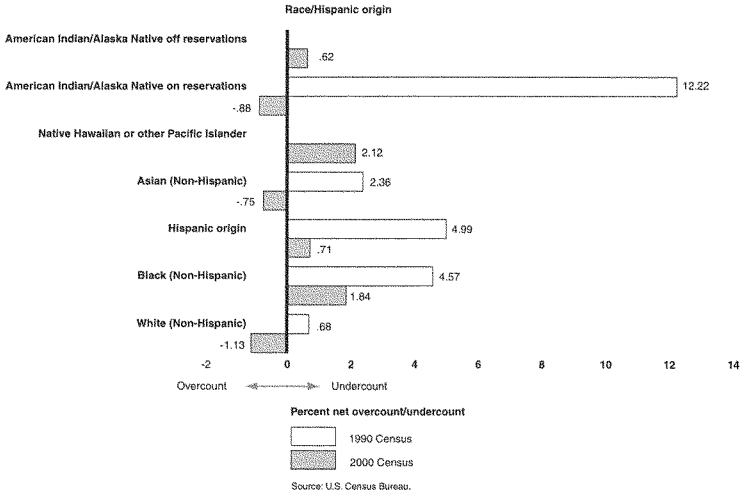
are most needed, and ensure that it has the ability to quickly respond to various contingencies that could jeopardize the accuracy of the count.

## Background

The Bureau puts forth tremendous effort to conduct an accurate count of the nation's population. However, some degree of coverage error in the form of persons missed or counted more than once is inevitable. Two types of errors that can affect the accuracy of the enumeration are the omission of persons who should have been counted and erroneous enumerations of persons who should not have been counted.

Historically, undercounts have plagued the census, although, according to the Bureau, they have generally diminished since 1940. For the 2000 Census, for the first time in its history, the Bureau reported a slight net overcount of approximately 0.5 percent or about 1.3 million people. However, as shown in figure 1, coverage errors were not evenly distributed through the population. For example, there was an overcount of non-Hispanic Whites, and an undercount of non-Hispanic Blacks. Nevertheless, figure 1 also shows the strides the Bureau made in reducing the undercount in the 2000 Census compared to 1990.

**Figure 1: Comparison of Percent Net Undercounts, 1990 and 2000 Censuses**




Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

Note: A negative number indicates an overcount. In 1990, Asian (Non-Hispanic) included Pacific Islanders.

Importantly, the national net overcount of about 0.5 percent does not mean that 99.5 percent of the population was counted correctly in 2000. In fact, the number of persons who were counted twice in the census was partially offset by the number of persons who were missed by the census. We have long maintained that the sum of these numbers—known as gross error (rather than the difference between the two numbers or net error)—provides a more comprehensive measure of total error in the census.

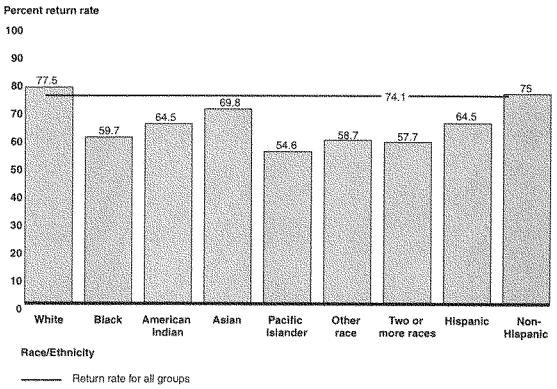
Participation in the census, as measured by the mail return rate, also affects the accuracy of census data. The Bureau calculates mail return rates as the percentage of questionnaires the Bureau receives from

occupied housing units in the mail-back universe.[3] Although individuals who fail to mail back their census forms might be counted by an enumerator during a subsequent operation called nonresponse follow-up, high mail return rates are critical to quality data. A Bureau evaluation of the 2000 Census found that responses from mail returns tend to be more accurate than those obtained during nonresponse follow-up.

Historically, return rates have declined. According to the Bureau, in 1970, for example, the overall mail return rate was 87.0 percent; in 1980, 81.3 percent; and in 1990 and 2000, 74.1 percent. Importantly, as shown in figure 2, during the 2000 Census, differentials existed in the mail return rates of different demographic groups. For example, Whites had a higher mail return rate (77.5 percent) than the rate for all groups (74.1 percent), while nearly every other demographic group had lower return rates than the overall mail return rate. The lowest mail return rates were those of Pacific Islanders (54.6 percent) and those of two or more races (57.7 percent). Maintaining or increasing mail return rates, especially minority return rates, represents an important opportunity for the Bureau to improve the quality of census data.

[3]The mail return rate differs from the mail response rate in that the mail response rate is calculated as a percentage of all the housing units in the mail-back universe, including those that are later discovered to be nonexistent or unoccupied. The Bureau uses this percentage as an indicator of its nonresponse follow-up workload.

Figure 2: Return Rates by Race/Ethnic Groups during 2000 Census




Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

## A Number of Census Operations Are Aimed at Improving Coverage

In designing the 2010 Census, the Bureau recognized the importance of including a number of operations aimed at improving coverage and reducing the differential undercount. Three such efforts that I will highlight in my remarks today are (1) a complete and accurate address list, (2) an Integrated Communications Campaign to increase awareness and encourage participation, and (3) special enumeration programs targeted toward historically undercounted populations. These activities, along with a number of others planned for 2010, will position the Bureau to reduce the undercount. At the same time, each faces particular challenges and uncertainties that I will describe later in my statement.

### Building a Complete and Accurate Address List

The foundation of a successful census is a complete and accurate address list and the maps that go with it. The Bureau's Master Address File (MAF) is the inventory of the nation's roughly 133.7 million housing units. In so far as it is used to deliver questionnaires as well as to organize the collection and tabulation of the data, the MAF serves as the basic control for the census.

The Bureau develops its address list and maps over the course of the decade using a series of operations that sometimes overlap to increase the

accuracy of the list of all housing units are included. These operations include partnerships with the U.S. Postal Service and other federal agencies; state, local, and tribal governments; and local planning organizations.

Three operations that can help include the hard-to-count are the Bureau's Local Update of Census Addresses (LUCA) program, address canvassing, and Group Quarters Validation.

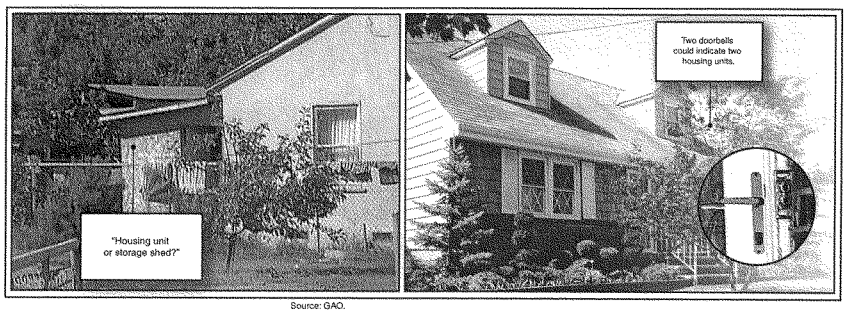
### Local Update of Census Addresses

The LUCA program gives state, local, and tribal governments the opportunity to review and update the list of addresses and maps that the Bureau will use to deliver questionnaires within those communities. According to Bureau officials, LUCA helps identify hard-to-count populations and "hidden" housing units such as converted basements because local governments might know where such dwellings exist and have access to local data and records. In October 2008, the Bureau is scheduled to complete its reviews of participants' LUCA submissions and update the MAF and a related geographic database used for maps.

### Address Canvassing

In the address canvassing operation, thousands of temporary Bureau employees known as listers verify the addresses of all housing units—including those addresses provided by localities in LUCA—by going door to door across the country. As part of this effort, listers add addresses that might not be in the Bureau's database. To help find hidden housing units it might otherwise miss, listers ask if there is more than one residence at a particular address, or to look for clues such as an outbuilding or two mailboxes or utility meters that could indicate additional households. Indeed, as shown in the picture on the left in figure 3, someone could be living in what appears to be a storage shed. Likewise, in the picture on the right, what appears to be a small, single-family house could contain another apartment as suggested by its two doorbells.

**Figure 3: Address Canvassing Can Help Locate Hidden Housing Units**




Source: GAO.

## Group Quarters Validation

While the vast majority of U.S. residents live in residential housing units such as single-family houses, apartments and mobile homes, the 2000 decennial enumerated over seven million people living in group situations such as college dormitories, nursing homes, migrant labor camps, prisons, and group homes, collectively known as "group quarters". Some group quarters, such as seasonal and migrant labor camps, can be difficult to locate because they are sometimes fenced-in or in remote locations away from main roads. The Bureau encountered a number of problems when enumerating group quarters during the 2000 Census. For example, in 2000, communities reported instances where students in college dormitories were counted twice and prison inmates were counted in the wrong county. Additionally, group homes are sometimes difficult for census workers to spot because, as shown in figure 4, they can look the same as conventional housing units.

**Figure 4: Group Quarters or Single-Housing Unit?**

Source: GAO, 2004.

Since 1970, the Bureau has conducted a separate operation to enumerate the group quarters population. For 2010, the Bureau has plans to conduct Group Quarters Validation to validate the addresses found in the Address Canvassing operation and collect information about the type of group quarters.

## Encouraging Participation through the Integrated Communications Campaign

The Bureau's Integrated Communications Campaign is designed to increase the mail response rate, improve cooperation with enumerators, enhance the overall accuracy of the census, and reduce the differential undercount. The Bureau estimates it will spend $410 million on the Integrated Communications Campaign for the 2010 Census.

In September 2007, the Bureau awarded its communications contract to DraftFCB, a communications firm hired to orchestrate a number of communications activities for the 2010 Census. DraftFCB's approach includes a specific focus on undercounted populations. As one example, the contractor worked with the Bureau to segment the nation's population into distinct "clusters" using socioeconomic, demographic, and other data

from the 2000 Census that are correlated with a person's likelihood to participate in the census. Each cluster was given a hard-to-count score and the Bureau's communications efforts are to be targeted to those clusters with the highest scores. The four clusters with the highest hard-to-count scores made up 14 percent of the nation's occupied housing units based on data from the 2000 Census, and included the following demographic characteristics: renters, immigrants, non-English speakers, persons without higher education, persons receiving public assistance, and persons who are unemployed.

Targeting the Bureau's communications campaign to hard-to-count populations will help the Bureau use its resources more effectively. This will be important because in constant 2010 dollars, the Bureau will be spending less on communications for the 2010 Census ($410 million) compared to the 2000 Census ($480 million).

The campaign strategy will be based on the theme "It's In Our Hands". According to the Bureau, this approach reflects a marketplace trend where communications are becoming more two-way or participatory, and can be seen, for example, in people creating their own content on the World Wide Web. The goal of the strategy is to encourage personal ownership and involvement that spreads the word about the census. The Bureau believes this approach will be more effective than if the message came from the government talking to the public. Further, the generic theme will be tailored to specific groups. For example, outreach targeted to families might carry the message, "The education of our children. . .It's in our hands," while the economically disadvantaged might receive "The power to matter. . .It's in our hands."

The communications campaign consists of (1) paid media including national, local, outdoor, and online advertisements; (2) earned media and public relations such as news releases, media briefings, special events, podcasts, and blogs; (3) Census in Schools, a program designed to reach parents and guardians through their school age children, and (4) partnerships with key national and local grassroots organizations that have strong connections to their communities.

Although the effects of the Bureau's communication efforts are difficult to measure, the Bureau reported some positive results from its 2000 Census marketing efforts with respect to raising awareness. For example, four population groups—non-Hispanic Blacks, non-Hispanic Whites, Asians, and Native Hawaiians indicated they were more likely to return the census form after the 2000 Census Partnership and Marketing Program than before its onset. However, the Bureau also reported that the 2000 Census

Partnership and Marketing Program had mixed success in favorably impacting actual participation in the census.

Of the various campaign components, the Census in Schools and partnership programs are specifically aimed at hard-to-count populations. The Census in Schools program provides curriculum and teaching materials that introduce students to the purpose and importance of the census as well as census activities and products. The program is also designed to engage students to encourage their parents to complete and return their census questionnaires.

According to Bureau officials, although the Census in Schools program is not as extensive as the one conducted in the last decennial, they made a number of changes based on lessons learned from the 2000 Census. For example, the program will spend less on printing and base their 2010 Census materials on materials used for the 2000 Census rather than create new materials from scratch. Moreover, similar to 2000, the Bureau is not reaching out to all schools but instead plans to target schools with large hard-to-count populations. Lower grades will be targeted as well, as Bureau officials believe their message has more traction with younger students.

Under the partnership program, the Bureau plans to hire specialists to collaborate with local individuals and organizations, leveraging their knowledge and expertise to increase participation in the census within their communities. Partnership specialists are to be trained in, and help implement, various aspects of the census, as well as to reach out to key government and community leaders and gain commitments from community organizations to help the Bureau execute the enumeration.

## Reaching Out to Undercounted Populations Using Special Enumeration Activities

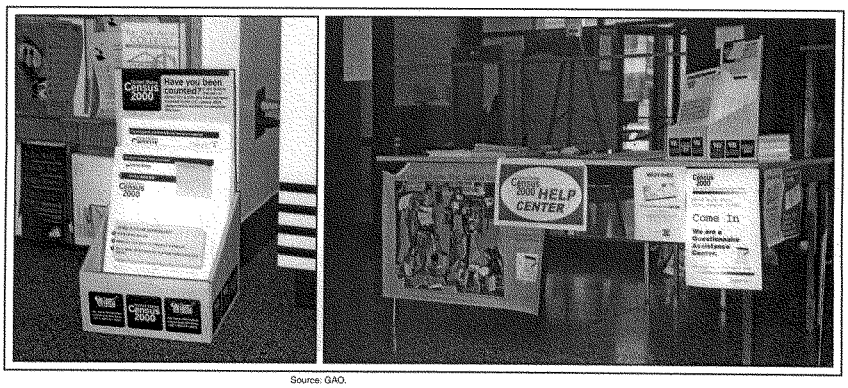
The Bureau operates a wide range of special enumeration programs—such as Be Counted, Questionnaire Assistance Centers (QAC) and Service-Based Enumeration—that target hard-to-count populations. Other activities, such as offering in-language questionnaires and replacement questionnaire mailings for nonresponding households, can help increase participation in non-English speaking populations as well as residents in areas with historically low responses rates.

### Be Counted program and Questionnaire Assistance Centers

The Bureau developed the Be Counted program to enumerate people who believe they did not receive a census questionnaire, or were otherwise not included in the census. The Be Counted form is a questionnaire intended to be placed in public locations such as stores, libraries, and other places where people congregate (see figure 5). QAC staff help people complete

their Be Counted forms as well as other census forms. Census officials reported that approximately 560,000 people were enumerated through the Be Counted program in 2000 that might have otherwise been missed. Additionally, a Bureau evaluation found that Be Counted forms were more likely to include members of minority groups and children—two traditionally undercounted populations—when compared to the traditional mail forms. Plans for the 2010 decennial include 30,000 QAC sites (a 25 percent increase over the 2000 Census) and 40,000 Be Counted sites, which are oftentimes co-located with QACs but can be stand-alone sites. Partnership specialists are to help determine the location of the sites, which are to be operational for 4 weeks during the 2010 Census. The Be Counted forms are to be available in English, Chinese, Korean, Russian, Spanish, and Vietnamese.

**Figure 5: Be Counted Sites and Questionnaire Assistance Centers Can Help Improve Coverage**




Source: GAO.

## Service-Based Enumeration program

The Bureau developed the Service-Based Enumeration program (SBE) for the 2000 Census to provide the homeless and others without conventional housing an opportunity to be included in the census. The program involves visiting selected service locations such as shelters, soup kitchens and regularly scheduled mobile food vans that serve people without conventional housing. The Bureau reported that during the 2000 Census, the large percentages of historically undercounted populations were

among the 171,000 people in emergency and transitional shelters enumerated through the program. For 2010, the Bureau plans to conduct address list updates of SBE locations by obtaining information about SBEs from the Internet and soliciting information from government agencies and advocacy organizations.

### In-Language Questionnaires and Other Efforts

The Bureau intends to notify respondents through the Integrated Communications Campaign that if a questionnaire in one of the 5 languages other than English (Chinese, Korean, Russian, Spanish, or Vietnamese) is needed, the respondent should call the number provided on the questionnaire. The Bureau plans to provide language assistance guides for 59 languages, an increase from 49 languages in 2000. New in 2010, the Bureau plans to send bilingual questionnaires to approximately 13 million households that are likely to need Spanish assistance, as determined by analyzing recent data from the American Community Survey (a related Bureau survey program). Moreover, for 2010, the Bureau plans a multi-part approach for replacement mailings that includes a blanket mailing of approximately 25-30 million replacement questionnaires to census tracts with low response rates several weeks after the initial questionnaire mailing.

## Challenges and Opportunities to Reduce Undercount

Although each of the operations I've described can position the Bureau to address the undercount, they also face challenges and uncertainties that, if not adequately resolved, could reduce the effectiveness of the Bureau's efforts.

For example, with respect to address canvassing, the Bureau plans to provide listers with GPS-equipped handheld computers (HHC) to verify and correct addresses. Consequently, the performance of the HHCs is critical to the accurate, timely, and cost-effective completion of address canvassing. However, the Bureau's ability to collect and transmit address and mapping data using the HHC is not known. For example, the 2008 Dress Rehearsal—which was an opportunity for the Bureau to conduct development and testing of systems and prepare for the 2010 Census—revealed a number of technical problems with the HHC that included freeze-ups and data transmission issues. The problems with the HHC prompted the Bureau to make major design changes, and a limited field test is scheduled for December 2008 (GAO is making plans to observe this test). However, if after this test the HHC is found to be unreliable, the Bureau will have little time to make any refinements.

Operations that were not tested during the Dress Rehearsal also introduce risks. These operations include the Be Counted program, Service-Based

Enumeration, and Group Quarters Enumeration. Although the Bureau employed these operations during the 2000 Census, the Dress Rehearsal afforded the Bureau an opportunity to see how they might perform in concert with other activities planned for 2010, as well as identify improvements that could enhance their effectiveness.

The Integrated Communications Campaign faces its own set of challenges, chief among which is the long-standing issue of converting awareness of the census to an actual response. As a rough illustration of this challenge, various polls conducted for the 2000 Census suggested that the public's awareness of the census was over 90 percent. Yet, as noted earlier, (1) the actual return rate was much lower—around 74 percent of the nation's households, and (2) the Bureau's evaluation of the 2000 Census Partnership and Marketing Program found that it only had mixed success in encouraging actual participation.

With respect to the partnership program, the Bureau plans to have 144 partnership staff, including specialists, on-board nationwide by the end of September 2008, and ramp up to 680 partnership staff by 2010. According to Bureau officials, although this level of staffing is about the same as for the 2000 Census, the Bureau believes it is sufficient, and plans to deploy the partnership specialists more strategically by allocating more partnership specialists to regions with large hard-to-count populations. For example, the Atlanta region, (which includes Florida, Alabama, and Georgia), had 50 partnership specialists in 2000, but is to receive more than 70 partnership specialists in 2010. Although the strategic deployment is a reasonable approach, the impact of the reallocation on those regions that will receive fewer partnership specialists is unclear.

Our evaluation of the 2000 Census Partnership Program found that there were mixed views regarding the adequacy of specialists staffing levels.[3] Although partnership specialists we spoke to generally agreed that the Bureau hired enough specialists to carry out their activities, the managers of local census offices we interviewed noted that the partnership specialists' heavy workload may have limited the level of support they were able to provide. In 2010, to the extent that partnership specialists in regions with lower staffing levels wind up working with as many or more groups compared to 2000, or need to cover large geographic areas, they could find themselves thinly spread.

[3]GAO, 2000 Census: Review of Partnership Program Highlights Best Practices for Future Operations. GAO-01-579 (Washington, D.C.: Aug. 20, 2001).

Our observations during the 2000 Census highlighted some best practices that appeared to be key to successful partnership engagements, and might help the Bureau refine its partnering efforts in 2010.[4] For example, best practices for partners include (1) identifying 'census champions' (i.e., people who will actively support the census and encourage others to do so), (2) integrating census-related efforts into partners' existing activities and events, and (3) leveraging resources by working with other partners and customizing census promotional materials to better resonate with local populations. For the Bureau, best practices include (1) providing adequate and timely information, guidance, and other resources to local partners on how they can support the census; (2) maintaining open communications with partners; and (3) encouraging the early involvement of partners in census activities.

Another challenge lies in staying on schedule. In order to meet legally mandated data reporting requirements, census activities need to take place at specific times and in the proper sequence. For example, the Group Quarters Validation operation needs to be completed after the Address Canvassing operation; the Questionnaire Assistance Centers need to be properly staffed, equipped, and opened by a particular date; advertising needs to be synchronized with various phases of the enumeration; and the questionnaires and replacement mailings all need to be carried out at the right time. Given the tight deadlines, small glitches could cascade into significant problems with downstream operations.

Another challenge will be to develop management information systems capable of tracking key operations to enable the Bureau to quickly address trouble spots. The Bureau did this successfully in 2000 with the system it used to track local census offices' progress in meeting their recruiting goals. At those offices where recruiting was found to be lagging, the Bureau was able to quickly raise pay rates and take other actions that enabled the Bureau to meet its goal. Less successful was the management information system used to track the Bureau's partnership efforts in 2000, which was found to be slow and not user-friendly, among other shortcomings, which limited its use as an effective management tool. For 2010, the Bureau intends to use a Web-based system that will enable it to manage the partnerships in real-time and determine, among other things, whether staff need to be redirected or reallocated.

[4]GAO-01-579.

## Potential Impact of Undercounts on Federal Funding

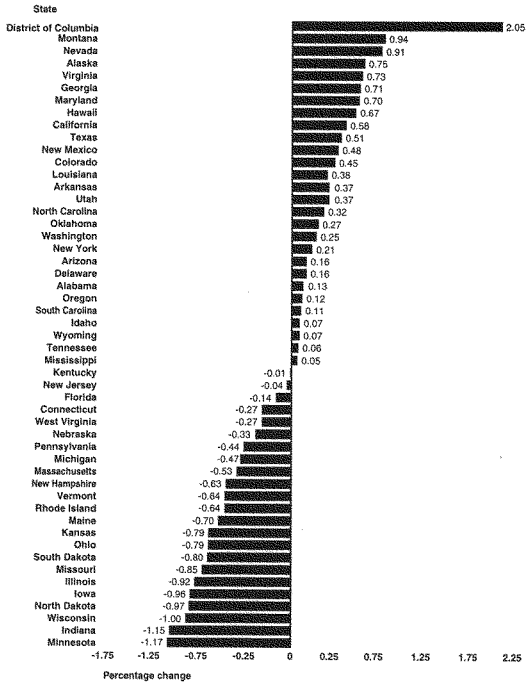
Our past work indicates that the accuracy of state and local population estimates may have an effect, though modest, on the allocation of grant funds among the states.[5] Many of the formulas used to allocate grant funds rely upon measures of population, often in combination with other factors. In our June 2006 report, we analyzed the sensitivity of Social Services Block Grants (SSBG) to alternative population estimates, such as those derived by statistical methods that incorporate the number of people that were overcounted and undercounted in the census, rather than the actual census.

To analyze the prospective impact of estimated population counts on the money allocated to the states through SSBG, we recalculated the state allocations using statistical estimates of the population that were developed for the 1990 and 2000 Censuses in lieu of the actual census numbers. We used the population estimates, which are based on the 2000 Census counts, and then adjusted these population estimates by the difference between the 2000 official population counts and the statistical estimates of the population.

We selected SSBG for our analysis because the formula for this block grant program, which was based solely on population, and the resulting funding allocations, were particularly sensitive to such alternative population estimates. In short, as shown in figure 6, in 2004, 27 states and the District of Columbia would have gained $4.2 million and 23 states would have lost $4.2 million of the $1.7 billion in SSBG funding. Based on our simulation of the funding formula for this block grant program, the largest percentage changes were for Washington, D.C., which would have gained 2.05 percent (or $67,000) in grant funding, and Minnesota, which would have lost 1.17 percent (or $344,000). While the shifting of these funding amounts may not seem significant in total, using an inaccurate count to allocate grant funds could adversely impact some states' ability to provide services to their residents. Reducing the undercount will alleviate this potentially adverse impact to states.

[5]GAO, 2010 Census: Population Measures Are Important for Federal Funding Allocations. GAO-08-230T (Washington, D.C.: Oct. 29, 2007) GAO, Federal Assistance: Illustrative Simulations of Using Statistical Population Estimates for Reallocating Certain Federal Funding. GAO-06-567 (Washington, D.C.: Jun. 22, 2006).

**Figure 6: Estimated Social Services Block Grant Percentage Change in Grant Funding Using Statistical Population Estimates for States**




Source: GAO analysis of data from the Department of Commerce and the Department of Health and Human Services.

This simulation was done for illustrative purposes only—to demonstrate the sensitivity of government programs to alternative population estimates that incorporate the number of people that were overcounted and undercounted in the census. Only the actual census numbers should be

used for official purposes. This illustration further emphasizes the importance of an accurate decennial count.

## Concluding Observations

The Bureau's strategy for reducing the differential undercount appears to be comprehensive, integrated, and based on lessons learned from the 2000 Census. If each of the various components is implemented as planned, they will likely position the Bureau to address the differential undercount. Still, the various programs we examined are generally in the planning or early implementation stages, and a number of uncertainties and challenges lie ahead as the activities become operational. Indeed, past experience has shown how the decennial census is an enormous and complex endeavor with numerous moving parts, and any shortcomings or missteps can have significant consequences for the ultimate cost or accuracy of the enumeration.

With this in mind, the success of the Bureau's efforts aimed at the hard-to-count will depend in large part on the extent to which they (1) start and finish on schedule, (2) are implemented in the proper sequence, (3) are adequately tested, and (4) receive appropriate staffing and funding. It will also be important for the Bureau to have a real-time monitoring capability to track the progress of the enumeration, target the Bureau's resources to where they are most needed, and to quickly respond to various contingencies that could jeopardize the accuracy or cost of the count. In the months ahead, it will be important for Congress and the Bureau to continue to focus on these issues, as well as to be alert to newly emerging challenges.

Chairman Carper, Senator Coburn, and Members of the Subcommittee, this concludes my prepared statement. I would be happy to respond to any questions you may have.

If you have any questions on matters discussed in this testimony, please contact Robert Goldenkoff at (202) 512-2757 or by email at goldenkoffr@gao.gov. Other key contributors to this testimony include Ronald Fecso, Chief Statistician; Signora May, Assistant Director; Nicholas Alexander; Thomas Beall; Sarah Farkas; Richard Hung; Andrea Levine; Lisa Pearson; Sonya Phillips; Timothy Wexler; and Katherine Wulff.

**Honorable Kenneth Prewitt, PhD.**

Testimony September 23, 2008 before

**THE SUBCOMMITTEE ON FEDERAL FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT, GOVERNMENT INFORMATION, FEDERAL SERVICES, AND INTERNATIONAL SECURITY OF THE COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY AND AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS**

Thank you Chairman Carper, Ranking Member Coburn and Members of the committee for this opportunity to testify today on addressing the differential Undercount in the decennial census as well as lessons learned from the 2000 Census to help prepare for the 2010 Census. I will touch on four points:

**What is an accurate census?**

**What is a fair census?**

**How to achieve both.**

**How to know whether we did.**

During the 2000 Census, at the Bureau we coined the phrase "the largest peace time mobilization in American history" to convey the size, complexity and sensitivity of the decennial plan, not to mention the significance of the Constitutional mandate we undertake every ten years to ensure the fairest, most representative democracy. The decennial is the first and indispensable step toward the competitive election system that clearly vests power in the hands of the American people. It does not exaggerate to say that a flawed census ripples through our democratic processes as well as through public policy making and the reliability of the picture we have of our nation.

Before turning to the specific issues on which you have asked me to testify, I digress for just a moment. The Congress is now dealing with Fiscal Year 2009 funding. The Decennial, precisely because it is conducted only once every ten years, is particularly vulnerable to funding uncertainties -- especially on the eve of the decennial launch. Those operations which are specifically designed to improve accuracy and to reduce the

Undercount, and the Overcount, are extremely sensitive to funding uncertainties. For that very reason, I encourage you to work to ensure the Census Bureau has timely, adequate and flexible funding.

**The Meaning of Census Accuracy**

In discussions of the decennial census we often hear the term accuracy. It was so in the first census of 1790; it was so in the most recent census of 2000.

In 1790, Thomas Jefferson, who as Secretary of State oversaw this first census, reported to President George Washington that the American people numbered 3,929,214. The President was not pleased. He had expected a population about five percent higher, and blamed the "inaccuracy" on residents who did not cooperate and on negligence among some of the U.S. Marshals who took the first census. Washington felt that the true, higher count would forestall the temptation in European quarters to think that the new America was weak, and its independence fragile. Thomas Jefferson, mathematical wizard that he was, made some upward adjustments on the state-by-state counts that America's diplomats in Europe could cite when bragging about our robust and growing population.

In 2000, nearly a million temporary workers led by a professional staff of more than 5,000 Census career public servants were "mobilized" in 2000 and achieved what Commerce Secretary Evans described before the U.S. Senate in March 2001 as "...the most accurate census this nation has ever conducted."

It is true that, in a very challenging environment, when by order of the Supreme Court we had to completely replan the Census just months after my arrival, the Census Bureau reversed an historical trend of declining mailback response rates that went back three decades. Much of the credit for the success of Census 2000 was deservedly earned by the career government employees who innovated and accommodated in the face of these challenges. We were greatly assisted by a ground-breaking national advertising, partnerships and promotion effort that reached into every community, small and large, urban and rural. This achievement was possible only because President Clinton and a Republican Congress came together in a crisis and provided us with full funding for our requests, provided it when it was needed, and built-in enough flexibility to deal with the

unexpected – floods in North Carolina, schedule difficulties in Chicago, technical issues in data capture, fraud in Hialeah, Florida.

But was Secretary Evans right to call 2000 the "most accurate census ever conducted?"

The truth of the matter is that we won the gold medal in 2000 because the number of people we failed to count was offset by the number we counted more than once. In 2000, the Undercount was 4.5 million people and the Overcount was 5.8 million. More specifically, while the white population was overcounted at 1.13%, the black population was undercounted at 1.84%, leading to a white/black differential undercount of nearly 3%. This was a modest improvement over earlier censuses but not something we want to celebrate.

It is an inescapable fact about census-taking is that it can be a huge success for the vast majority of the population and yet still have an undercount that differs from one population group to another. This can be hypothetically illustrated:

There are 120 million households, of which
90 million mail back their forms, leaving
30 million to be visited by enumerators, of which
28 million are located, leaving
2 million households not in the census, of which
1.5 million are racial minorities

In this hypothetical census, only a percent or so of the households are missed, but those missed are disproportionately concentrated among minorities. The differential undercount occurs in the final one to two percent of the census. It is a stubborn problem. Its persistence undermines the fairness of the census, and thus the fairness of our entire system of representative democracy.

Perhaps I can make this clearer by suggesting why a census has to worry about two types of accuracy: numerical accuracy and distributional accuracy.[1] The former

[1] This text summarizes a more detailed discussion found in Kenneth Prewitt, *Politics and Science in Census Taking*. Russell Sage Foundation and the Population Reference Bureau, 2003.

measures how close the census approximates the true population size, which matters when absolute numbers are at stake (as they were for George Washington).

Distributional accuracy points to the *proportional distribution* of the population by geography or sub-population groups. This matters when benefits from a fixed resource are allocated proportionate to population shares, as of course is the case with apportionment, redistricting, and many formulae driven government funding programs.

A census can be numerically inaccurate but still achieve distributional accuracy. If, for example, the census misses the same percentage of the population in every state, then each state will still get the number of congressional representatives it would had the census counted 100 percent of the population. It is only when the percentage of errors differs from one state to the next that there is distributional inaccuracy. The simple illustration in the figure below shows two censuses that miss the same overall percent of the population, but those missed are proportionately higher in State A than State B. In the latter case, State B gets a higher share of the final census count and thus more congressional seats and Electoral College votes. Shares matter when a fixed pie is being sliced.

Distributional Accuracy Illustrated

| | Census Misses 10 % of the Population But is Distributionally Accurate | | Census Misses 10 % of the Population And is Distributionally Inaccurate | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | State A | State B | State A | State B |
| True Size | 1 m | 5 m | 1 m | 5 m |
| Census Count | .9 m | 4.5 m | .8 m | 4.6 m |
| Percent Missed | 10% | 10% | 20% | 8 % |

**The Meaning of Census Fairness.**

If, as I urge, the Congress focuses on distributional accuracy, it is obvious that going forward we must improve our census systems, especially those that help cure *both* the Undercount and the Overcount. The Census Bureau should not add last minute,

untested operations or procedures that could worsen either the Undercount or the Overcount, for either reduces census fairness.

My experience directing the 2000 Census convinced me (and there is ample evidence to support the conclusion[2]) that the Census Bureau's historic paid advertising and innovative partnership programs, both of which were conducted in dozens of languages, were instrumental in helping us improve the count of historically Undercounted communities; the poor, minorities, recent immigrants, rural areas, folks living in unusual housing arrangements, and so forth. I feel strongly that the advertising and promotion and partnership efforts in 2010 should be as ample and robust as those in 2000.

But the census has to be equally vigilant about the Overcount. In the name of a "fair census," this Committee should closely examine the Bureaus operations designed to seek, detect, and remove duplicate responses. These typically come from households with more than one housing unit, or with students away at college, or where a husband and wife do not share information that each has responded to one of several response options. On balance, the challenge of reducing the Overcount is more manageable and achievable than the myriad of difficulties we must overcome to cure the Undercount.

**A Reliable Report Card**

Whatever our success at improving accuracy, numerical and distributional, the discussion is almost an academic exercise unless the Census Bureau has in place a timely, robust, and comprehensive report card on how well it did. In Census speak, this is generally known as coverage measurement. Historically the Census devises a companion survey of a sample of national households to measure how well the Decennial operation did in its mission of counting every resident and correctly assigning them to a specific household on April 1st. Without this vital diagnostic tool, we truly do not know how well we did. Probably no other Agency in the Federal Government takes as much professional

[2] Documented in *The Hard Count: The Political and Social Challenges of Census Mobilization.* New York, The Russell Sage Foundation. D. Sunshine Hillygus, Norman Nie, Kenneth Prewitt and Heili Pals) 2006.

pride in finding its mistakes as it takes in not making mistakes in the first place. Every decennial census is, or should be, a lesson in how to conduct the next decennial. At the Census Bureau, the decennial is not only a census; it is a science project, and, like all science, has embedded in it self-correcting and self-improving procedures.

I am concerned about reports I have heard that due to funding uncertainties and or management challenges that Census Bureau management has reviewed options about delaying or scaling back the coverage measurement operation for 2010. I strongly encourage this Committee to monitor those actions closely and to insist upon nothing less than excellence in this critical operation, if only to ensure that your oversight of the results of the 2010 Census are informed and useful.

In closing, I do not want to appear to gloss over the current management and contractor problems confronting my successors at Suitland. I am familiar with the scope of the problem as Secretary Guitierez asked me to serve on his Expert Panel earlier this year to review and recommend a re-plan of the 2010 decennial design. I believe the 2010 census is at great risk of being only the second census in our history – the other being 1990 – that does not improve upon the prior census. However, I do have a great deal of confidence in the dedication and ingenuity of the career scientists, mathematicians, demographers, geographers and other professionals at the Bureau.

They mastered the challenge in 1999 and 2000, and I believe they can master it again today. Overlooked in the story of Census 2000 Mr. Chairman is another proud fact. At the end of the day, as we released the numbers to the Congress, I was pleased to be able to send a letter to the relevant appropriation and authorizing committees of the House and Senate that not only did we deliver a full count of the nation on schedule, we did so under budget. We reported a surplus in excess of $300 million taxpayer dollars.

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee, I do not doubt that Congress will fund the Decennial Census. I do worry that the funding may not meet the other two principles so critical to a good census: timeliness and flexibility. It was the combination of the three funding principles that made for a good census in 2000, and will make for a good census in 2010.

**Testimony of**

**Roderick Harrison, Ph.D.**

**Senior Fellow**

**Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies**

***"Reducing the Undercount in the 2010 Census"***

**The Subcommittee on Federal Financial Management,**
**Government Information, Federal Services, and International Security**

**Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs**

**United States Senate**

**Tuesday, September 23, 2008**

**TESTIMONY OF DR. RODERICK HARRISON, SENIOR FELLOW**
**JOINT CENTER FOR POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC STUDIES**
September 23, 2008

Chairman Thomas R. Carper, Ranking Member Tom Coburn, and distinguished members of the Subcommittee. Thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today.

Article 1, Section 2 of the Constitution of the United States, ratified in 1787, mandated that the number of seats in the House of Representatives should be determined and "apportioned among the several States...according to their respective Numbers...." on the basis of a census or enumeration of the population, to be conducted every ten years.[1] This provision both created the decennial census, and at least the seed of a principle, codified by the Supreme Court in a series of decisions in the 1960's, that congressional districts drawn for many state and local bodies, must have approximately equal voting age populations to guarantee each person one vote. The Voting Rights Act in 1965 prohibited states from drawing voting districts for federal, state, or local elections in ways designed to dilute the voting power of minority populations. In many states, accurate counts of racial and ethnic populations are therefore as important to redistricting as an accurate count of the total population.

The integrity of democracy in the United States has solidly rested upon public confidence in fairness and integrity of the decennial census. George Washington himself thought the count of 3.9 million in the first census in 1790 was too low, but it sufficed for apportioning the first Congress. Complaints about undercounts have plagued every census since, although recounts were conducted in several cities in 1870 and 1920, the counts have usually been accepted, as they were in 1790, as adequate for the constitutionally mandated apportionment of the Congress.

Simultaneously, exclusion from the count, beginning with the notorious compromise that counted slaves as 3/5ths of a person for purposes of apportionment and the exclusion of "Indians not taxed," and continuing through undercounts and redistricting practices that diluted minority votes, represents an iconic statement that one in fact *does not count* as fully as others, and provides a measure of how far we stand from full inclusion of all in our society. In this sense, an undercount that does not alter the apportionment of the congress is still not good enough for a society that proclaims the equality of all its members.

*A Brief History of the Measured Undercount*

Clear statistical evidence of undercount emerged in October of 1940 when the selective service registration found 425,000 more draft age men than the 1940 census count, a 2.8 percent undercount. It also found 229,000 more black men than the census, or an undercount of 13.0 percent. The Census Bureau has since used what is called "Demographic Analysis"— estimates of how the population *should have* changed based upon recorded births, deaths, immigrants and

1 See Appointment of the U.S. House of Representative in the References.

emigrants, and assumptions about the flow of undocumented immigrants. This process attempts to measure how far each decennial census fell short of the best estimates of the population's size. Estimates of the net undercount from demographic analyses fell from 5.4 percent in 1940 to 1.3 percent in 1980, before rising again to 1.8 percent in 1990. The undercount for blacks dropped from 8.4 percent in 1940 to 4.5 percent in 1980, and then rose to 5.7 percent in 1990.[2]

**Table 1. Decennial Census Population Net Undercount Rates from Demographic Analysis: 1940 to 2000 3**

| | YEAR | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 1940 | 1950 | 1960 | 1970 | 1980 | 1990 | 2000 |
| Total | 5.4 | 4.1 | 3.1 | 2.7 | 1.2 | 1.8 | 0.1 |
| Black | 8.4 | 7.5 | 6.6 | 6.5 | 4.5 | 5.7 | 2.8 |
| Difference: Black – Total | 3.0 | 3.4 | 3.5 | 3.2 | 3.3 | 3.9 | 2.7 |

Due to limitations in the identification of race and ethnicity in birth records, Demographic Analysis has only been able to provide undercount estimates for blacks and the total population. Important segments of the statistical community also grew committed to not just improving our ability to measure the undercount, but also to potentially adjust census counts to correct for the undercount. In the 1990 and 2000 censuses, the Bureau conducted carefully designed follow-up surveys to measure the undercount in a different way, not just for blacks and the total population, but also for the other major race and ethnic populations by age, owners and renters, native and foreign born residents, central city residents in large and small metropolitan areas, and non-metropolitan residents. The 1990 Post Enumeration Survey (PES) sampled 170,000 housing units in 5,400 census block or block clusters, and the Accuracy and Coverage Evaluation (ACE) survey sampled 314,000 housing units in 12,000 census blocks or block clusters scientifically sampled to represent the entire country. Extraordinary efforts were made to interview members of every household in these samples, including contacting each household up to six times, and to match them to respondents in the respective census. Households or individuals within households captured in the PES and ACE, but who did not respond to the census were used to estimate the undercount. The PES and ACE also drew samples of completed census forms (E samples) to identify individuals who completed more than one form and were therefore "over counted." The *net* undercount subtracts the overcount from the number of people missed, and is therefore smaller than the actual number of people that the census missed.

*Census 2000, the Undercount, and Adjustment*

The ACE was designed not only to improve our estimates of the undercount, but more importantly, to enable the Census Bureau to adjust the census for the undercount. The Bureau of the Census had planned the 2000 Census to be the first in history to adjust for undercounted

2 See Clark and Moul (2003).
3 Ibid.

populations. The Bureau planned to interview samples of the households in each census tract that did not respond to the census, and to use their responses to statistically represent all non-responding households in the tract. However, in January of 1999, the Supreme Court ruled that the Bureau could not use adjusted counts produced through such sampling for the constitutionally mandated purpose of apportioning the Congress. The ruling explicitly allowed the Bureau to provide adjusted counts for other purposes, however, including files for redistricting and for allocating funds for federal programs that are based upon census estimates of eligible populations.

The Court's decision forced the Census Bureau to use traditional headcount methods that had produced higher undercounts in the 1990 census, especially among minority populations. Given the growth of hard-to-enumerate populations, including immigrants, non-English speakers, migrant workers, and the undocumented, and deep seated suspicion of government agencies in many minority, poor, and immigrant communities, it seemed that the Census Bureau would do well if it kept the undercount at the same levels as in 1990. The Bureau's newly appointed Director, Dr. Kenneth Prewitt, noted that "using traditional counting methods, [the Bureau] must run harder to stay in place. It will run harder; it hopes to stay in place." The most important additional burden was that instead of enumerating a sample of non-responding households in each area, the Bureau would have to try to reach all non-responding households. The Bureau placed 100,000 more enumerators in hard to enumerate areas. In total, 42 million households were enumerated in a nine week period following April 27th. Perhaps most critically, the Bureau worked with over 140,000 partners, including many minority and civil rights organizations, to try to assure a complete count of the population.

The results of these efforts were striking: the Bureau had done much better than just stay in place. The ACE initially indicated that Census 2000 produced a net undercount of 1.2 percent, a substantial drop from the net undercount of 1.6 percent in 1990. Even more extensive reductions were achieved in the undercount of African Americans and other historically under-enumerated populations. The estimate of the undercount of the black (non-Hispanic) population in the 2000 Census was 2.2 percent, less than half of the 4.6 percent undercount of Blacks in 1990. The undercount of American Indians on reservations in Census 2000 was 4.7 percent, down from 12.2 percent undercount in 1990; the off-reservation undercount was 3.3 percent. The 2000 undercount of Hispanics was 2.9 percent, 40 percent less than the 5.0 percent undercount of Hispanics in 1990. Despite these reductions, the *differential* undercount – the greater likelihood of undercounting African Americans, American Indians and Alaska Natives, and Hispanics – remained large. The undercount for non-Hispanic whites was only about 0.7 in both 2000 and 1990. 4

Renters, another historically undercounted group, were also enumerated more completely in the 2000 census (2.8 percent) than in 1990 (4.5 percent), and the undercount of children was reduced by 50 percent, from about 3.2 percent in 1990 to about 1.5 percent in 2000. The undercount of 18 to 29 year old males, however, was larger in 2000 (3.8 percent) than it was in 1990 (3.3 percent). The Bureau and its partners thus seemed to have won a major victory in the decade

4 See pp. 4-5 in Report of the Executive Steering Committee for Accuracy and Coverage Evaluation Policy.

long struggle to reduce the undercount, particularly among traditionally undercounted populations.

Despite these dramatic improvements, the 2000 Census is estimated to have missed 6.4 million people, and double counted 3.1 million, producing a net undercount of 3.3 million. In 1990 the census missed 8.4 million people, double counted 4.4 million, producing a net undercount of 4 million.

There still seemed to be substantial reasons for adjusting the census to correct for these undercounts. The January of 1999, the Supreme Court decision had specifically noted that although adjusted counts could not be used for apportioning the Congress, they could be used for redistricting in the states, and for allocating federal funds. Most observers were therefore stunned on March 1st, 2001, when the Bureau 's professionals recommended *against* adjusting the 2000 Census, because they could not be certain that adjusted data would be more accurate for use in redistricting than the unadjusted data. One major concern was that the adjusted figure would be more than 5 million higher than the estimates derived from demographic analyses that updated the 1990 census using birth, death, and immigration records. This discrepancy could occur because the undercount in 1990 was larger than previously believed, or because the demographic analyses failed to capture all the population's growth, including, perhaps, undocumented immigrants. Others were concerned that the ACE was missing duplicate records and underestimating the overcount. Some experts argue that the demographic analyses are indeed flawed[5] and that adjustment should not have been rejected on these grounds. However, the committee noted it could not resolve these issues before the April 1st deadline for releasing redistricting files that the states needed to redraw the districts for congressional and state legislative seats.6

A re-analysis of the ACE revised the post-stratification factors and found additional erroneous enumerations. The March 2001 ACE estimated a population of 253 million and an undercount of 3.3 million. The revised October ACE II population was 248.3 million, suggesting a net overcount of 1.9 million, with 4.7 million additional erroneous enumerations detected by ACE Revision II. The revised estimate of the undercount of blacks was 1.8 percent (down from 2.2 percent in the initial ACE and 4.6 percent in the 1990 PES), and the revised estimate for Hispanics fell to 0.71 percent, which is not statistically different from zero. The initial ACE estimate of the 2000 Hispanic undercount had been 2.9 percent, the 1990 PES estimate 5.0. The initial ACE estimated undercount of American Indians on reservations was 4.7 percent, down from 12.2 percent in the 1990 PES. The revised ACE estimated a net undercount of only -0.88 percent for American Indians on reservations, an undercount not significantly different than zero.7

If one accepts the ACS Revision II estimates, the decision that census counts estimated from the initial ACE could not be taken as more accurate than the unadjusted counts was correct. More important, the results suggest that the longstanding undercount of the population and the differential undercount of minorities and children was dramatically reduced in the 2000 census,

5 See http://www.cmbp.gov/downloads/study-030601-passel.pdf
6 See pp. 11-12 in U.S. Census Monitoring Board (2001).
7 See pp. 4-5 in Mule (2003).

and perhaps even eliminated for Hispanics and American Indians on reservations.

*Implications for 2010*

**What can this teach us about reducing or eliminating undercounts in the 2010 census?**

First, that it can be done – the 2000 census came within reach of this historic goal.

Second, that it will remain a challenge to maintain or improve upon the relative success of the 2000 census. Distrust and fear of government agencies will almost certainly remain barriers to enumeration, and one could not be surprised if perceived trade-offs between civil liberties and homeland security, and perceived hostilities and threats to immigrant and undocumented workers will make some populations more wary of this process. The Bureau will have to work as diligently and as creatively as it did in 2000 just to maintain the low or reduced undercount rates of 2000.

Third, that the Partnership and Marketing Program (PMP) made critical contributions to the success of the 2000 census. A recent paper[8] estimates that the PMP increased the mail return rate for the census questionnaire, which correspondingly reduces the much more expensive resources that would have to be devoted to non-response follow-up. More importantly, the PMP is estimated to have achieved the greatest increases in the mail return rates in tracts identified as economically disadvantaged. Since these types of tracts tend to also have the highest undercounts, increasing their mail return rates would constitute a critical step towards reducing their undercounts. The paper also found above average increases in mail returns in tracts with high percentages of young, mobile and single individuals, and those with ethnic enclaves of renters and of homeowners. These types of tracts also have higher than average undercounts. This research on the 2000 PMP provides a very strong foundation for identifying comparable types of census tracts that could be targeted with large PMP resources in 2010.

Fourth, the large increase in enumerators targeted to hard-to-count areas was a *sine qua non* for success after the Bureau had to thoroughly redesign its census operations after the Supreme Court decision banned sampling for non-response only a little more than a year before Census day. The unavailability of hand-held collection instruments and the cutbacks in verifying the occupancy status of housing units in the dress rehearsals create challenges that must be overcome if the undercount is not to rise. However, these challenges hardly seem greater than those overcome by the Bureau in the year before the 2000 census, and can be overcome given strong leadership within the Bureau and focused attention and commitments to address these problems in the Administration and the Congress.

Fifth, providing multiple ways of being counted, including the "Be Counted" forms in local stores and public agencies, telephone modes, and, perhaps in 2010, internet access, improved response rates but also probably generated duplicate records will certainly enhance the accuracy of the count. Most census evaluation reports expressed confidence in the ability of highly

8 Bates, Nancy and Mary H. Mulry (2007) *Segmenting the Population for the Census 2010 Integrated Communications Program.*

improved technologies and procedures for identifying such duplicates. Extensive provision of multiple opportunities to respond seem essential for reducing undercounts in some populations. Implementing state-of-the art procedures for identifying and resolving possible duplicates therefore seems essential.

Sixth, about half of the undercount arises from missed housing units and households. The sharing and updating of the Bureau's Master Address File (MAF) by localities almost certainly contributed to reducing undercounts in the 2000 census, and an even stronger and more effective Local Update of Census Addresses (LUCA) will be needed for the 2010 census to be as successful, especially in localities with substantial numbers of newly constructed or vacated units. Units that homeowners, landlords, or renters have created without permits or permissions (e.g. sublets, converted garages or basements) have higher rates of being missed, and assurances are needed that the census does not disclose these to local agencies.

Seventh, findings of the PMP cited above point to the high value of the 140,000 partnerships that the Bureau formed with a wide spectrum of organizations, especially those serving hard-to-enumerate communities and populations. Many within household misses arise from the very complex set of 31 residence rules governing who should and should not be counted within households. A Bureau evaluation report strongly recommended that these be simplified, but it does not seem that much progress has been made in doing so. In 2010, special attention should be given to training partners in the rules most relevant to those they serve, and to enabling them to promote awareness of these and/or assistance, to their constituents.[9]

Few who had contact with some of these efforts would doubt that the partnerships played an irreplaceable role in promoting the 2000 census, in explaining its importance to specific communities of interest, and in overcoming sources of hesitancy and distrust specific to those communities. Together, they constituted perhaps the single greatest movement of civic awareness and participation since the Civil Rights Era, creating in many communities a sense that being counted by the census was a civic and moral duty, second (but as many came to understand, logically prior in many ways) to registering to vote.

Finally, however, it seems critical that operational problems, such as those reported with the handhelds, be resolved within a period of time that Bureau and the oversight committees deem appropriate . Alternative plans for the handhelds and any other operational components that did not function adequately in the dress rehearsals should be developed and prepared for implementation .

If efforts to maintain low undercounts or reduce them succeed , and as the likelihood that undercounts would affect apportionment or that differential undercounts would substantially alter redistricting for state and local offices, or affect the relative shares of funds allocated to different communities, perhaps the most important reason we must reduce and eliminate it is to affirm that each and every one of us, in all the diversity of our origins, communities, families, and perceptions, each and every one of us has a sacred civic duty to be counted in the census, and being counted is the first but necessary step to full and equal participation in our society.

Thank you for your attention. I will be happy to answer any questions you may have.

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9 See Report of the Executive Steering Committee for Accuracy and Coverage Evaluation Policy.

ADVANCING EQUALITY

**Statement of**
**Karen K. Narasaki**
**President and Executive Director, Asian American Justice Center**

**Before the**
**Subcommittee on Federal Financial Management, Government Information, Federal Services, and International Security**
**Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs**
**United States Senate**

**Hearing on Reducing the Undercount in the 2010 Census**
**September 23, 2008**

**Introductory Statement**

In 1990, the U.S. Census Bureau conducted its decennial count of individuals residing in the United States. The count disproportionately missed ethnic minorities, children, and immigrants. Asian Americans were among the disproportionately undercounted due to obstacles including cultural and linguistic barriers. For Census 2000, with the hard work of the Census Bureau on outreach initiatives in collaboration with the national community education outreach projects by many community based organizations, the Census Bureau was able to improve its count of the American population. However, there were still issues of undercount for many of the same communities. As we approach the 2010 Census, it is clear that the undercount is again an issue that must be address, with even more challenges facing the Census Bureau.

The demographics of 2010 have changed drastically from 2000. Some communities, such as the Latino American and Asian American communities, have experienced high growth rates of many ethnic communities. There is an increase in African and Caribbean immigrants. There are more languages being spoken and more people speaking them. There are generally high levels of mobility for many who move from state to state, city to city. Additionally, recent natural disasters have displaced many people from their homes and have created a more complex, less traditional or static sense of household for many people. The Census Bureau must be able to understand these communities and situations and the unique barriers to an accurate count that may exist for them.

The Census Bureau also has to account for the fact that people are reluctant to voluntarily provide personal information to the government in an age of identity theft and in the wake of immigration raids and other dragnets that post-9/11 policies have created. Combined with the growing privacy concerns that have arisen from disclosures this decade that the Census Bureau has inappropriately shared information with government agencies, an increasing number of people, particularly minorities, are fearful of providing even the most basic of information asked on the

1140 Connecticut Ave. NW, Suite 1200, Washington, D.C. 20036 • T 202.296.2300 • F 202.296.2318 • www.advancingequality.org
AFFILIATES: Asian Pacific American Legal Center in Los Angeles • Asian Law Caucus in San Francisco • Asian American Institute in Chicago

census. The Census Bureau must overcome the many obstacles created by these factors in order to get an accurate count.

As we look towards Census 2010, there are many areas of improvement needed to achieve an even more accurate count of our population. This written testimony will identify some of the challenges that the Census Bureau faces in achieving an accurate count in the 2010 Census and provide some feedback on the Bureau's plan for addressing these challenges and ultimately reducing the undercount in hard-to-enumerate populations, including discussing the importance of culturally appropriate outreach and the significant of partnerships with CBOs and the Bureau's plan to utilize these tools.

**Organizational Background**

The Asian American Justice Center (AAJC), formerly known as the National Asian Pacific American Legal Consortium (NAPALC), is a national non-profit, non-partisan organization that works to advance the human and civil rights of Asian Americans through advocacy, public policy, public education, and litigation.

AAJC has three affiliates: The Asian American Institute (AAI) in Chicago; the Asian Law Caucus (ALC) in San Francisco and; the Asian Pacific American Legal Center (APALC) in Los Angeles, all of which have been engaged in working with their communities to ensure an accurate count during past decennial census. APALC is a Census Information Center and established a Demographic Research Unit to make Census 2000 and other relevant research more accessible to the growing Asian American and Pacific Islander community and the organizations that serve it. APALC also led the California statewide collaborative effort on census outreach and education in 2000. AAJC also has over 100 Community Partners serving their communities in 24 states and the District of Columbia.

Together with our Affiliates and our Community Partners, AAJC has been extensively involved in working to eliminate the problems that have historically resulted in undercounting and underreporting of Asian Americans in federal data collection and analysis efforts, and in particular the decennial census count. AAJC conducted an extremely successful national Census 2000 outreach and educational project focused on the Asian American community. Through this project, AAJC and its Affiliates distributed over 750,000 linguistically and culturally appropriate community education materials and hosted or participated in over 865 community education activities, including panel discussions, presentations and press conferences.

Since the 2000 Census, AAJC has not paused in its efforts to ensure accurate and appropriate federal data collection and reporting on Asian Americans. AAJC has been a member of the Decennial Census Advisory Committee since the beginning of 2000. In 2005, AAJC became a member of the reconstituted and downsized 2010 Census Advisory Committee. In its advisory role, AAJC is able to assist the Census Bureau in understanding what research and programs would help the Bureau to effectively address the cultural differences and intricacies in various hard-to-reach communities, particularly in the Asian American communities, in order to get the most accurate count possible.

Additionally, AAJC currently co-chairs the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights' (LCCR) Census Task Force. LCCR is the nation's oldest, largest, and most diverse civil and human rights

coalition, with nearly 200 member organizations working to build an America as good as its ideals. In its leadership capacity on LCCR's Census Task Force, AAJC has kept LCCR members informed of important census policy issues and has facilitated conversation among the groups to build consensus recommendations for various census policy and outreach issues.

Through its various leadership roles, AAJC worked with numerous supportive Congressional members to ensure that additional funding was appropriated last year for the Census Bureau's Partnership Program in FY08 after the Administration failed to provide any funding for the program in its budget request. AAJC appreciates the Chairman's support for an accurate census and interest in ensuring that the census process is efficient and fair, which takes adequate funding.

AAJC is pleased to provide comments on reducing the undercount in the 2010 census. AAJC would like to request that this written statement, and the attached appendix, be formally entered into the hearing record.

**Undercount Concerns**

Since 1940, the Census Bureau has attempted to measure its ability to accurately count the people in America whether it was through Demographic Analysis or the use of a separate coverage measurement survey. Duplicate responses lead to overcounts, while omissions, or missed persons, lead to undercount.[1] Subtracting overcounts from undercounts results in a net undercount or overcount for each census. It is important for the Census Bureau to check its ability to achieve an accurate count through a coverage management program.

For each decennial census from 1940 to 1980, the national net undercount went down, as did the net undercount for specific population subgroups. However, since 1940, there has always existed a differential undercount – that is, non-Hispanic whites had lower undercount rates than people of color, or, stated another way, people of color were missed by the census more often than non-Hispanic whites. The differential undercount was also reduced each decennial census since 1940, until the 1990 census.

The 1990 census was a watershed moment for the Census Bureau. It was the first census that was less accurate than the one previous. The differential undercounts were the highest the Census Bureau had ever recorded. We also learned from 1990 that it was not only African Americans who suffered significant differential undercounts but also Latino Americans and Asian Americans.[2] American Indians on reservations had the highest undercount of any groups in the 1990 census, with an undercount rate over 12 percent.[3] The undercount of children was generally

[1] There are two ways to miss a person, thereby attributing to the undercount. First, the Census Bureau could miss the whole housing unit because they do not have the address or they have an incorrect address. Thus none of the people at the housing unit will be counted. The second way to miss people is for the Census Bureau to fail to capture other people who are within a responding household. These people can be missed for a variety of reasons, including fear of government and outsiders, limited knowledge of English, mobile people and households, and irregular household members such as households with two or more separate families residing there.

[2] The 1990 census provided the first measurements on the undercounts for Latino Americans, Asian Americans, American Indians and Alaska Natives. In the previous decennial censuses, the only coverage measurements made were for "black" and "non-black."

[3] Howard Hogan And Gregg Robinson, What The Census Bureau's Coverage Evaluation Programs Tell Us About

disproportionate. Children made up a quarter of the overall population in 1990, but accounted for slightly more than half of all persons missed by the Census Bureau.[4] The undercount of children of color was even more disproportionate. For example, the undercount for African American children was twice as high as that for non-Hispanic white children.[5]

In 2000, the Census Bureau worked to improve the accuracy of the count. Unfortunately, it was unclear how well the Census Bureau was able to count people. The final coverage measurement, the Accuracy and Coverage Evaluation (Revision II) ("A.C.E. Revision II"), results showed a net national overcount of about one-half a percent.[6] However, a net national overcount/undercount of around zero masks a much larger counting problem. While it appeared that the net undercount for the entire population and the net undercount for some race groups were reduced, the results did not fit historical patterns for these race groups.

For example, the A.C.E. Revision II showed that Asian Americans nationally had a slight overcount. However, several Asian American subgroups believed that they were actually undercounted. This was particularly true for Southeast Asian communities. For example, many community leaders in Long Beach, California believed that the Cambodian population was undercounted in the 2000 census. As evidence, they cite the fact that local school enrollment data were considerably disparate to the data provided by the 2000 census. During that year, school enrollment data showed a population of Cambodian children that was nearly as large as the entire Cambodian population counted by the Census Bureau, while the 2000 census data showed that the Cambodian school-age population accounted for much less than 50% of all Cambodians in California. It is clear that the Census Bureau missed a significant number of Cambodian children in their 2000 census, and it is equally likely that the census missed adult Cambodians as well in California. There was a relatively high rate of duplication for Asian Americans in college living away from home, which potentially offset any undercount of Asian Americans.[7] This duplication would likely distort accuracy in terms of place and ethnicity data, that is where we are being counted or missed and which of our communities are being counted or missed.

Despite the fact that in the end, the Census Bureau did not have confidence in the detailed findings and decided not to adjust the census numbers, the National Academy of Sciences' National Research Council did conclude with a fair amount of confidence that the net undercount and differential undercount by race/ethnicity were reduced from 1990. However, the panel also concluded that there existed a differential undercount of racial minorities in the 2000 census.[8]

**Challenges to achieving an accurate count in the 2010 Census**

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Differential Undercount, Paper developed by U.S. Census Bureau Population Division for the 1993 Research Conference on Undercounted Ethnic Populations (1993), *available at* http://www.census.gov/population/www/documentation/1993/conference.html.

[4] Barry Edmonston, The Undercount in the 2000 Census, *available at* http://www.prb.org/pdf/undercount_paper.pdf.

[5] *Id.*

[6] The A.C.E. Revision II estimated 33.1 million mistakes of all types, including 17.2 million erroneous overcounts (which primarily includes duplications and people counted in the wrong place) and 15.9 undercounts (e.g. people missed). The report says there were a minimum of 9.8 million duplications. Committee on National Statistics, National Research Council, National Academy of Sciences, The 2000 Census: Counting Under Adversity (2004), 240-241, 253.

[7] Committee on National Statistics, National Research Council, National Academy of Sciences, The 2000 Census: Counting Under Adversity (2004), 241.

[8] For example, Black men appeared to have one of the most significant subgroup undercounts: 4.2 percent according to A.C.E. Revision II. *Id.*

While the ideal for a census is to achieve a complete count of all persons in the country, perfection in this context is impossible. The pragmatic reality is that the Census Bureau constantly strives to achieve the most accurate count possible and one that is better than counts achieved previously. The 2010 census will provide the Census Bureau with even more challenges in achieving an accurate count. While this testimony is not exhaustive of all the challenges that face the Bureau, here are some challenges most pertinent to some of the traditionally harder to count communities, such as Asian American communities and immigrant communities.

*Language Barriers to Census Participation*

In 2006, almost 55 million persons spoke a language other than English at home.[9] Almost half of these language minorities had difficulty speaking English and are classified as Limited English Proficient (LEP).[10] Lack of English fluency is a significant barrier to participation of many immigrant households. The Census Bureau's own focus group research found that Asian Americans and Africans believed that lack of in-language questionnaires and lack of English-language fluency were among the major barriers to having greater participation in the census among their communities.[11] The focus group research also noted that some in the Arab American community are not comfortable enough speaking or reading English to complete the census forms and that the availability of in-language communications and assistance is equally important for the Latino community.[12] The Census Bureau must develop a language assistance program that addresses the language barrier to census participation. As discussed later, while the Census Bureau has done work on Spanish language assistance, more needs to be done for other languages.

*Impact of Immigration Debate, Raids, and Anti-Immigrant Rhetoric*

Our nation's current debate about the future of its immigration policy is creating additional challenges that the Bureau must address in reaching the newcomer population. Some policymakers have adopted a divisive tone and tenor during this discussion, and several states and localities have implemented or are considering harsh and hostile measures intended to target immigrants. Some of these measures require local law enforcement agencies to enforce federal immigration laws; others would require apartment owners to check the immigration status of potential renters. There has been an increase in immigration raids of homes as well as businesses. This has created a climate which will exacerbate immigrants' fear of contact with government agencies, including the Census Bureau.

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[9] U.S. Census Bureau, Table S1601. Language Spoken at Home, 2006 American Community Survey.

[10] *Id.* The current definition of LEP is persons who speak English less than very well. The Census Bureau has determined that most respondents over-estimate their English proficiency and therefore, those who answer other than "very well" are deemed LEP.

[11] *See* Image Media Services, Inc., *on behalf of* U.S. Census Bureau, Ethnic and Racial Sub-Population Focus Group Research (2007), *available at* http://www.census.gov/procur/www/2010communications/final%20report%20-%20asian%20&%20arab-american.pdf (results from focus groups with Asian, Arab, multi-racial, and white participants) ("Asian Focus Groups Report"). *See also*, M. Davis & Company, *on behalf of* U.S. Census Bureau, An Exploration of Attitudes and Perceptions Concerning the US Census Among Black Populations (2007), *available at* http://www.census.gov/procur/www/2010communications/final_report.pdf (results from focus groups with African-American, Caribbean, and African participants) ("African American Focus Groups Report").

[12] *See* Asian Focus Groups Report. *See also*, Maya Advertising & Communications, *on behalf of* U.S. Census Bureau, Preparation for the 2010 Census Hispanic Community Focus Groups Qualitative Research Report (2007), *available at* http://www.census.gov/procur/www/2010communications/final%20report%20-%20hispanic.pdf (results from focus groups with Latino participants) ("Latino Focus Groups Report").

Undocumented immigrants, legal permanent residents, and even U.S. citizens who live in households where family members have varying status of immigration, will be discouraged from answering the Census.[13] The anti-immigrant climate today will harm confidence in the confidentiality of the Census, and promote the belief that among many residents the Bureau will use the information they provide in a detrimental manner. This is a potentially significant barrier for many immigrant communities, including Latinos, Africans, and Asian Americans.[14] It is critical that the administration take measures that will ensure a non-hostile and inclusive environment in which immigrants and U.S. citizens alike are comfortable and confident in filling out their census forms.

As they did during the 2000 census[15], the Census Bureau must begin working with the U.S. Immigration & Customs Enforcement ("ICE") to limit their enforcement activity during the 2010 Census process. Additionally, they must begin working with them earlier than they did during the 2000 census. Unfortunately, some enforcement efforts by the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS), ICE's predecessor, despite a commitment to limit activity during the census, may have caused many immigrants to avoid participating in Census 2000.[16] The INS was slow to come out with guidance to its regional offices concerning enforcement during the census and failed to adequately communicate policy early in the process resulting in raids conducted in Arizona, Oklahoma, Washington State and Texas even after the release of guidance requesting offices to limit highly visible enforcement activities. Many immigrants, who had initially been convinced that they could safely participate in the census, were frightened because of the raids that took place.[17] The Census Bureau can ill afford this chilling effect, especially in light of data sharing and privacy concerns that have surface this decade. The Census Bureau must take proactive steps to reinvigorate efforts to work with ICE as they did with ICE's predecessor during past censuses and produce documentation for such policy, and they must do so well in advance of the 2010 Census.[18]

*Confidentiality and Privacy of Census Data & Breaches in Public Confidence*

It is important to address the widely reported discovery in 2007 that during World War II the Census Bureau turned over confidential information including names and addresses to help the government identify Japanese Americans in preparation for their internment.[19] While it had been known that the Census Bureau shared general aggregated data about where Japanese Americans lived with the government in 1942, new documents in these past few years reveal that the Census Bureau also shared information about individuals with the government during that period. This information included individuals' names, addresses and data on the age, sex, citizenship status and occupation of Japanese Americans in the area. This recent discovery highlights a significant

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[13] *See* Latino Focus Groups Report.
[14] *See* Asian Focus Groups Report, Latino Focus Groups Report, and African American Focus Groups Report.
[15] Jack Norman, INS promises to defer some raids during census, Milwaukee Journal Sentinel, *available at* http://www2.jsonline.com/news/nat/mar00/census20031900.asp (last updated March 19, 2000).
[16] Asian American Justice Center, Asian Pacific Americans And Census 2000: Findings And Recommendations For Census 2010 (2001) (on file with the author) ("AAJC Census 2000 Findings and Recommendations").
[17] *Id.*
[18] Such actions would not be novel. Not only did the Census Bureau work with the INS to suspend immigration enforcement during the 2000 census, during the 1980 Census then-President Jimmy Carter issued an order for the INS not to interfere with the census count. Also, during the 1990 census, INS publicly promised not to interfere with the census. *See*, Terry Greene, Down for the Count, Phoenix New Times (April 11, 1990), *available at* http://www.phoenixnewtimes.com/1990-04-11/news/down-for-the-count/.
[19] Haya El Nasser, Papers show Census role in WWII camps, USA Today, March 30, 2007, *available at* http://www.usatoday.com/news/nation/2007-03-30-census-role_N.htm?csp=36.

concern for immigrants and minorities, particularly South Asians, Arab Americans, and Muslims Americans in this post 9/11 environment.

While the Census Bureau contends its actions were legal at the time due to the laws in place in the 1940s, many today question the ethical correctness of their actions. Moreover, most Americans are not aware that since that time "important safeguards to protect against the misuse of census tabulations have been instituted, notably stronger legal provisions to protect data confidentiality and the Census Bureau's introduction of disclosure avoidance techniques" in order to safeguard the confidentiality of the data.[20]

For example, following a LA Times article discussing the recent discovery of the individual level data sharing of Japanese Americans during World War II elicited the following response from its readers:

> "I can guarantee you that what information the census of 2010 wishes to have will not be forthcoming from me. A broken oath is a broken oath; there is no trust anymore."[21]

A more recent data sharing incident occurred in 2004 when the Census Bureau turned over data regarding Arab Americans at the ZIP code level. While there was no sharing of individual information in this case and the information was technically publicly available, concerns were raised by civil rights organizations about the impact such disclosure would have on the ability of the Census Bureau to accurately count people. The Census Bureau was responsive to these concerns that such disclosure could have a chilling effect on the willingness of people to fill out their forms, especially those of persecuted or discriminated classes. While the Census Bureau established the position of Chief Privacy Officer and now puts all requests for sensitive data through a rigorous approval process and makes all special releases of data available to the public, damage has been done in the public eye due to this latest revelation, particularly in light of the discovery of the involvement of the Census Bureau in the interment of Japanese Americans during WWII.

The Census Bureau cannot afford for these concerns of distrust and fear to prevail and will need to work even harder to ensure that these attitudes do not result in a less accurate count. Couple this attitude with a fear of government and outsiders, and the Census Bureau faces the very real possibility that people will refuse to fill out and mail back their census forms. The Census Bureau must make all efforts to boost public confidence in the census.

*Katrina & Other Natural Disasters*

Although Hurricanes Katrina, Rita and Wilma hit several years ago, those impacted by these storms are still experiencing the fallout. While tourists are slowly returning, many residents need only look around their neighborhoods for a vivid reminder of the impact of one of the most destructive natural disasters in U.S. history. The region struggles with neighborhood redevelopment,

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[20] U.S. Census Bureau, Census Confidentiality and Privacy: 1790-2002, 16, *available at* http://www.census.gov/prod/2003pubs/conmono2.pdf (comments from then-Director of the Census Bureau Kenneth Prewitt in an e-mail to Census Bureau staff in 2000).

[21] Letters to the Editor, Census questions, LA Times, April 5, 2007, *available at* http://www.latimes.com/news/opinion/letters/la-lew-census5apr05,1,1746876.story?ctrack=1&cset=true.

and there are increased healthcare challenges. It is more important than ever that the Gulf region get quality, accurate data about its population in order to work towards rebuilding the community.

The census counts people at their usual place of residence on Census Day. Therefore, people displaced by the hurricanes who are living elsewhere on April 1, 2010, even if they intend to move back to the Gulf Coast as soon as acceptable housing becomes available, will not be counted in their original home communities. Demographers already are predicting that Louisiana will not regain enough of its pre-Katrina population to avert the loss of one of the state's seven seats in the U.S. House of Representatives.[22] In addition, Louisiana will lose out on federal funding based on this counting method for those who are attempting to back it back to Louisiana.

Additionally, the Census Bureau faces other challenges in counting those affected by these hurricanes, as well as other natural disasters even under its current counting plans. There is a lack of trust in the government resulting from the aftermath of these hurricanes, particularly Hurricane Katrina, that may impact residents' willingness to participate in the government-sponsored census. The Bureau faces difficulties with locating all the households in the impacted areas due to the rebuilding efforts, making address canvassing even more important in those regions. Finally, there will be confusion for displaced residents who intend to return home but who have yet to finish transitioning back home as to where they should respond as their usual place of residence come Census Day. All these problems will be exacerbated for immigrant communities from the impacted areas who also have to contend with cultural and linguistic barriers.

The Bureau has done work around the effects of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita such as special reports and the Bureau has acknowledged the unique concerns facing the Bureau in enumerating those who have been displaced. However, their current policy on how to count these displaced persons during the 2010 census fails to accommodate the unique situation faced by those displaced. At a minimum, the Census Bureau should issue a report that details the impact of this counting method on displaced persons in the Gulf region and Louisiana during the 2010 census. The Census Bureau should also consider reassessing the counting policy for those displaced by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita for the 2010 census, particularly in light of the role the federal government has played in creating some of the fallout from these hurricanes.

**Evaluation of Census Bureau's Plans for Dealing with Challenges**

The following Census Bureau programs and activities are critical to help reduce the undercount. These programs and activities focus on providing culturally appropriate outreach and materials to traditionally hard-to-reach communities, including Asian American and immigrant communities, and relying on partnerships with local and national community-based organizations to act as a conduit for this information and the census message. Also key to the success of these programs and activities in helping to reduce the undercount is ensuring that they are fully funded and properly implemented.

*2010 Census Communications Plan*

[22] Jeremy Alford, Population Loss Alters Louisiana Politics, The New York Times, October 4, 2005, *available at* http://www.nytimes.com/2005/10/04/national/nationalspecial/04census.html.

Building on the success of the Census 2000 partnership and marketing campaign, which helped reverse a two decade-long decline in the national mail response rate, the Census Bureau is taking an integrated approach to goes beyond advertising to include public relations, partnerships, grassroots marketing, special events, Census in the Schools, and more thought its 2010 Census Communications Campaign.[23]

By integrating these different components of outreach, education, and advertising, the campaign intends to reach all people in the most efficient and effective manner by supporting the 2010 Census goals of:

- Increase mail response
- Improve cooperation with enumerators
- Improve overall accuracy and reduce the differential undercount

The Communications Campaign is intended to run from mid-2008 through June 2010; the prime contractor for the campaign is DraftFCB. Working with DraftFCB are subcontractors, some of whom will be focusing on specific, traditionally hard-to-count communities:

*Public relations:* Weber Shandwick
*Media buyer:* Initiative
*African-American:* Global Hue
*Latino:* Global Hue, A to Si
*Asian-American*: IW Group*
*American Indian / Alaska Native / Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander*: G&G*
*Emerging markets*: Allied Media*
*Experiential marketing*: Jack Morton
*Management and integration*: Booz Allen Hamilton
*Recruitment*: Marcom Group*
*Design*: Zona Design*
*Puerto Rico*: Draftfcb Puerto Rico
* *small businesses*

DraftFCB developed a plan that was shared with Census Advisory committee members and all of the Bureau's regional office staff but it has not yet been finalized. The two components of the media and outreach efforts are mounting a national media campaign in every broadcast medium to advertise the Bureau's messaging for 2010, which will be developed based on research conducted by DraftFCB and a media campaign focused on specific minority groups. The plan is to have the national media campaign kick off in January 2010 and continue through each phase of the census. Ethnic media advertising will complement the national campaign in an effort to reach the hard to count populations. The Census Bureau anticipates that the efforts of each of DraftFCB's sub contractors along with their proven track record of reaching their target communities will be instrumental in addressing the differential undercount.[24] The integration is particularly important

[23] Hearing on Census 2010: Using the Communications Campaign to Effectively Reduce the Undercount, Before the Subcomm. on Information Policy, Census and National Archives of the H. Comm. on Oversight and Government Reform, 110th Congress, July 10, 2008 (prepared statement of Census Bureau Director Steve Murdock), *available at* http://informationpolicy.oversight.house.gov/documents/20080711101648.pdf ("Director Murdock's Statement").
[24] *Id.*

because we saw during the 2000 census that there were differing messages coming from different offices of the Census Bureau, causing confusion for partnership program partners and ultimately those community members that those partners served.

While the Bureau should be commended for learning from its Census 2000 experience and moving toward an integrated communications strategy, other lessons learned from 2000 must also be addressed. For example, we learned from the 2000 census that significant amounts of money is needed for advertising in language and to target language minority communities as well as a comprehensive strategy about the language component of its paid advertising campaign. It is important to note that not only must the Census Bureau request sufficient funds in their budget to accomplish these tasks, it must also actually spend the necessary funds to effectively accomplish these tasks. That is, the Census Bureau cannot allow these funds to be diverted to other activities or programs because they are critical to achieving an accurate count.

During the 2000 Census, AAJC heard from local CBOs that the Census Bureau's innovative advertising campaign did not reach many ethnic groups who needed in-language media the most. The 2000 campaign targeted the Asian American groups with the highest number of LEP individuals, but unfortunately, did not also target the smaller ethnic groups who have the highest LEP rates and the highest percentage of linguistically isolated households. With a limited budget the advertising campaign failed to cover an adequate number of Asian languages and cultures, and the advertising agency was forced to make generalizations based on sometimes inadequate research.[25]

In advertising, it is important to have as much consistency as possible to increase the effectiveness of the message and to reduce potential confusion inherent in the use of more than one slogan. There is a possibility for much greater leverage and synergy by incorporating involvement of the CBO community in the advertising and outreach campaign. Advertising research needs to be done in the targeted language as well as in English where possible.

Another lesson learned from the 2000 Census is that the Census Bureau must make better use of its partners and advisory committee members. While the advisory committee had input into the outreach campaign for the 2000 census, it had less information about the advertising campaign which was being handled by a separate team. As a result, the slogan chosen for the advertising campaign used a concept that was clever in English but did not translate well into many of the languages. Some of the CBOs had to choose different slogans that would make sense in the various languages for their communities. So far during this 2010 Census Integrated Communications Plan process, there has been more consultation of interested stakeholders, which will hopefully lead to a more effective outreach campaign for our communities.

CBO input into the choice of images for posters and print is also important, given the diversity of the hard-to-count communities. Such input in the 2000 Census effort helped to avoid costly mistakes. Input for 2010 should be formalized and occur earlier in the process.

It also took too long for Census 2000 to develop a protocol and make available images and video footage that could be incorporated into major campaigns run by CBOs working in close partnership with the Census Bureau during the 2000 census. It is critical for CBOs to have access to

[25] *Id.*

these images and video footage in order for them to implement their outreach and education plans. CBOs generally do not have the resources available to purchase such images and must rely on taking pictures of people that they know. This is a more cumbersome and time consuming manner for getting usable images and footage. The Census Bureau should help leverage these images for their partners.

The Census Bureau must strategize about how much free/earned media to aim for versus how much paid media. The Census Bureau must plan how it will get earned media in all different types of media (from mainstream to ethnic, from urban to rural, and so forth). While a fully supported paid advertising campaign in ethnic media is critical for Census 2010, it is equally important to fully fund a strategic earned media campaign. Quite simply, paid advertising is seen as something that is bought. Therefore paid advertising is good to heighten awareness of the Census, but is not always the best method to get across some messages.

For example, earned media discussing the confidentiality and security of census data would go much further in reassuring the American public that their response is indeed safe than a paid advertisement proclaiming the same sentiment. Similarly, earned media in ethnic media will ease concerns of hard to enumerate minority respondents in a way that can very much leverage the Census Bureau's paid advertisement effort. A variety of voices stating the same messages will be stronger than one voice saying it alone. Trusted journalists and media outlets should be utilized through working with them to get earned media on the importance of the census and other message points.

While the Bureau through DraftFCB and its subcontractors has made strides toward ensuring that all communities are reached through its communications campaign and have at some level addressed many of these issues in their proposed plans, without a finalized plan or a sense of how much will be allocated for what pieces of the communications plan, it is unclear how well the communications campaign will deliver on its potential to truly reach all persons, particularly those who have been traditionally hard to count.

*Partnership Program*

The 2000 census partnership and outreach program was credited by many in the civil rights community and in the Census Bureau for helping to achieve one of the most accurate counts for many of our hard to count communities by relying on culturally appropriate outreach and partnerships with CBOs. Establishing partnerships with hard-to-count communities has been shown to reduce non-response follow-up costs and improve accuracy. As noted above, while the 2000 count was better than in the previous year, there is still a ways to go and improvements to be made to help achieve an even more accurate count in the face of growing privacy fears and concerns about potential government misuse. We believe that a partnership and outreach program that builds upon the successes in 2000 is a critical step towards a more accurate count.

The partnership program promotes a more accurate count by having government leaders, school leaders, faith-based leaders, corporate leaders, and other kinds of community leaders communicate with their constituents about the importance of filling out their census form to the success of the economy and their community – their neighbors, their kids, their schools and so forth. This has proven to be a great success as respondents are interacting with leaders that they trust, rather than with a stranger representing the federal government, and have been more willing to

participate in the census program.[26] The growing privacy concerns and distrust in the Census Bureau, the growing diversity, hostile climate to certain communities, and the general distrust of government makes a strong and vibrant partnership and outreach program even more necessary and important for an accurate count in 2010.

The Census Bureau itself has noted the value of a strong partnership program, particularly important for those in areas isolated by language or geography. In fact, Director Murdock has indicated that the 2010 Partnership Program will be even more "robust" than in 2000. The Census Bureau will provide partnership materials in at least 20 languages, all of which will be customizable so that partners can tailor the message to their specific communities. Additionally, 2010 materials will be easily accessed through the Internet or as printed copy, unlike the 2000 census when one had to go through a Census Bureau partnership specialist in order to obtain promotional materials. The Bureau will also provide resources such as specially printed promotional materials, customized banners, special event promotional items that encourage participation in the census, and in-language materials that help reach the hardest-to-count populations.

The Community Partnership Specialists were an important innovation for Census 2000, but the program's quality varied significantly across regions. Specialists were not always hired early enough and were sometimes not provided adequate training. For the 2010 Census, the regional offices have hired and trained 120 partnership specialists as of May 2008 who are now actively developing local partnerships with key stakeholders. In January of 2009 the regions will add 560 more partnership specialists, for a total of 680 partnership specialists, which is comparable to the numbers from the 2000 census. While the Bureau is planning on hiring a comparable number of partnership specialists, these numbers will not be sufficient to cover the various communities or whether they will be allocated in a manner that allows for sufficient coverage. In the 2000 census, not enough specialists were hired to cover the various communities in any given region. More partnership specialists need to be hired and they need to be hired earlier in order to effectively work with all the various communities.

Another problem was that regional and local offices did not make consistent efforts to reach out to leaders in different communities. For example, in many of the areas, the Community Partnership Specialists did not meet with all of the various Asian American groups, resulting in overly generic outreach plans that were not appropriately tailored to specific ethnic and neighborhood communities. While outreach has occurred at the national level to different communities, it is less clear from a national level what is occurring at the local levels. For the 2010 Census, regionally offices must consult with one another to learn best practices and share resources that offices develop.

It is clear that time is needed for the Census Bureau to do the outreach to the organizations, as well as reach out to local governments and engage them in these efforts. It is important the Census Bureau achieve, at a minimum, the depth and breadth of partner organizations that it did in Census 2000, all of which requires time. Time is also needed for CBOs, schools, churches,

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[26] *Id.* In fact, Director Murdock noted:

> Partnership has been a vital part of the census since 1990, and it is the foundation of our outreach efforts. In Census 2000 more than 140,000 organizations partnered with the Census Bureau. These included state, local and tribal governments, community and faith - based organizations, schools, media and businesses.

corporations, and other partner groups to gear up for their outreach campaign to their constituents. These partner groups need to raise funds from local philanthropists and other sources to do the outreach work. Advance planning is particularly important for minority communities to adequately provide necessary outreach to its constituents.

Inadequate partnership and outreach programs will result in high and differential undercounts. We applaud Congress for recognizing and appreciating the importance and significance of partnership to the ability of the Bureau to get a more accurate count, particularly for harder-to-count communities, in providing additional funding in FY 08 that allowed the Census Bureau to start its Partnership Program a year earlier than anticipated (yet was the comparable year in which the 2000 program started). However, we are concerned that it was not as much as originally requested by the Census Bureau and hope that Congress continues to place a priority on the Partnership Program by adequately funding it.

Finally, it is important to note that while the Partnership Program is incredibly important to CBOs in getting the word out to their communities, it is often not enough on its own – while the Census Bureau does provide in-kind assistance, it does not provide direct monetary assistance. This is particularly important for community organizations which have limited resources and extensive workloads. In order for these community organizations to most effectively assist the census education and outreach efforts, they must receive funding to help support their work.

In Census 2000, we saw that the count proved to be more accurate where resources for CBOs were available to support census outreach activities. For example, in California where state and local government, as well as foundation resources, were made available to CBOs, the outreach and count went more smoothly in hard-to-count neighborhoods than in New York where there were no additional government resources. Unfortunately, few states and cities made support available, and those that did, were very late doing so. As a result, already overloaded CBOs had to depend on discretionary funds from regional Census Bureau offices or on private funding. It is important for the Census Bureau to plan and budget for CBOs who are assisting the Bureau with its outreach.

*Language Assistance Program*

The Census Bureau made strides to address respondents' language ability issues during the 2000 census by implementing a more aggressive language outreach program that included translating census materials into a variety of languages, toll-free phone assistance and questionnaire assistance centers. The translation of the questionnaire into five non-English languages (Spanish, Chinese, Tagalog, Vietnamese, and Korean) and the creation of Language Assistance Guides in 49 different languages were critical to reaching limited English proficient respondents.

While the Census Bureau is to be commended for undertaking a variety of language assistance initiatives, the expansion of which was a significant improvement over the effort in 1990, there was still more that needed to be done. For example, the Census Bureau did not provide enough translated materials and questionnaires to meet the need and the demand. The Census Bureau also did not produce materials in a timely manner whereby the translated materials that were shared were shared so late in the process that they were not useful. There was no consistency in the translations used across Census Bureau materials, as there was no consistency in the language assistance provided from region to region, and locality to locality.

Finally, there was inadequate publicity and coordination with CBOs to get what materials they did have as well as no centralized clearinghouse of translated materials so that regional offices and NGOs could share them on a local level. The language assistance guides, toll-free phone assistance, and questionnaire assistance centers did not always effectively reach members of the LEP community due to the lack of sufficient publicity and coordination with CBOs. The advertising campaign was not well coordinated with the outreach campaign. The Census Bureau did not appear to have coherent national or regional publicity plans to inform LEP households about the existence or location of the various language assistance alternatives. Many community leaders were unaware of what was available or were not told where to access them. The Census Bureau must learn from these problems to build upon the successes of the 2000 program to make a more effective program in 2010.

The Bureau is looking to its 2010 Census Language Program as another means to ensure that they reach as many people as possible. The primary goal for the 2010 Census Language Program is "to improve coverage and achieve efficiencies by developing effective methods to meet the language needs of our Nation's diverse population" and is to be integrated with major Census Operations, including content, census forms design, response processing, communications, and telephone.[27]

For the first time, the Census Bureau will mail about 13 million bilingual Spanish/English questionnaires targeted to areas with concentrations of Latino populations.[28] Questionnaires will be available in five languages in addition to English: Spanish, Chinese, Korean, Vietnamese, and Russian. Telephone Assistance will also be provided in these five languages, including the ability to mail materials to respondents who request them, such as the questionnaires in the five primary languages, Language Guides, and the English Questionnaire. The Census Bureau will also provide single sheet language assistance guides in more than 50 languages that will be available on the Internet and at approximately 30,000 Questionnaire Assistance Centers located throughout the country, which will be staffed by people fluent in the languages spoken in their communities.[29] The 2010 Census Language Program also includes translation guidelines, a language reference dictionary, testing translation, translation review (internal and external) and a centralized translation contract.

While the Census Bureau should be commended for the work that they have done to ensure that Spanish speakers are adequately assisted, we are concerned that the Census Bureau has not done enough for the other languages that must be assisted during the 2010 Census. Due to the growing diversity in this county, we are concerned that there are only five priority languages for primary language assistance (that is, translated questionnaires, telephone assistance, and so forth). We believe that more resources need to be put towards adding more languages than the number done in the 2000 census.

Additionally, the Bureau's plan to provide numbers that people can call to receive language assistance is a good starting point but, as they say, the devil is in the details. There is the real question of whether or not there will be enough time to recruit non-response follow up interviewers

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[27] U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 Decennial Census Language Program PowerPoint (2007), *available at* http://www.census.gov/clo/www/cic/10-10_Language_Program_for_the_2010_Census-Kathleen_Styles.ppt.
[28] Director Murdock's Statement.
[29] *Id.*

and bilingual operators to man telephone assistance centers from communities so that the languages spoken in those communities are represented and to develop a translated glossary of terms for them to use. While it appears from their planning that this will be done, the question is has it been done and if not, then when.

It is also clear that the 2010 Census Language Plan contemplates a glossary or dictionary of census terms but the same questions of has it been completed and if not, then when also apply. It is important to have a glossary of census related terms for each language that has been fully vetted by communities and experts in advance of their distribution. For some languages, a comparable term may not exist. For others, there may be a variety of possible translations, some being more appropriate than others. These glossaries need to be completed early and widely disseminated so that CBOs and others generating education materials are using consistent terms.

In fact, two key factors for a successful language outreach program are consistency and timeliness. The translations must be consistent across the board and speak with the same voice and promote the same message. Confusion created by poor translations will create more work for both the Bureau and the CBOs on the back end as they try to work with respondents in filling out their questionnaires.

Some languages are simply more difficult to work with, such as some of the Asian languages. From the translations to the hiring of linguistically competent workers, more time will be needed to ensure that these communities actually receive assistance for the 2010 Census. One of the common complaints AAJC received following the 2000 census from local Asian American community-based organizations was that the Bureau was late in making critical decisions on the translations materials and there was no centralized clearinghouse of translated materials. Because of the lateness of the Bureau's decisions, CBOs did not have sufficient time to determine what needed to be produced to supplement the offerings nor were they able to adequately utilize the materials produced by the Census Bureau.[30]

On the positive side, the Census Bureau has translated some documents and has begun to circulate them to community members and community based organizations for feedback on the quality of the translations. On the negative side, there have already been concerns raised by the Vietnamese community about the translation of the Vietnamese questionnaire. Some of these concerns include using a different translation than what has been traditionally used for "U.S. Census Bureau." The new translation actually sounds like the FBI and has the connotation of "criminal investigations." The Vietnamese translation also has a big bold title of the problematic translation of U.S. Census Bureau (that is not on the English version of the questionnaire) that looks very threatening. Those reviewing the quality of the translation actually proposed that the translation be redone by someone more competent.[31] It is unclear what protocol the Bureau has in place to deal with such problems with translation quality.

Finally, the availability of translated materials on the Internet certainly goes toward having a clearinghouse of translated materials that was missing in the 2000 Census. This will help to ensure that Census participants that speak languages other than English do not need to call multiple phone

[30] AAJC Census 2000 Findings and Recommendations.
[31] Email from Vietnamese community leaders to the U.S. Census Bureau in response to request to review quality of Vietnamese translation of Census form (on file with author).

numbers to receive different brochures or information in the same language. However, the Census Bureau must be mindful of the digital divide for some communities and plan to have another means available for those persons to get the information that they need.

*Recruitment and Hiring*

The Census Bureau needs to recruit about 3 million temporary workers to get the hundreds of thousands of temporary workers around the nation needed to conduct the 2010 Census. One hundred fifty Local Census Offices (LCOs) will open in Fall 2008 and the remaining 344 LCOs will open by Fall 2009. While the LCOs will begin hiring in early 2009, peak hiring will take place in March through June of 2010 with the opening of the remaining LCOs. Address canvassing will require 150,000 workers in 2009, and the Non-Response Follow-Up effort will require 700,000 in 2010.[32]

It is important that the Census Bureau recruit and hire people who are "indigenous" to the communities where they will be working because of the knowledge these workers bring – from the local knowledge of language to the local knowledge of neighborhood and culture. CBOs can help identify potential candidates for these positions from traditionally hard-to-count communities, including those with language skills, as well as advertise these job postings to their members and constituents. Furthermore, CBOs can help train them to pass the test for these positions.

Awareness of the Census 2000 recruitment program was high. For the first time, the Census Bureau hired local private contractors for dissemination of paid advertisement of recruiting needs to the local media. Job fairs held by the Census Bureau were excellent. The Welfare-to-Work program provided opportunities for employment without penalty for federally assisted citizens, resulting in a good number of Welfare-to-Work workers to be hired. The ability to pay prevailing local wages allowed the Census Bureau to obtain and retain more qualified people. Also, partnerships with CBOs helped with visibility within our communities.

Removing the hiring priority for U.S. citizens was a success because the Census Bureau could hire local legal residents who were representative of their communities. This is particularly useful in collecting complete information from immigrant respondents, where they are more likely to be mobile, have complex household arrangements, and lack English-language skills and thus harder to count. People are more likely to respond to enumerators who share their same cultural background, language, and other such factors. Because of the heightened challenges facing the Census Bureau this census, it is even more important that removing the citizenship requirement occurs earlier than last time.

Another exemption utilized by the Census Bureau in 2000 was an exemption for federal retirees to work as a temporary worker for the census that ensured that their retirement/pension was not impacted by their work with the Census Bureau. This is particularly relevant as we now see a huge wave of new retirees leaving the work force, which provides the Census Bureau an opportunity to recruit these new retirees so that the Bureau's temporary work force better reflects the population in this county.

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[32] Ken Hodges, Association of Public Data Users, May 15-16 2008 Meeting Of The Census Advisory Committee, *available at* http://www.apdu.org/advocacy/docs/DCAC2008-05-15.htm (APDU is a member of the 2010 Census Advisory Committee and Ken Hodges is the APDU representative).

The Census Bureau should use even more creative and unconventional methods to recruit and hire Census workers for the 2010 census, including making better use of technology, removing financial disincentives to work for the Census Bureau, enhance the incentives, and increasing local advertising related to Census job opportunities. Potential candidates for the Welfare-to-Work program should be more informed regarding the benefits of income exclusions. Recruiting in senior communities should be increased. The Census Bureau should hire recruiters specific to minority communities. Recruitment should take place at the natural gathering areas for minority communities (churches, stores, ballroom dances, karaoke bars, restaurants, and conferences).

The decision to continue policies allowing waivers of Census income and citizenship requirements for census workforce, thereby opening Bureau positions to U.S. citizens or legal residents and encouraging the hiring of legal residents to meet the need for bilingual personnel, must happen earlier. During Census 2000, the policy guidance came out too late to be helpful and was arbitrarily applied. This highlighted one of the problems prevalent during Census 2000: the insufficient coordination between the national headquarters in Washington and regional and local offices. This led to some regional offices not fully understanding official Census Bureau policy, which resulted in inconsistent or inaccurate application of policies across regions. It caused confusion in the community over policies covering the hiring of noncitizens and the publicity of language assistance options.

Finally, the Census Bureau should constantly strive to achieve a more diverse full time workforce. Many of the groups have met with the Census Bureau to discuss their concerns that the Bureau's workforce, particularly at the senior management level, is not as diverse as it could be. We believe that the Census Bureau must implement a hiring policy that recognizes the importance of having experts on various hard-to-count communities, including the Asian American, Pacific Islander and other minority communities, throughout the Bureau's operations. In particular, it is important for the Census Bureau to recruit and hire qualified persons of these communities in senior positions. These positions are particularly important for those programs and offices that are charged with ensuring that Census Bureau programs are adequately and appropriately addressing the outreach and data generated for these communities.

**Additional Areas of Concern to be Addressed**

*Sufficient and Timely Funding for Census 2010 Preparations and Implementation*

The Census Bureau must receive sufficient funding to accommodate the significant funding ramp-up required in the final year of preparations for the 2010 decennial census and to enable the Census Bureau to perform its essential operations and constitutional requirements. The Census budget is cyclical and must increase dramatically in the years preceding the census to pay for necessary preparations. These preparations include opening early local offices, hiring temporary headquarters and regional staff, printing hundreds of millions of forms, verifying local addresses across the country, and conducting promotional activities. The groundwork done in the final year before the census will, to a large extent, determine the success of the 2010 Census. The Census Bureau must receive sufficient funding, and in a timely manner, to ensure that vital preparations are thorough and timely. Additionally, it is important that the Census Bureau receives adequate funding for its Partnership Program.

*Need for immediate and decisive decision about Census Director by incoming president*

There will be a new incoming president in the year right before the 2010 Census, during which the Census Bureau will begin address canvassing, a key operation to ensuring an accurate census (in Spring 2009) and its main publicity campaign (in October 2009). These efforts will be followed up by census taking activities beginning in the field in January 2010, one year after the new president enters office. Because of this timeline, it is imperative that a decision be made about the Census Bureau director immediately. One option is for the incoming president to decide to retain the current director for the duration of the decennial census, thereby maintaining continuity and expertise in that position and minimizing disruption to census preparations and implementation. However, if the incoming president decides to go another route and not retain the current director, it is critical to an accurate census that the incoming president nominates a new Census Bureau director immediately so that enough time is given to accommodate the confirmation process yet still keep the decennial census preparations and implementation on track. Which ever route the incoming president decides to take, it is crucial that the Director is eminently qualified to the lead the agency's enumeration and data compilation efforts and must be a skilled statistician with superior management expertise and experience, especially with respect to the operational components of the decennial Census, the ACS and other Bureau data activities.

*American Community Survey*

Finally, while this hearing is focused on the 2010 Census, AAJC would be remiss if we failed to mention that another key component that requires oversight is the implementation of the American Community Survey (ACS). While the 2010 Census is important for reapportionment and redistricting purposes, ACS data is equally important for other purposes, such as governmental planning, appropriations and work done by non-governmental agencies. Because the ACS replaces the long form of the decennial census, it is important that the quality of data captured by the ACS is at a minimum the same as the long form. Ideally, the quality of data would be better, since the move to the ACS was designed to improve our ability to capture more current data.

While 2005 was the first year of full implementation of the ACS, there remain issues regarding the implementation of the ACS and its ability to capture data, particularly for hard-to-count communities, including smaller population groups. Concerns include whether there is adequate language outreach to languages other than Spanish, the quality of data generally and specifically with regards to smaller populations, and the inclusion or exclusion of group quarters, such as dorms, prisons, and nursing homes. In particular, AAJC is concerned about whether the ACS will in fact provide the same quality of data as provided from the long form for small geographic and small group populations. We urge the subcommittee to hold a future hearing that delves deeper into the implementation of the American Community Survey.

**Conclusion**

On behalf of AAJC, I want to thank the Committee for the opportunity to provide a written statement on reducing the undercount in the 2010 Decennial Census. While the Census Bureau has taken important steps to improve the count in 2010, there are still many areas where the Census Bureau needs to address in order to meet the challenges facing an accurate count in 2010 and ensure full participation by the American public.

ADVANCING EQUALITY

## APPENDIX

**Statement of**
**Karen K. Narasaki**
**President and Executive Director, Asian American Justice Center**

**Before the**
**Subcommittee on Federal Financial Management, Government Information, Federal Services, and International Security**
**Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs**
**United States Senate**

**Hearing on Reducing the Undercount in the 2010 Census**
**September 23, 2008**

1140 Connecticut Ave. NW, Suite 1200, Washington, D.C. 20036 • T 202.296.2300 • F 202.296.2318 • www.advancingequality.org

AFFILIATES: Asian Pacific American Legal Center in Los Angeles • Asian Law Caucus in San Francisco • Asian American Institute in Chicago

ADVANCING EQUALITY

# ASIAN PACIFIC AMERICANS AND CENSUS 2000: FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CENSUS 2010

Based on an Assessment of the Bureau of the Census Outreach to the Asian Pacific American Community in Census 2000

Asian American Justice Center

September 2001

**AAJC wishes to acknowledge the contributions of the following organizations, whose input and feedback form the basis of this report and recommendations:**

Asian American Coalition (Atlanta, Georgia)
Asian American Federation of New York (New York, New York)
Asian Law Alliance (San Jose, California)
Asian Law Caucus (San Francisco, California)
Asian Pacific American Legal Center (Los Angeles, California)
Boston Chinese Radio (Quincy, Massachusetts)
Chinatown Community Center (Washington, D.C.)
Chinatown Community Development Center (San Francisco, California)
Chinese American Lions Club (Houston, Texas)
Chinese American Service League, Inc. (Chicago, Illinois)
Chinese Community Action Coalition (Honolulu, Hawaii)
City of Union City (Union City, California)
Coalition of African, Asian and Latino Immigrants of Illinois (Chicago, Illinois)
Families of Vietnamese Political Prisoners Association (Arlington, Virginia)
Green Bay Hmong Association (Green Bay, Wisconsin)
Hawaii Government Complete Count Committee (Honolulu, Hawaii)
Illinois Coalition of Immigrant and Refugee Rights (Chicago, Illinois)
Indian American Forum for Political Education (Virginia chapter)
Indian American Political Awareness Committee (Boston, Massachusetts chapter)
National Alliance of Vietnamese American Service Agencies (Wheaton, Maryland)
National Association of Asian American Professionals (North Carolina chapter)
National Federation of Filipino American Associations (Hampton Roads, Virginia Chapter)
Oakland Chinese Community Council, Inc. (Oakland, California)
Organization of Chinese Americans (South Florida chapter)
Pan Asian Community Alliance (Tucson, Arizona)
Resources for Families (San Jose, California)
Self Help for the Elderly (San Francisco, California)
Sikh Mediawatch and Resource Task Force (Germantown, Maryland)
Social Economic Development Center for Southeast Asians (Providence, Rhode Island)
Wichita Indochinese Center, Inc. (Wichita, Kansas)

**AAJC wishes to acknowledge the contributions of the the National Census Advisory Council:**

Ms. Tessie Guillermo; Asian Pacific American Labor Alliance
Ms. Ngoan Le; Illinois Dep't of Human Services
Mr. Lee Pao Xiong; Hmong National Development
Ms. Kristine Minami; Japanese American Citizens League
Mr. Henry Der; National Coalition for an Accurate Count of Asian and Pacific Islanders
Ms. Cung-Wa Hong; National Korean American Service & Education Consortium
Ms. Jin Sook Lee; Asian Pacific American Labor Alliance
Ms. Nancy Choy; National Asian Pacific American Bar Association
Mr. Debasish Mishra; India Abroad Center for Political Awareness
Mr. Jon Melegrito; National Federation of Filipino American Associations
Mr. Clayton Fong; National Asian Pacific Center on Aging
Ms. Daphne Kwok; APAICS
Ms. Ka Ying Yang; Southeast Asia Resource Action Center
Mr. Doi Van Dung; National Alliance of Vietnamese American Service Agents
Mr. Prany Sananikone; Laotion Humanitarian Foundation
Ms. Chaiwon Kim; The Center for Pan Asian Community Services, Inc.

Ms. Yvonne Lee; US Commission on Civil Rights
Mr. Al Pauole; Pacific American Foundation
Mr. Ted Wang; Chinese for Affirmative Action

AAJC would also like to acknowledge the AAJC, AALDEF, ALC and APALC staff who participated in preparing the report: Kushwinder Bambrah, Deepa Iyer, Pang Yang, Synta Keeling, Sally Kinoshita, Glenn Magpantay and Bonnie Tang.

**Asian American Justice Center**
**1140 Connecticut Avenue, N.W., Suite 1200**
**Washington, D.C. 20036**
**202.296.2300 phone**
**202.296.2318 fax**
**www.AAJC.org**

**AAJC affiliates:** **Asian American Institute, Chicago**
**Asian Law Caucus, San Francisco**
**Asian Pacific American Legal Center, Los Angeles**

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# I. INTRODUCTION

## CONDUCTING OUTREACH to the ASIAN PACIFIC AMERICAN COMMUNITY

In October 1999, just six months before Census Day, the Presidential Members of the U.S. Census Monitoring Board released the results of a survey that assessed national public opinions and attitudes toward the census.[1] The survey asked a number of questions, including if people knew when the next census would take place. Merely 30% of Asian respondents were aware that the next census would take place in the year 2000[2]; and only less than half said that they definitely planned to participate in Census 2000.[3] Not surprisingly, the most commonly noted barrier to participation in Census 2000 was the concern that census responses would not be kept confidential-55% of Asians surveyed were worried that their responses would be disclosed.[4]

Confidentiality concerns were not the only barriers to overcome in persuading Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders to participate in the census. Evaluations by the Bureau of the Census revealed that there are certain social, economic and cultural characteristics that lend to an undercount of racial and ethnic minorities.[5] For many Asian Pacific Americans (APAs), these characteristics–that include limited proficiency in English, nontraditional living arrangements, residence in high crime areas and distrust of the government[6]-are magnified.

The APA community numbered close to 12 million in the 2000 census, an increase from slightly over 7 million in the 1990 Census. According to the Census Bureau, APAs will comprise 5% of the nation's population by 2010 and 9.4% by 2050.[7] There are approximately forty-five ethnic groups identified as Asian or Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander. Asian Pacific Americans speak over fifty different languages and dialects and live in both urban areas such as New York, San Francisco and Houston, as well as in smaller cities in the South and the Midwest.

The cultural, socioeconomic, geographic, linguistic and generational diversity of the APA community makes it difficult to develop outreach methods that can be applied uniformly. The Census Bureau's outreach plans to encourage the APA community to participate in Census 2000 consisted of a number of different components, from a paid advertising campaign to the hiring of APA staff to providing language assistance options. Community groups across the country, including AAJC and its affiliates, conducted outreach campaigns to inform APAs about the importance of participating in the census.

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[1] *Report to Congress,* U.S. CENSUS MONITORING BOARD PRESIDENTIAL MEMBERS, October 1999.
[2] *Id.* at 7.
[3] *Id.* at 15.
[4] *Id.* at 12.
[5] U.S. Dep't of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, *Report to Congress: The Plan for Census 2000* (August 1997).
[6] *Id.*
[7] U.S. Census Bureau, www.census.gov/population/projections/nation/summary/np-t5-c.pdf; www.census.gov/population/projections/nation/summary/np-t5-g.pdf.

According to Census Bureau estimates, the undercount rate for APAs fell to .98 from 2.36 in 1990.[8] The undercount rate for Pacific Islanders is 4.60 in the 2000 Census, but no comparable 1990 data is available to determine whether the count improved or not. In addition, the Census Bureau does not have data that would help to determine which geographic areas and which ethnic groups may have had more problems than others in being counted. There have been reports that certain highly populated APA areas in New York and California did not fully participate in the census.[9] In addition, there is concern that emerging APA communities are not being accurately counted. For example, many people in touch with the Hmong community in Minnesota believe that the estimate of 42,000 to be much too low. They believe that the true count is closer to a figure of approximately 80,000.[10]

## PURPOSE and BASIS of the AAJC REPORT

This report focuses on the policies and procedures that the Census Bureau used to inform and convince the APA community to participate in Census 2000. It is intended to serve as a reference for the Census Bureau, Congress, the U.S. Census Bureau Monitoring Board and community-based organizations (CBOs) that will conduct census outreach tailored to the APA community in Census 2010. We believe that the recommendations made in this report, if followed, will lead to more effective outreach and greater rates of participation by the APA community in the next census.

This report is based on information we received from AAJC affiliates and other regional partners that conducted census education and outreach on the local level, as well as responses we received from CBOs to a survey that we conducted in April 2000. The survey was designed to evaluate the effectiveness of the Census Bureau's policies regarding language assistance, hiring, local outreach and the ethnic advertising campaign (See Exhibit 1 for a copy of the survey). Over 30 organizations, representing communities in areas from Rhode Island to Kansas to Hawaii, responded to the survey.

AAJC's affiliates-the Asian Law Caucus (ALC) in San Francisco, the Asian American Legal Defense and Education Fund (AALDEF) in New York, and the Asian Pacific American Legal Center (APALC) in Los Angeles-contributed to this report by providing local examples of applications of policies and by suggesting recommendations that might be helpful in their respective areas in Census 2010.[11]

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[8] Report of Executive Steering Committee For Accuracy and Coverage Evaluation Policy, March 1, 2000. The 1990 undercount rate includes the undercount for the Pacific Islanders. The two categories have been separated beginning with the 2000 Census. The Pacific Islander population is a relatively much smaller population so the weighted effect on the undercount rate for the 1990 combined category would be very slight.

[9] "Down For the Count," Newsday, Friday, April 7, 2000; "Census Figures Hint at Weak S.F. Turnout," San Francisco Chronicle, April 13, 2000.

[10] Art Hughes, "Hmong Population Rises Dramatically," Minnesota Public Radio, August 1, 2001.

[11] *See also* "Census 2000 and Outreach to the Asian and Pacific Islander Communities in California: Assessments and Recommendations" by Asian Pacific American Legal Center of Southern California, July 2000; "Counting Asian Americans: An Evaluation of Census 2000 Programs and Policies" by Asian American Legal Defense and Education Fund, 2001.

## C. AAJC's CENSUS 2000 PROJECT

AAJC's education and outreach project, titled *"Asian Pacific Americans Count in Census 2000!"* was the largest national campaign of its kind targeting the APA community. The project involved the development, production and distribution of informational guides, fact sheets, fliers, posters, instructional videos and public service announcements. Many of these materials were translated into as many as 17 Asian and Pacific Islander languages.

AAJC also held two national planning conferences for APA; Dr. Kenneth Prewitt, acting director of the Census Bureau, keynoted the conference in October of 1999. AAJC staff provided technical assistance to hundreds of groups and community leaders traveling across the country to conduct workshops and briefings for local APA groups in 30 cities.

Through its media campaign, AAJC produced "press kits" which contained drop-in articles and editorials by community members. Many of these articles appeared in ethnic press.

AAJC's project directly helped to reach over 800 CBOs.

AAJC began planning for its Census 2000 work in 1998 with support from the Ford Foundation. Over the three-year period, other foundations such as the Joyce Foundation, the MacArthur Foundation, AT&T Foundation, and corporations such as Pacific Bell/SBC, AT&T, Anheuser Busch, State Farm Insurance, Merryl Lynch, Chevron, Imada Wong, International Channel, the Carnegie Corporation of New York, the FannieMae Foundation gave grants as well as in-kind support for the education materials, PSAs and videos.

AAJC's Census 2000 project had three components: advocating for policies that would decrease the undercount of APAs; maximizing community education and outreach to increase participation in the census; and raising the awareness of ethnic and mainstream media to issues concerning APAs and the census. To achieve these goals, AAJC collaborated with its 3 affiliates. AAJC also convened members of its Community Partners Network to assist in the planning and implementation of the project. In addition, AAJC created a census advisory committee that included representatives from the major national APA organizations, as well as key leaders who had worked on Census 1990. See forward for list.

During the three-year census project, AAJC sought to provide advice to the Census Bureau concerning policies, materials development and outreach methods targeting the APA community. AAJC was particularly interested in the Census Bureau's planning and implementation of outreach to linguistically and culturally isolated communities and immigrant populations, AAJC focused on non-citizen hiring of census employees, recruitment of APA and Pacific Islander candidates as community partnership specialists and other Census Bureau personnel, and effectiveness of language assistance options. AAJC also was interested in the extent to which the Bureau contracted with APA and Pacific Islander businesses.

In addition, AAJC intervened in litigation in 1998 to represent APA individuals and organizations and defended the constitutionality of the use of sampling methods and

continues to provide analysis of that issue to stakeholders. AAJC and its affiliates worked with the Department of Justice in obtaining an opinion concerning the impact of immigration laws passed on the confidentiality provisions of the laws related to the Census. AAJC convened a working group of CBOs to press the Immigration and Naturalization Service for a sensitive interior enforcement program and policy during the conduct of the census and monitored INS regional compliance with the policy.

AAJC led a coalition of civil rights organizations in working with the Office of Management and Budget and the Department of Justice in developing a protocol for counting multiple responses to the race question for use in civil rights enforcement. AAJC provided education to the APA community about the implications of the policy.

AAJC briefed the Race and Ethnic Advisory Committee for the Asian and Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander populations about AAJC's project in November 2000. AAJC subsequently became a member of the Commerce Secretary's Census 2000 Advisory Committee at the beginning of 2000.

# II. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## *GENERAL FINDINGS*

**Coordination between the national office and regional Census Bureau offices, as well as with CBOs, is the key to effective implementation of outreach policies.** The national headquarters in Washington and regional or local offices seemed to share an insufficient amount of information. The headquarters staff should have organized some opportunities for CBOs involved in leading national outreach to provide a regular briefing to the field staff. This lack of sufficient communication and coordination led to some regional offices either not being aware of or not accurately understanding official Census Bureau policy. The lack of understanding resulted in inconsistent or inaccurate application of policies across regions and caused confusion in the community concerning policies covering the hiring of noncitizens and the publicity of language assistance options.

**The addition of Asian language forms in Chinese, Vietnamese, Tagalog and Korean helped to encourage limited English proficient (LEP) Asian immigrants to participate but the forms needed to be more readily available.** The availability of the translated forms and the process by which Asian language forms could be obtained was not sufficiently publicized. The envelope containing the advance letter was only in English, and it was only once a person turned over the official letter that the translated notices could be found. Furthermore, the toll free number was not adequately publicized, and there was much confusion over the period of operation. Also, there was a shortage of translated "Be Counted" forms.

**The Census Bureau is to be commended for undertaking a variety of language assistance initiatives. The expansion of the Census Bureau's language assistance program was a significant improvement over the effort in 1990. The program, nonetheless, could be made even more effective with adequate publicity and coordination with CBOs. The Census Bureau's language assistance often did not effectively reach LEP individuals.** The language assistance guides, toll-free phone assistance and questionnaire assistance centers did not always effectively reach members of the LEP community because of the lack of publicity and coordination with community-based groups. The Census Bureau had no national or regional publicity plans to inform limited English proficient households about the existence or location of the various language assistance alternatives. Many community leaders were unaware of what was available or were not told where to access them.

**The Census Bureau is to be commended for undertaking the translating census materials into a variety of languages. The Bureau, however, was late in making critical decisions on the translations materials and there was no centralized clearinghouse of translated materials so that regional offices and CBOs could share what was done on a local level.** Many community leaders found the offerings to be inadequate. Not many of the official materials were translated, and when they were, it was often in too few languages and dialects. Some regional offices took the initiative to try to create their own translated materials, but the quality of the translations was sometimes

inconsistent. Because of the lateness of the Bureau's decisions, CBOs did not have sufficient time to determine what needed to be produced to supplement the offerings.

**Where resources for CBOs were available to support census outreach activities, the count proved to be more effective. It is imperative that Congress includes early funding in the Census budget for allocation to states for community based organization initiatives.** In states like California where state and local government as well as foundation resources were made available to CBOs, the outreach and count appeared to go more smoothly in harder to count neighborhoods than in New York where there was no additional government resources. Unfortunately, few states and cities made support available, and those that did, were very late. As a result, already overloaded community groups had to depend on discretionary funds from regional Census Bureau offices or on some private funding.

**The Community Partnership Specialists were an important innovation for Census 2000, but the program quality varied significantly between regions. It must be a priority for 2010 for the Bureau to have sufficient resources to hire the specialists early and provide adequate training. In addition, the Census Bureau did not hire appropriate numbers of APA staff.** The Asian American and Pacific Islander communities are extremely diverse in language and culture, with a significant percentage of the APA community being relatively recent immigrants who are limited English proficient. The regional offices need to be able to hire more specialists to cover the various communities. The Bureau should develop a handbook about lessons learned in 2000 of how to develop and implement an effective outreach plan. Regional and local offices did not make consistent efforts to reach out to all Asian and Pacific Islander leaders. In many areas, the Community Partnership Specialists did not meet with all of the various APA groups, resulting in overly generic outreach plans that were not appropriately tailored to the various ethnic and neighborhood communities.

The hiring of APA staff familiar with the relevant communities was also sometimes too limited. AAJC received many reports that APAs who had passed the test were often not called back. Some of the bilingual staff hired were not actually fluent or trained in the appropriate terminology.

**The Census Bureau is to be commended for issuing policy encouraging the hiring of non-citizens to meet the need for bilingual personnel, but unfortunately the policy guidance was late and often inconsistently or arbitrarily applied by regional offices.** AAJC, along with many other stakeholders, believed that the Census Bureau would not be able to hire a sufficient number of bilingual staff familiar with the communities unless they had a clear policy encouraging the hiring of non-citizens under appropriate conditions. Yet there was much confusion in the field, even after the Census Bureau belatedly issued guidance. Few regions appeared to have a bilingual hiring plan, much less one developed with the input of the local CBOs. This confusion undermined the efforts of CBOs to help the Census Bureau to identify and recruit an adequate number of bilingual staff.

**Local and regional offices were an integral part of the Census 2000 Outreach Program. Offices, however, did not always develop outreach plans appropriately tailored to all ethnic immigrant communities.** For example, AAJC's affiliate, AALDEF, reported that

in New York the needs of the Pakistani and Bangladeshi communities were not met since the census outreach plans were tailored only towards Asian Indians.

**The Questionnaire Assistance Center (QAC) program was an important addition to the Bureau's mail back count but was given inadequate resources to be truly effective.** The Census Bureau needs to have more resources to make this program effective. There was often inadequate publicity about QAC locations, available times, and languages spoken. There also was confusion about where the centers could be located and which would have paid staff. Often the decisions were made at the last minute and/or poorly advertised. Community-based organizations were not given grants to cover the cost of staff and operations. There was often an inadequate number of bilingual staff and an insufficient supply of translated "Be Counted" forms and Language Assistance Guides in the appropriate languages.

**The Census Bureau is to be commended for their language program. The Bureau did not, however, devote sufficient resources towards developing language messages about confidentiality of census responses.** Messages regarding confidentiality of census responses were not publicized adequately in ethnic press or in the ethnic community.

**The Census Bureau's paid advertising campaign was an extremely helpful innovation, but did not reach many ethnic groups who needed in-language media the most.** The campaign targeted the APA groups with the highest number of LEP individuals, but unfortunately, did not target the smaller ethnic groups who have the highest rates of limited English proficiency and the highest percentage of linguistically isolated households. With a limited budget the campaign failed to recognize an adequate number of Asian languages and cultures, and the advertising agency was forced to make generalizations based on sometimes inadequate research.

**Enforcement efforts by the Immigration and Naturalization Service, despite a commitment to limit activity during the census, may have caused many immigrants to avoid participating in Census 2000.** The INS was slow to come out with guidance to its regional offices concerning enforcement during the census and failed to adequately communicate policy early in the process so that raids were conducted in Arizona, Oklahoma, Washington State and Texas even after the release of guidance requesting offices to limit highly visible enforcement activities. Many immigrants, who had initially been convinced that they could safely participate in the census, were frightened because of the raids that took place.

**Although, the Census Bureau is to be commended for the importance they placed upon developing fair and accurate race categories, the race question on the census form caused confusion among many APAs who did not understand the format.** Many APAs did not understand that checking an ethnic category would place them into either the Asian or the Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander boxes.

## *GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS*

- ✓ **The Census Bureau Monitoring Board and the Census Bureau should conduct an assessment to analyze where coordination among the national office and regional/local Census Bureau offices can be improved.** Such an assessment should form the basis for making structural changes that will allow for improved coordination and communication among the national and local offices in Census 2010.

- ✓ **The Census Bureau should establish national positions within the Census Bureau which can act as liaisons between the Bureau and stakeholder groups.**

- ✓ **The Census Bureau should ask Congress to pass legislation appropriating funds that can be used to fund community groups conducting community outreach and serve as QACs. The Census Bureau should also encourage states to include funding for census outreach in their budget proposals.**

- ✓ **Foundations and state and local governments should provide resources to community groups to conduct localized census outreach.**

- ✓ **We strongly recommend that that there be a separate heading for both Asian American and Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander race categories. We also strongly recommend that the Bureau continue to allow individuals to identify their ethnicities under the Asian and Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander categories.**

- ✓ **The Census Bureau and the Census Bureau Monitoring Board should conduct an assessment of whether or not immigrants were convinced that their census responses would remain confidential, particularly in the areas where INS conducted raids.**

- ✓ **The Census Bureau should test alternatives to the advance letter as the only option for requesting in-language forms and should include publicity for this option and other language assistance options as part of its paid advertising plan and regional outreach plans.**

- ✓ **The Census Bureau should clearly articulate that it will hire work-authorized non-citizens, regardless of country of origin, at the start of the Census 2010 recruitment process, and the regional offices should develop hiring plans that include target numbers of bilingual personnel at the outset.**

- ✓ **We recommend that the Census Bureau should attempt to offer tests in Asian or Pacific Islander languages in areas where there are high concentrations of Asians or Pacific Islanders and high rates of LEP, or at least in all the languages in which forms are available.**

- ✓ **We recommend that the Census Bureau plan early on for the establishment of the QAC sites with ample time for consultation with community groups. Clear criteria about the requirements and expectations of QACs must be made available so that agencies are certain about the requested commitment.**

- ✓ The Census Bureau should recruit Community Partnership Specialists early in the process and provide adequate training on outreach techniques, cultural and linguistic sensitivity. The Bureau should also ask the regional and local offices to meet with community leaders on a regular basis.

- ✓ We recommend that if possible, the Census Bureau should provide census forms in additional languages, especially in languages that are spoken by those with the highest rates of LEP persons, as evidenced by Census 2000 data.

- ✓ We recommend that at the commencement of the recruitment phase, the Census Bureau widely publicize their policy on the hiring of non-citizens with needed language skills in all recruitment materials, set target hiring goals and train staff about this policy.

- ✓ We recommend that the Census Bureau should make promotional materials more easily available to community groups that are conducting census outreach.

- ✓ We recommend that the Census Bureau incorporate broader community feedback at all stages in developing the advertising campaign, including message and ad development.

# III. FINDINGS and RECOMMENDATIONS

## General

In this section, we set forth findings and general recommendations for Census 2010. More specific recommendations are outlined in subsequent sections.

- **The Census Bureau must make structural and institutional changes to facilitate improved communications and better coordination among the national and regional offices and with CBOs.** National and local community leaders observed that there was inadequate coordination among the national Census Bureau office and its regional and local offices. A AAJC survey participant from Chicago, Illinois, noted, "The U.S. Census Bureau is a dispirited, uncoordinated effort. The left hand does not know what the right hand is doing. Decisions are always made centrally when the impact trickles down locally."

  Many community leaders who did not receive information about language assistance options or census materials in a timely fashion echoed this frustration with the Census Bureau. It was also evident in the arbitrary and inconsistent application of policies, especially with respect to hiring noncitizens. In many instances, understanding and implementation about hiring policies and community outreach policies in the West Coast Bureau offices would dramatically differ from that of East Coast Bureau offices.

  AAJC was told that there were periodic conference calls and other gatherings of the regional directors and other relevant staff. AAJC had suggested that the Bureau invite AAJC, and some of the other CBOs doing national outreach campaigns to participate in some way. At a minimum, AAJC asked to brief the regional directors on our outreach plans, exchange ideas and inform them of the questions and concerns being raised on a local level. Unfortunately, the briefing was not permitted. AAJC tried to meet with regional and local staff as we conducted our outreach, but the Bureau's national headquarters could do much more to facilitate and ensure a consistent exchange of information and coordination.

  The Census Bureau and the Census Bureau Monitoring Board should conduct a study to assess the communication and coordination gaps between the national and regional Census Bureau offices in Census 2000. In addition, the Bureau should create a communication and coordination plan that includes some participation by key stakeholder organizations. Changes must be made well in advance of Census 2010 to avoid similar miscommunications and lack of coordination from occurring in future Census Bureau activities.

**AAJC strongly commends the Census Bureau for establishing the Advisory Committee's, nonetheless, the Bureau also should establish national staff positions within the Census Bureau that are created specifically to act as a liaison between APA stakeholders and the Bureau.** It was extremely helpful that the Bureau had established Advisory Committees with APA organizations and individuals. Historically, accessing the Bureau and its regional offices proved to be a

difficult process for national and local CBOs. It must be remembered, however, that the members of the Advisory Committees are volunteers who do not always have the resources to adequately respond to questions regarding the Bureau's outreach plans.

Similar positions had been created for Latinos, including a position that served as the primary liaison between the Bureau and the Latino community. The Census Bureau also hired a Latino media specialist and marketing staff who could respond to concerns of the Latino community. Providing similar liaison positions for APA coordination would make the Bureau's outreach to the APA community more efficient and effective.

**Congress should pass legislation allocating funds to community groups to conduct localized community outreach.** Foundations and city governments should provide resources to community groups to conduct localized census outreach.

In Census 2000, local groups received very little funds from the Census Bureau or the state governments to develop outreach plans and implement them. Some funds were available from regional Census Bureau offices, but they were extremely limited and for the most part discretionary, and some groups were even unaware that these funds were available.

If funding was received, it came from foundations or from city or state governments. A few states and cities decided to allocate funding, but these funds were also fairly limited and generally came very late in the process. Most APA organizations did not receive adequate amounts, if any, support.

Congress should consider allocating federal funds for local census outreach. In the first session of the106th Congressional session, Rep. Dan Miller (R-FL) introduced a bill titled the "2000 Census Community Participation Enhancement Act."[12] Under the bill, $26 million would have been allocated as grants to be provided to organizations for one or more of the following purposes: to train volunteers to assist individuals to complete census forms; to educate the public about the importance of participating in the census; to educate the public about the confidentiality of census information; to recruit candidates to apply for census positions; to sponsor community events to promote the census; to produce community-tailored promotional materials; and to rent space to provide any of the above services. The bill did not become law, but a similar concept should be adopted and implemented before census operations begin for the next decade. While apparently, there is some concern about the Bureau's capacity to make grants, such funding could be made available to the states or local governments as block grants or to the regional offices to increase their discretionary funding for CBO activity.

**At least a year in advance, the Census Bureau should make sure that the Immigration and Naturalization Service has developed an effective policy to ensure that immigrants, especially undocumented immigrants, are not fearful of participating in Census 2010.**

[12] H.R. 1009, March 4, 1999

In Census 2000, the INS developed an important policy minimizing its presence during the census enumeration period. The policy built on the lessons learned from Census 1990 and required INS personnel to hold off on highly visible interior enforcement efforts such as raids, unless the operation was cleared at high levels and involved defined circumstances. The policy worked relatively well except that it was finalized late in the process because the Bureau did not engage in this issue, relying instead on community advocates to weigh in. This made it difficult to ensure that all INS personnel understood the policy and there were a few early problems.

The INS also identified a point person with whom the community could check with when operations went forward so that the context could be explained to the community.

The Bureau has a delicate but important role to play. It is important that the Bureau's actions do not give the perception that census taking is related or in any way connected to INS enforcement activity. However, it is also important for the Bureau to take a strong stance to persuade the INS to minimize its interior enforcement activities during the census.

Messages about the confidentiality of census responses should be coordinated between the Census Bureau and the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) to the fullest extent. Many immigrants trust information coming directly from the INS; therefore, any statements or press releases regarding confidentiality of census responses should be made by both agencies.

**The Census Bureau should consider altering the format of the race question as related to Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders, while continuing to collect information by ethnicity.**

We strongly recommend that there be separate headings for the Asian and Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander race categories under which the ethnic groups are listed. Many community members were confused by the layout of the race question and did not know how they would be identified if they checked one of the subethnic categories–since there are no clear indicators that "Asian" and "Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander" are race categories in of themselves. Moreover, a clear delineation by category will make it clear that the Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander category is separate from the Asian category.

We also strongly recommend that the Bureau continue to allow individuals to identify their ethnicities under the Asian and Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander categories. This is important because many recent immigrants identify more with their particular country of origin and do not recognize the term "Asian." Also, many Pacific Islander communities identify with particular affiliations rather than the umbrella category of Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander.

We also recommend that the Bureau produce demographic characteristics on groups listed under "Other Asian" or "Other Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander."

## B. LANGUAGE ASSISTANCE OPTIONS

### The Need For Language Assistance

According to the 1990 Census, about two-thirds of the APA community speaks an Asian or Pacific Islander language at home; and 56% claimed that they did not speak English "very well."[13] Certain ethnic groups had higher LEP rates as well as linguistic isolation.[14] For example, 73% of the Cambodian community did not speak English "very well" and 56% of the respondents were linguistically isolated.[15] The highest rates of linguistic isolation belonged to the Hmong community; 78% of Hmong respondents claimed that they do not speak English "very well" and 60% were linguistically isolated.[16]

These statistics from the 1990 Census and ethnographic data revealing that language minorities are undercounted by the census show that providing language assistance is a priority in any outreach project targeting the APA community. In Minnesota, for example, it was reported, "language barrier (48%) was the single largest problem associated with the census questionnaire. This was expected since many Southeast Asian are still not proficient in English."[17] With respect to the census, CBOs have strongly recommended that the Census Bureau should partner with local groups to provide language assistance. The Illinois Coalition of Immigrant and Refugee Rights (ICIRR) conducted a study that revealed the following:

Nearly 75% of study participants said they would need assistance to complete the census form, largely due to language capacities. They would look to CBOs, family, relatives, friends, and neighbors for this assistance.[18]

The Census Bureau is to be commended for recognizing the particular language concerns and needs of immigrant and LEP persons and their subsequent development of a potentially promising language assistance program. Based upon AAJC survey results, the Census Bureau's language assistance program, however, did not effectively reach linguistically isolated individuals or those not fully proficient in English. Many community groups who conducted local census outreach stated that they were unaware of the Bureau's telephone questionnaire assistance and language assistance guides. Others stated that while they were aware of these services, they were not helpful.

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[13] "*We the American . . . Asians*," U.S. Dep't of Commerce, Economics and Statistics Administration, BUREAU OF THE CENSUS (September 1993), 5.

[14] Linguistic isolation refers to "persons in households in which no one 14 years old or over speaks only English and no one who speaks a language other than English speaks English 'very well.'" *We the American... Asians*, U.S. Dep't of Commerce, Economics and Statistics Administration, BUREAU OF THE CENSUS (September 1993), 5.

[15] *Id.*

[16] *Id.*

[17] "*Final Progress Report*," The Southeast Asian Census 2000 Complete Count Committee, at 13, (2001).

[18] "*Don't Count Me Out": Immigrants and Census 2000, Perceptions and Recommended Strategies*, Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights, Executive Summary, p. 2 (April 1999).

**The Census Bureau's Language Program**[19]

The Census Bureau's Language Program provided the following materials in some Asian languages:

(1) Census Forms in Chinese, Vietnamese, Korean and Tagalog (to be ordered through the "advance letter");
(2) Language Assistance Guides in 49 languages;
(3) Questionnaire Assistance Centers with bilingual staff;
(4) Telephone questionnaire assistance operators in Chinese, Tagalog, Korean and Vietnamese; and
(5) Fact Sheets in Chinese, Hmong, Korean, Laotian and Tagalog;[20] and handbills in Chinese, Cambodian, Hmong, Korean, Laotian, Tagalog, Thai and Vietnamese.[21]

This section assesses the following components of the Census Bureau's language program: telephone questionnaire assistance; language assistance guides; questionnaire assistance centers; the advance letter; translated census forms; and "Be Counted" forms. It sets forth observations from the community and recommends changes for implementation in Census 2010.

## 1. *TELEPHONE QUESTIONNAIRE ASSISTANCE*

**OBSERVATIONS FROM THE COMMUNITY:**

Community groups indicated that when Telephone Questionnaire Assistance (TQA) was used, it was helpful in filling out translated forms and phone representatives were able to speak the four Asian languages proficiently. However, community leaders found TQA to be ineffective under certain circumstances and cited the following reasons:

**Some community organizations were not aware that the Bureau provided TQA.**

*If we, as an organization promoting outreach for the census, are unaware of TQA, it's likely not well known by others either.* (North Carolina)

*The 1-800 toll-free numbers were not widely publicized or distributed to ethnic communities earlier; [these communities] needed this service the most.* (Chicago, IL)

*Our center was not even aware of TQAs in various languages.* (Tucson, AZ)

[19] http://148.129.129.31/dmd/www/pdf/Langpro.pdf
[20] http://www.census.gov/dmd/www/forlang.html
[21] http://www.census.gov/dmd/www/advhandbill.htm

*The TQA was performed by the City of Chicago, not the Bureau. This is the only TQA we know of in the area…* (Chicago, IL)

*In New York, AALDEF reported that there was very little in-language advertising of the TQA Hotline. When it was provided, it was very late, well into April.* (AALDEF, An Evaluation of Census 2000 Programs, New York, NY)

- **Community groups noted problems in accessing the non-English speaking representatives.**

*I tried calling the 1-800 [Chinese] assistance number. The call was received by an English speaking operator. I asked in English for Chinese assistance. My call was referred to a supervisor on duty. The Supervisor told me that the U.S. Census Bureau hotline only provides Spanish assistance for non-English language [speakers].* (Boston, MA)

*In New York, AALDEF reported that the Chinese TQA began with a long Mandarin tape, which many Chinese in New York and Boston did not understand. Only after a long time did a live Cantonese operator answer the line.* (AALDEF, An Evaluation of Census 2000 Programs, New York, NY)

**There was little to no publicity regarding the fact that TQA was open through early June of 2000.**

*AAJC learned that TQA operators told callers that TQA would be open only through the end of April 2000.*

*AAJC learned that TQA operators would not take census form information over the phone, but asked callers to wait for an enumerator instead. However, many of the callers using TQA preferred to give information via phone rather than to a census enumerator.*

*APALC reported that the Census Bureau limited publicity about the 1-800 lines to the census form itself and prohibited partnerships Specialist from advertising the numbers as late as the third week of March. By severely restricting the publicity of the 1-800 lines, thousands of individuals who could use the language line assistance did not even know about its existence.* (APALC Census 2000 Report, Los Angeles, CA)

**The Census Bureau prepared a Glossary of Terms in order to create uniformity and reduce confusion among various translations of key census terms, the program, however, was fraught with problems.**

*In New York, AALDEF reported that the glossary came out very late. For such reason, groups had to move forward with their own translations and as a result, the same terms were translated in different ways by different Census Bureau units and among community groups and the ethnic media.* (AALDEF, An Evaluation of Census 2000 Programs, New York, NY)

*APALC reported that despite requests from the community, community feedback on the terms was disallowed. Moreover, by then time the glossary was made available, it was too late to be of any significant use. Finally, the outreach materials outside the ad campaign, there was apparently no policy of using the glossary in the development of flyers of other pieces.* (APALC Census 2000 Report, Los Angeles, CA)

**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

✓ **We recommend that the Census Bureau should extensively advertise the availability and existence of TQA by January of 2010**. The 1-800 numbers should be publicized through ethnic advertising, the advance letter and other materials to ensure that community groups are aware of the service, when it is available and how it works.

✓ **We recommend that TQA numbers should be given in advance to community organizations**. Those organizations in turn could advertise the numbers as part of their outreach efforts.

✓ **We recommend that the Census Bureau should hire operators who are proficient in the languages in which they offer help**. There should be all efforts made to hire from CBOs or at the least seek recommendations from CBOs for bilingual operators.

✓ **We recommend that the Census Bureau should ensure that operators undergo a training process similar to that of other Bureau employees.** Training should involve equipping operators with answers to questions that immigrant or linguistically isolated communities might ask.

✓ **We recommend that the Census Bureau should make it possible to receive census forms through TQA.** In Census 2000, many individuals did not understand that they could use the advance letter to request an in-language form, or threw the form away. As a result, they were unable to respond to the English census form, and were either unaware of the "Be Counted" forms or could not access them conveniently. TQA would be an effective way of dispensing census forms in certain languages.

There seemed to be conflicting reports from the Census Bureau on the possibility of receiving in-language forms through TQA for Census 2000. Five of our survey participants indicated that they ordered and received in-language forms through TQA, although Census Bureau officials emphasized that in-language forms could not be ordered through TQA.

**We recommend that TQA should be kept open throughout the non-response follow-up period to allow individuals who prefer phone interviews to make use of this option.**

**We recommend that the methodology for creating the Glossary of Terms needs to be revised.** Translations require diligence. Translated materials need not only be timely, but need also to be evaluated with native speakers. Otherwise, mistranslated materials only exacerbate confusion, distrust and fear of the census. Moreover, an accurate Glossary of Terms should be a tool used consistently in the Bureau's outreach campaign as well as in developing its ad campaign.

## 2. *LANGUAGE ASSISTANCE GUIDES*

**OBSERVATIONS FROM THE COMMUNITY:**

The Census Bureau's development of language assistance guides (LAG) was an innovative and promising effort to include LEP persons in the Census 2000 count. Unfortunately, most survey participants rated effectiveness of as average or below average. Community members indicated that in situations where the language assistance guides were used, they helped clients fill out census forms. However, some members indicated that the LAGs were ineffective for the following reasons:

- **The LAG program was innovative, however, the guides were hard to access or arrived too late to be of use:**

*The effort was valuable; the implementation was a problem. Some CBOs acting as Questionnaire Assistance Centers were given language assistance guides without orientation. [They were late in the distribution, not allowing people to become familiar with them.] A list of languages included was not available early enough.* (Chicago, IL)

*Language Assistance Guides were found on the web; however, local census representatives never offered them. The Internet is likely to be less accessible to the harder-to-reach communities, such as immigrants and refugees.* (North Carolina)

*There was no effective distribution system for LAGs. The guides were so scant that CBOs like the Chinatown Voter Education Alliance photocopied more that 10,000 guides at their own expense, and these ran out quickly. According to one CBO staff member, "People want to fill out their forms-they just don't know now."* (AALDEF An Evaluation of Census 2000 Programs, New York, NY)

*The guides were a valuable resource providing step-by-step information on completing the census form. However, there was an apparent void in planning for how average non-English proficient community member would learn about their availability.* (APALC Census 2000 Report, Los Angeles, CA)

**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

**We recommend that the Bureau should make LAGs available by December 2009, and should find better methods of making them more accessible.** For example, the Internet is not the most effective forum to place the LAGs, as most LEP individuals do not have access to the Internet.

**We recommend that the Bureau should make LAGs directly available to community groups.** This would allow groups to send LAGs in the appropriate languages to individuals before the census form arrives, or to use the guide in English as a Second Language or citizenship classes to familiarize people with the census. In fact, in Monterey Park, California, the city sent Chinese and Spanish language assistance guides to every household, resulting in a 70% mailback response rate.

**We recommend that the Bureau should advertise the availability and existence of the guides through ethnic advertising and other materials.** There was little to no advertising in ethnic press of the availability of LAGs. Moreover, it was insufficient to merely indicate on the advance letter that LAGs were available, as the advance letter did not receive much attention and because the message was in English. The procedure of sending out a LAG to individuals who called TQA lines should be continued.

**We recommend that the Bureau should address the need for broadening the scope of languages in which LAGs are made available.** For example, AAJC received recommendations that the Bureau should make a guide available in Punjabi, a language spoken by many immigrants from India.

3. ***QUESTIONAIRRE ASSISTANCE CENTERS***

**OBSERVATIONS FROM THE COMMUNITY:**

The Census Questionnaire Assistance Centers (QACs) were a wonderful supplement to Census 2000s language assistance program. AAJC is in accord with the thought that personalized assistance is very effective and believes that the program has great potential. Unfortunately, however, during the Census 2000, the program was still in need of development. The most common complaint from community groups was that information about QACs was not provided to them until very late in the process. The majority of survey participants indicated that local census offices did not inform them about services, location or bilingual staff availability at QACs in a timely manner. Fourteen community groups based in New York, North Carolina, Illinois, Massachusetts, California, Virginia and Arizona indicated that they were not given information about QACs in enough time to make use of them. Only after national advocacy did the Census Bureau release information about the QACs on its website–this occurred at the end of March 2000.

**The local and regional offices did not provide timely information about QACs.**

*The community did not know about the QACs… Organization of QACs with Asian language ability could have been more timely and thoughtful…* (New York, NY)

*Information about the QACs came too late. Our county did a better job informing the community about the QACs and developing them in various languages.* (San Jose, CA)

*The community did not hear of how, when and where exactly the QACs [operated] until two days before the opening date. Assigned QACs had to scramble around to let the public know and volunteer staffing was very hard due to this poor planning. QAC volunteer trainings were also conducted late and the hours were not flexible.* (Tucson, AZ)

*The set up of the QACs was completely disorganized. Staff found the Local Census Office (LCO) in Oakland didn't seem to know what was going on. The LCO didn't have updated lists or the language availability list until the very end.* (San Jose, CA)

*It took far too long for us to be notified what sites had been selected* [in New York]. *We were promised a draft list by March 10th, but did not receive anything until two weeks later. As a result of the delay, we were neither able to check the quality of sites nor report on gaps for particular communities. We were also unable to publicize the sites to the community.* (Letter dated April 7, 2000 from the Asian American Federation of New York to Dr. Kenneth Prewitt)

- *Once the QAC list was finalized and released to community groups, it was far to late to be effective. In Los Angeles, the list was not received until the end of March. Thus, community members were often unable to successfully direct individuals to QACX sites that were convenient for them or that had particular language assistance for non-English proficient individuals.* (APALC Census 2000 Report, Los Angeles, CA)

*In New York, the paradox in the QAC program was that individuals who needed assistance in their native languages of how to complete their census forms, had to understand English to find QACs providing assistance in their language. Almost all of the promotion was done in English.* (AALDEF, An Evaluation of Census 2000 Programs, New York, NY)

**Where information about QACs was provided, it was not complete; information about hours of operation and bilingual capability of QAC staff was not shared.**

*For example, AALDEF in New York reported that the list of QACs did not contain valuable information regarding the bilingual capabilities of staff and the hours of operation. Since community groups did not have the necessary information about QACs, many individuals did not receive adequate help with their census forms.* (AALDEF, An Evaluation of Census 2000 Programs, New York, NY)

- *The criteria for what was required from a QAC were ambiguous from the start. Many nonprofit groups that wanted to provide assistance were reluctant to do so given that the Bureau did not initially state what was required of the organization's staffing and facilities*

*use. With limited staffing and strained resources, groups were wary of committing to becoming a QAC.* (APALC Census 2000 Report, Los Angeles, CA)

- **Community members observed that the Census Bureau either did not hire sufficient numbers of bilingual staff at QACs or that the staff that were hired could not help non-English speakers with their census forms.**

*Agencies in our network who became QACs were not provided staff until April 11. None of them were bilingual.* (Chicago, IL)

*The Census Bureau recruited people who could not work in DC [because they lived in Maryland or Virginia suburbs]. There were not enough volunteers or staff who met language needs. Paid staff from DC had no bilingual skills.* (Washington, DC)

*The local office seemed to have a lot of trained paid volunteers, but the number of trained paid volunteers sent to QACs did not reflect this.* (Tucson, AZ)

*The QAC process was a mess… QACs were open too late and were a formality. [There were] no bilingual staff…* (Chicago, IL)

*The LCOs chose very few of the sites we recommended* [in New York], *resulting in poor coverage for linguistically isolated groups such as Bengali speakers in Long Island City, Urdu speakers in Midwood, Fukienese speakers in Chinatown, Khmer speakers in the Bronx, and many others.* (Letter dated April 7, 2000 from the Asian American Federation of New York to Dr. Kenneth Prewitt)

*Questionnaire Assistance Centers were routinely ill equipped to adequately service the community. In New York, community organizations were initially pleased to see that the Census Bureau decided to assign staff to so many sites. But it was soon discovered that the personnel sometimes did not resemble or have the language ability of the community served.* (AALDEF, An Evaluation of the 2000 Census, New York, NY)

- **The QAC Centers were many times ill-equipped**

*In New York, many were turned away because census forms were not available. In Midwood, a director of a QAC site had to turn away over a hundred Pakistanis who had gone to his office seeking "Be Counted" forms. The director believed that even if the forms were sent, the people had already been turned away and it would be unlikely that they would return.* (AALDEF, An Evaluation of the 2000 Census, New York, NY)

- *Maintenance of the QACs must be better organized with special consideration given to the training of the paid and volunteer staff, the stocking of materials such as Language Assistance Guides and "Be Counted" forms, and the scheduling of bilingual staff.* (APALC Census 2000 Report, Los Angeles, CA)

**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

**We recommend that community groups should be consulted with before local offices choose QACs**. The local offices should solicit suggestions for QACs from community groups in order to ensure coverage for linguistic minorities. These recommendations should be followed to the fullest extent possible. For example, in New York, Asian groups put together a list of over 200 possible sites. However, the local census office chose very few of those sites, resulting in poor coverage of the Asian community in New York, especially for Bengali speakers in Long Island City, Urdu speakers in Midwood, Fukienese speakers in Chinatown, and Khmer speakers in the Bronx.

**We recommend that local census offices should make information about QACs available by February of 2010**. This information should be shared with local partners and CBOs. We understand that one of the reasons that LCOs did not release QAC information is because it continued to change–however, this could have been avoided had LCOs made decisions about QACs at an earlier stage. A process by which suggestions on QAC locations are solicited by October of 2009 and selected by December 2009 would leave enough time to compile accurate information regarding hours of operation and bilingual capabilities by February of 2010.

**We recommend that the Census Bureau should make concerted attempts to ensure that local organizations serve as QACs and to provide them with paid staff, or to hire the organizations' staff members on a temporary basis.** It is important that QAC staff are capable of speaking the languages spoken by the community and is sensitive to the needs of the community. Community members are more likely to respond to representatives at CBOs to which they turn for services routinely.

**We recommend that QACs that can be flexible with their hours of operation should be given priority**. We received several comments that QACs should open during evenings, especially those located at community colleges and adult schools.

**We recommend that the Census Bureau needs to ensure that QAC sites are adequately supported. Federal Grants for QACs housed in CBOs should be made available to cover the cost of staff and operations. The Bureau cannot depend upon voluntary staffing or housing of QACs.**

**We recommend that the Census Bureau must plan early on for the establishment of the QAC sites with ample time for consultation with community groups. Clear criteria about the requirements and expectations of QACs must be made available so that agencies are certain about the requested commitment.**

**We recommend that the Census should expand its efforts to provide bilingual census staff that resembles the racial, ethnic, and linguistic makeup of the neighborhood.**

## 4. *ADVANCE LETTER*

In developing the advance letter, the Census Bureau demonstrated forethought and concerns that language minorities would not be able to effectively participate in the Census 2000. The "advance letters" were sent to every household in the country during the week of March 13th, 2000. The advance letter alerted households that a census form would arrive soon, and also gave people the option of receiving a census form in languages other than English–namely Spanish, Vietnamese, Korean, Tagalog and Chinese.

Despite the forethought and concern of language minorities, the advance letters encountered several problems. Advocates for immigrant groups were concerned that there was not sufficient publicity about the advance letter, and that the envelope did not contain any information in different languages to warrant it being opened.

In addition, when the advance letters actually arrived in the mail, they were incorrectly addressed; the envelopes had an extra digit before the address. Although the U.S. Postal Service assured the American public that the advance letters would be delivered to the correct addresses, there were reports of mis-delivery or non-delivery. Moreover, many immigrant advocates were worried that non-English speakers would throw away the advance letter because it was mis-addressed, and thus lose their one and only chance to receive an in-language form.

**OBSERVATIONS FROM THE COMMUNITY:**

The majority of our survey participants indicated that the advance letter was *less than effective* to motivate APAs to participate in the census.

- **Community leaders did not feel that the advance letter was an effective method of providing the option to request in-language forms.**

  - *The advance letter was primarily written in English, delivered in an official government envelope that many community members simply discarded… One individual explained, "I thought it was an advertisement" while another thought the letter [to be] "junk mail." We do not believe that these are isolated incidents…* (Letter dated April 7, 2000 from Asian American Federation of New York to Dr. Kenneth Prewitt)

  - *There has to be a better way to supply persons with translated forms. The advance letter process had many problems including wrong address, being primarily in English, addressed to 'resident' and poor publicity… When the translated form finally arrived, it took more than 2-3 weeks.* (San Jose, CA)

- *In New York, it was reported that there was no promotion of the advance letter, except for the work that community-based organizations had initiated. The Bureau produced flyers about the letter, but only to respond to the misaddressing mistakes.* (AALDEF, An Evaluation of the 2000 Census, New York, NY)

➢ **Most community leaders indicated that the advance letter option was ineffective because it meant that the in-language forms arrived very late.**

*We received many calls in our office asking for the translated census forms. Callers had used the advance letters to request the translated forms but had not received them close to April 1.* (Oakland, CA)

*Mailing back to request the form in another language was a barrier aside from it taking so long to receive or not receive the form at all. It may have been more effective if individuals were asked to contact a QAC for a translated form…* (Tucson, AZ)

- *Because of a backlog at the processing center and the late arrival of the Census forms, many non-English speaking Asian Americans received the form very late or not at all and those who understood the importance of the Census were sent into a panic.* (AALDEF, An Evaluation of the 2000 Census, New York, NY)

**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

✓ **We recommend that the concept of the advance letter should be thoroughly revisited. If the Bureau decides to continue using the advance letter, we suggest the following changes:**

The advance letter should be sent earlier than the third week of March 2010 so that the in-language census forms will not be delayed. It is crucial that the in-language form must arrive at the same time as the regular census form; in order to achieve this, the advance letter should be sent during the first week of March 2010.

The Bureau should not combine an alert regarding the arrival of the census form with the option to receive in-language forms. This is confusing to many speakers who are not proficient in English, especially since the option to receive in-language forms is on the back of the advance letter.

The envelope in which the advance letter comes should contain in-language information that would motivate non-English speakers to read the contents. The envelope should contain messages in different languages indicating the importance of opening the letter.

The advance letter should not be addressed to "Resident" but should identify an individual's name. Mail addressed to "residents" is often thrown away by immigrants and limited English proficient (LEP) individuals.

The letter should contain information about language assistance options available to those individuals who do not speak the five languages in which the forms are available.

The letter should contain the TQA hotline numbers and the dates and times during which they will be open.

We recommend that the Bureau use one vendor who translates and reviews all products. The vendor should be chosen after careful consultation with the API Race and Ethnic Advisory Committees and other groups engaged in census outreach. The advance letter underwent many changes due to inaccuracies in translation.

✓ **We recommend that there should be alternative ways to receive in-language forms**. Community leaders suggest the following methods:

(a) Request in-language form via phone rather than by mail.

(b) Pick up in-language forms at QACs, census offices or community-based organizations.

(c) Affix a peel-off address with a bar code on the advance letter (or the English census form). This method would allow people to peel off the label and affix it on an in-language form of their choice (which would be available at QACs, etc.).

**We recommend that the Census Bureau should more aggressively publicize the advance letter through its ethnic advertising campaign.** The advance letter was not publicized widely in the APA community in Census 2000. All translated Census Bureau materials and all phases of the advertising campaign should have made mention of this option.

✓ **We recommend that the Census Bureau should develop promotional materials about the Advance Letter.**

✓ **We recommend that the Census Bureau should explore alternatives to the advance letter to disseminate more effectively translated census forms.** Collaboration with regional and local governmental and non-governmental agencies and institutions could be implemented to identify neighborhoods for non-English form distribution.

## 5. TRANSLATED CENSUS FORMS

The Census Bureau is to be commended for, in Census 2000, offering for the first time, census forms in four Asian languages in addition to English and Spanish. The forms were available in Tagalog, Vietnamese, Korean and Chinese through the advance letter.

Although community groups were generally pleased with the translated census forms, there were several recommendations on how to make the delivery and use of the forms more convenient.

### RECOMMENDATIONS:

**We recommend that the Census Bureau should continue to provide language forms in Asian languages.** During Census 2000, the requests for Asian language forms were not indicative of the need for in-language forms in the community. According to the Census Bureau, of the requests for in-language forms, 7% were for Chinese forms; 5% for Korean; 4% for Vietnamese; and less than 1% for Tagalog.[22] However, we wish to emphasize that the low response rate is a result of what we believe included poor publicity about how to receive translated forms, how to use the advance letter, the misaddressed envelopes on the advance letter and advance letter envelopes with no identifying information.

**We recommend that if possible, the Census Bureau should provide census forms in additional languages, especially in languages that are spoken by those with the highest rates of LEP persons, as evidenced by Census 2000 data.** In 1999, Representative Dan Miller (R-FL) introduced the "2000 Census Language Barrier Removal Act"[23] that would have made the short form available in over 30 languages. Although AAJC generally supports the production of translated forms in additional languages, we were concerned that justifiable criteria had not been set in order to choose these languages; and that the Bureau did not have the resources to implement such translations merely a year before the census. However, we urge the Bureau, in making plans for Census 2010, to consider whether forms in additional Asian languages should be made available, in light of Census 2000 data regarding the number of LEP individuals of English descent.

**We recommend that the census form should not be addressed to "Resident" but should identify an individual's name (i.e. to "Jane Doe or to current resident").** In fact, the Illinois Coalition of Immigrant and Refugee Rights noted that "[m]ail not addressed to any particular person, such as the census form, is particularly vulnerable to being viewed as junk mail and thereby being "lost" or

[22] March 24th briefing by Dr. Kenneth Prewitt sponsored by the Communications Consortium, Washington, D.C.
[23] H.R. 929, 106th Congress, 1st Session (March 2, 1999)

thrown out. This is especially true when mail storage and distribution is haphazard."[24]

**We recommend that the in-language forms should clearly indicate that information might be completed in that particular language.** There was confusion about whether or not to complete the in-language form in English or in a particular language. Apparently, some local offices were advising individuals to complete the forms only in English.

**We recommend that the Bureau should investigate the possibility of scanning Asian forms via computers, rather than employing individuals to transcribe information from the in-language forms.** Many community members responded to the in-language forms in English when they realized that individuals would be transcribing information, for fear of human error and lack of quality checks.

**We recommend that there should be a tracking means in place to ensure that those requesting an in-language form should not receive an English form as well.** This confused many individuals, especially since the English form was received earlier than the in-language form.

## "BE COUNTED" FORMS

"Be Counted" forms were census forms that came in the five available languages, and were accessible at specific "Be Counted" sites. The forms did not contain bar codes which were address-specific; hence, census staff had to verify the addresses of any "Be Counted" forms.

Due to the fact that many LEP persons did not receive a census form in their own languages (*see "Advance Letter" discussion above*), they depended on the "Be Counted" forms as their last resort. However, it seems that "Be Counted" forms were not available in many areas such as New York, thereby precluding many individuals of their only opportunity to be counted. Moreover, miscommunication and inconsistent messages about how long the sites would be open and whether or not additional existing in-language "Be Counted" forms could be provided compounded existing problems.

### OBSERVATIONS FROM THE COMMUNITY:

**When many Asian Americans accessed "Be Counted" sites, they did not find adequate numbers of "Be Counted" forms.**

*On March 31st, many [community members] returned to find that the sites had not yet received the forms, or as in the case with many sites in Chinatown and Queens, sites did not have in-language questionnaires. We have had tremendous difficulty in procuring Chinese language forms for placement in "Be Counted" sites throughout the four Chinatowns of*

[24] *"Don't Count Me Out: Immigrants and Census 2000,"* Perceptions and Recommended Strategies, Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights, Exec. Summary, p. 1 (April 1999).

*New York City.* (Letter dated April 7, 2000 from the Asian American Federation of New York to Dr. Kenneth Prewitt)

*Locally, the Bureau's management in distributing forms was overly and unnecessarily tight fisted. The "Be Counted" forms were supposed to be available on March 31.at designated "Be Counted" sites and Questionnaire Assistance Centers. However, the distribution of "Be Counted" forms suffered major setbacks, including poor selection of "Be Counted" sites, lack of advertising, and overall miscommunication within the local census bureaucracy. As a result "Be Counted" forms were rare and inaccessible.* (AALDEF, An Evaluation of the 2000 Census, New York, NY)

**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

**We recommend that the Bureau conduct advertising and develop promotional materials for use in the ethnic communities to raise awareness of the opportunity to use "Be Counted" forms.**

**We recommend that the Bureau advertise the availability of "Be Counted" sites before April 1st, 2001. "Be Counted" sites should include all QACs.**

**We recommend that the "Be Counted" sites stay open longer than a two-week period**. In Census 2000, the sites were open from only March 31st through April 11, leaving little time for community members to make use of them.

**We recommend that the Census Bureau work with community groups to identify "Be Counted" sites early and publicize sites within the community.**

## C. LOCAL CENSUS OUTREACH

The Census Bureau's outreach to local communities comprised of a variety of components. In this section, we assess the effectiveness of local outreach, as measured by the following:

**Hiring sufficient APA community partnership specialists/other census staff;**

**Conducting effective outreach among local communities; and**

**Providing local organizations with promotional materials to conduct local outreach.**

To conduct census outreach locally, the Census Bureau established 12 regional offices and 500 local census offices in different regions of the country. The 12 regional offices were located in Atlanta; Boston; Charlotte; Chicago; Dallas; Denver; Detroit; Kansas City; Los Angeles; New York; Philadelphia; and Seattle.[25]

### 1. HIRING APA CENSUS BUREAU STAFF

The Census Bureau Regional Offices hired Community Partnership Specialists who targeted specific racial and ethnic communities. The efforts were an unprecedented approach to encourage participation in the process and were an excellent mechanism for increasing awareness, and catalyzing discussion within the communities. The program was innovative and sought to include even the most neglected segments of society and should undoubtedly be repeated. As with new programs, however, we provide the following recommendations to maximize the intended effect.

As of March 2000, only 8% of Community Partnership Specialists who were hired were of Asian/Pacific Islander descent.[26] More APA staff should have been recruited to fill management, recruiting and community outreach positions. The numbers for APA Community Partnership Specialists were disaapointing. The Bureau did not make effective attempts, especially in Washington, D.C., to recruit and hire staff. For example, in D.C., the Bureau did not waive the requirement that staff reside in the area they would work in; however, many APA live in the suburbs of Virginia and Maryland and work in D.C.

The hiring of sufficient numbers of APA Census Bureau staff was frustrated by an inconsistently applied policy the Bureau implemented regarding the hiring of non-citizens. The Census Bureau applied a policy of only hiring citizens until July of 1999. Advocacy organizations pressured the Bureau to remove the citizenship requirement since many non-citizens who are legally authorized to work in the U.S. possess bilingual capabilities necessary to conduct census outreach. In July of 1999,

[25] Accessed at http://www.census.gov/field/www/phone.html (May 3, 2000)

[26] March 24th, 2000 briefing by Dr. Kenneth Prewitt sponsored by the Communications Consortium, Washington, D.C.

the Census Bureau announced that it would waive the citizenship requirement and reproduce all of its recruitment materials to reflect the change.[27]

However, the Bureau was constrained by a federal appropriations law in whom it could hire. Under the 1999 federal appropriations law funding the Commerce Department, the Bureau could only hire non-citizens whose country of origin belonged on a list of Allied nations produced by the State Department.[28] As a result, the Bureau was precluded from hiring non-citizens who were from India, Bangladesh, Pakistan and the Middle East; the Bureau could also only hire certain Chinese nationals. The law allowed for certain exemptions, including hiring non-citizens from non-Allied nations for jobs requiring bilingual ability.

Advocacy on the part of civil rights groups and congressional inquiries led the Bureau to develop a policy by which it could hire work-authorized non-citizens from any country. In January of 2000, the Bureau issued a directive to its regional offices with instructions to hire work-authorized non-citizens from any country as long as they possessed necessary translation skills. However, misunderstanding among regional offices about the policy and discretionary ability to hire non-citizens led to many inconsistent and arbitrary applications.

Other obstacles to hiring employees of Asian and Pacific Islander descent rested, in part, on the Bureau's policy to not call back or to hire those applicants who had passed the test. Moreover, many LEP candidates could not take the test because it was given only in English and Spanish and not in any Asian languages. Finally, local and regional offices did not effectively recruit candidates of Asian and Pacific Islander descent.

**OBSERVATIONS FROM THE COMMUNITY:**

**Community groups indicated that testing was frustrated by ineffective and inaccurate recruitment.**

- *Testing was not widely available to communities. Miscommunication regarding age requirements resulted in conflicting outreach. The Bureau did not perform sufficient outreach so that enough APAs would be hired...* (New York, NY)

- *... Community Partnership Specialists are not recruiting sufficient numbers of employees who are bilingual and/or represent people of color. For example, in a local office in the Bronx, out of the 5000 individuals that were tested, less than 70 were of Asian descent... Yet, there are seemingly plenty of individuals who have taken tests or have been recommended by community groups but have not been hired.* (Letter from Leadership Conference on Civil Rights, dated March 23, 2000, to Dr. Kenneth Prewitt)

- *The Census Bureau should hire people years in advance and get a good operational head start... They need to work and understand what works at the local level. They also need*

[27] 2000 Decennial Census Regional Census Center Administrative Memorandum No. 99-113 (July 23, 1999).
[28] P.L. 105-277, Section 606

*recruit more [people] who look and talk like the people they count.* (SEACCC, Final Progress Report, MN)

- *In California, the process of placing bilingual field workers was ambiguous. Community members were told that local census offices were responsible for determining the number and assignment of bilingual enumerators. Apparently, however, local census offices had great discretion in making the determinations. The open-ended use of different sources of information to determine the need for bilingual enumerators resulted in uneven hiring and assignment of language skilled workers and inevitably, inadequate coverage of certain languages in certain census tracts.* (APALC Census 2000 Report, Los Angeles, CA)

*The Metrotech LCO, that encompasses a large and growing Chinese community in Sunset Park and Borough Park, hired only one Chinese for recruiting outreach, and to answer calls in Chinese. She was the only Chinese person at the LCO. Worse, the Chinese recruiter was routinely subjected to tirades from her supervisor, who often cursed and blamed the Chinese community for not helping in the Census.* (AALDEF, An Evaluation of the 2000 Census, New York, NY)

**Community groups indicated that census offices were not updating applicants whom they had tested and who had either passed or failed.**

*The LCO has been actively recruiting but has not hired any of the applicants tested, as of April 11th. We have recorded 203 applicants and only 2 people were hired, as of April 11th, 2000.* (Chicago, IL)

*Many bilingual persons applied for jobs, passed the tests, but were not notified of jobs available so they gave up. Better follow-up is needed to keep applicants informed about real job prospects…* (San Jose, CA)

- *After applying and testing for field positions, thousands of applicants received no update on their candidacy and complained to organizations. This resulted in a negative public perception of the Census Bureau at large. In addition, it left community organizations in the unenviable position of losing credibility with community members whom they had earlier encouraged to apply to the Census.* (APALC Census 2000 Report, Los Angeles, CA)

*The official Bureau policy was to hire bilingual candidates, but too often managers and supervisors did not seem willing to implement the policy. Some supervisors even rejected Chinese candidates–after they were offered positions based on high test scores-due to their native language. One Census staff noted, "language ability should be seen as a plus as opposed to a minus factor."* (AALDEF, An Evaluation of the 2000 Census, New York, NY)

*The process was messy. It included inconsistent information, wrong phone numbers… and people were not being called back. Some others were told they passed the test, but never heard from [the Bureau] again…* (Chicago, IL)

**Community groups were contacted by individuals who had either been fired after being hired, or were not hired at all, based on citizenship status**. Also reported were complaints that regional and local offices were unaware of changes in the national policy.

*...Some Census Recruiting Assistants in Brooklyn are still telling community residents that citizenship is a mandatory requirement to apply for a census job. . . conflicting messages from official Census Bureau recruiters are confusing community members.* (Letter from Asian American Legal Defense and Education Fund in New York, dated March 13, 2000, to Mr. Lester Farthing, Regional Director)

- *Although the Bureau promulgated a directive to regional offices with instructions to hire work-authorized non-citizens from any country with necessary translation skills, the new policy was inconsistently applied.* (APALC Census 2000 Report, Los Angeles, CA)

*Although the Bureau was unofficially telling regional offices to waive the requirement, many offices were using the discretion to not hire work-authorized non-citizens. AAJC came upon an advertisement for census enumerators in the Schaumburg, Illinois area. Dated March 1999, the ad expresses the U.S. citizenship requirement (see Exhibit 2). The Asian American Legal Defense and Education Fund came upon an ad for Census office managers and other staff in New Jersey in April 1999 that advertised the U.S. citizenship requirement. (see Exhibit 3).*

*[We] have heard complaints that non-citizens with work authorization who pass the test are still being declared ineligible for employment with the Census Bureau because of their country of origin... [We] suspect that the software has still not been updated with the new citizenship-neutral and country of origin neutral hiring policy.* (Letter from Asian American Legal Defense and Education Fund in New York, dated March 13, 2000, to Mr. Lester Farthing, Regional Director)

*In Los Angeles, a woman from Malaysia had been hired by the Regional Office and was working for a few months before she was fired, allegedly on the basis of the country of origin hiring policy. The woman was later reinstated after pressure from advocacy groups.*

*As late as March 12, AALDEF received reports that in New York, Indian and Pakistani non-citizens who passed the test were declared ineligible because the computer rejected them due to their country of origin.* (AALDEF, An Evaluation of the 2000 Census, New York, NY)

➢ **Community groups complained that tests had not been provided in any Asian languages.**

*Besides English, it's not fair [the Census Bureau] only included Spanish. What happened to the four Asian languages [the forms were in]?* (Miami, FL)

*The qualifying skills and English proficiency were problematic. The skills portion of the test and the enumerator trainings were only offered in English and Spanish; mo Asian*

*languages were available.* (AALDEF, An Evaluation of the 2000 Census, New York, NY)

**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

**We recommend that the Census Bureau should hire non-citizens regardless of their country of origin for local census office jobs and enumerator positions. The preference for hiring only US citizens should be eliminated.** The Census Bureau should work with Congress to make this policy clear at the start of Census 2010 to avoid inconsistent or arbitrary applications, and to preclude the need to make changes during operations. Moreover, the policy should be clearly communicated to all regional office staff that have recruitment and hiring responsibilities.

**We recommend that the Census Bureau should continue to hire a diverse pool of Asian and Pacific Islanders as Partnership Specialists. Specialists need to have extensive community experience in their ethnic community and the larger Asian and Pacific Islander community. The Bureau also needs to ensure the hiring of specialists at least 2 years in advance of census day.**

**We recommend that the Census Bureau should institute a more aggressive and inclusive affirmative action policy to ensure that managerial, supervisory, and enumerating staff better reflect the communities being enumerated.** Such staff should also be fluent in local languages or dialects.

**We recommend that the Census Bureau should have a more timely system of notifying applicants of their candidacy; of all those who passed <u>or</u> failed the test.** The Census Bureau and the Census Bureau Monitoring Board should conduct an analysis to determine how many individuals were tested and passed the test, but were not called back. There should be a breakdown of these candidates by race and ethnicity.

**We recommend that during Census 2010, the Bureau should provide racial and ethnic breakdowns of Community Partnership Specialists and other staff conducting local outreach to CBOs by December of 2009.** This will assist community partners in helping find adequate candidates and provide testing centers.

**We recommend that the Census Bureau should attempt to offer tests in Asian or Pacific Islander languages in areas where there are high concentrations of Asians or Pacific Islanders and high rates of LEP, or at least in all the languages in which forms are available.**

**We recommend that at the commencement of the recruitment phase, the Census Bureau needs to widely publicize their policy on the hiring of non-citizens with needed language skills in all recruitment materials and train staff about this policy.**

## 2. OUTREACH BY REGIONAL/ LOCAL CENSUS BUREAU OFFICES

AAJC recorded mixed reactions from survey participants regarding the effectiveness of outreach by their regional/local Census Bureau offices. Many survey participants indicated that their local census office promoted awareness of in-language options (although groups in North Carolina, Illinois, Virginia, Massachusetts and California disagreed). Others were especially indignant that Community Partnership Specialists had tailored outreach to certain ethnic communities, while ignoring others in the area.

### OBSERVATIONS FROM THE COMMUNITY:

- **Some community groups indicated that their API specialists did not plan census activities in their communities or contact them to provide outreach materials.**

*The specialists were inefficient, unresponsive, unreliable and simply inept. The would not return calls, and would not follow up or simply not show up for meetings.* (Chicago, IL)

*Community outreach efforts were stymied by a lack of a unified, concrete plan by the Bureau. For instance, some community members would only make efforts to outreach to that community and not the larger Asian and Pacific Islander community in their local census office (LCO). On the other hand, other specialists worked extremely hard to reach out equally to all Asian and Pacific Islander groups, as required, ands ended up attempting to compensate for specialists who did not conduct outreach to specific groups in their LCO.* (APALC Census 2000 Report, Los Angeles, CA)

*Local census staff were helpful when contacted, but were not proactive in outreach to the APA community. Aside from AAJC's efforts, I don't know of any other APA outreach activities initiated by the Census Bureau.* (North Carolina)

*Generally, once Partnership Specialists were in place, they never seemed to follow coherent, comprehensive outreach plans. The quality of work relied exclusively upon each specialist's individual skills and prior experience.* (AALDEF, An Evaluation of the 2000 Census, New York, NY)

*Partnership specialists did not plan events in the area [Chicago]. We invited them to speak at the outreach events. Partnership specialists are also uneven in cooperating with community organizations in providing materials and support. There should be more supervisors of them in the field.* (Chicago, IL)

- **Many groups commended the outreach on the part of APA Community Partnership Specialists and local offices, while noting the lack of resources and coordination that the staff suffered from in conducting outreach.**

*It was the rare partnership specialist who really understood and responded to the needs of the community... Eun Joo Kim was one of them.* (New York, NY)

*We commend the Bureau for developing the Partnership Specialist program which enabled regional offices to hire hundreds of bilingual, bicultural individuals who were familiar with conducting outreach in certain communities… however, without a unified plan for the Asian and Pacific Islander community and media outreach, it was very challenging for community groups to work with the specialists as a whole, for instance, on larger projects like planning a community calendar, or planning activities for Asian and Pacific Islander Census Week.* (APALC Census 2000 Report, Los Angeles, CA)

*Funding for census efforts in hard-to-reach communities should be the responsibility of local governments. The State of Minnesota, City of St. Paul, and the City of Minneapolis should reserve their own funds to launch their census efforts and not draw from private foundations. It should be the responsibility of government to invest in the interest of its people by ensuring an accurate count. Private foundations should not have to fund government.* (SEACCC, Final Progress Report, MN).

*The partnership specialists in San Francisco were great; considering the main Bureau office* [in D.C.] *was not doing a good job.* (San Francisco, CA)

*We congratulate the local offices for doing the best they could within the structure that existed. Local Census Bureau staff had very limited access to email and the Internet… resource-sharing in one of the offices was a significant problem. The L.A. Regional Office was also very supportive of the Hawaii Government Complete Count Committee work and made sure they communicated with us about issues and events…* (Honolulu, HI)

**Community groups indicated that some of the staff that had been hired did not possess adequate bilingual skills or did not understand the needs of the community.**

*The problem was that they did not hire APAs with language skills. They need to be more flexible in hiring individuals living outside of DC. DC residents who worked for the Bureau could not speak Chinese…* (Washington, DC)

*AAJC received alarming information from Phoenix, Arizona, where three minority managers (one of which was Asian American), were fired and replaced with white employees. The reason for the firing was that the minority managers had not recruited enough employees; the managers were replaced by white individuals whom the community did not know.*

*AALDEF was pleased that an Indian Specialist was hired who was proficient in Hindi, and conversant in Urdu. Yet this one Specialist was insufficient to educate the greater New York Metropolitan Area's entire South Asian community about the census.* (AALDEF, An Evaluation of the 2000 Census, New York, NY)

- **Some groups indicated that the APA Partnership Specialists only targeted specific groups or events, leaving many communities missed, or that they were not culturally or linguistically sensitive to needs of communities.** AAJC

heard the most complaints from groups in New York, that claimed that the Census Bureau had largely ignored Pakistani and Bangladeshi communities.

*We [Sikh Media Watch] were not approached for any of these outreach activities, nor were any other Sikh or Punjabi organizations nationally.* (Sikh Media Watch, MD)

*We reach our clients through English as a Second Language School yet the person who came to talk was from the Middle East. No one in this school is Middle Eastern...* (Families of Vietnamese Political Prisoners)

*Because there was so little outreach to the Pakistani and Bangladeshi communities in their native languages, we fear a dramatic undercount of the South Asian community may ensue.* (AALDEF, An Evaluation of the 2000 Census, New York, NY)

*We have become increasingly alarmed at the dismal outreach to the vast Indian community in Northern New Jersey. After attending numerous events in Newark and Jersey City, not once have [we] ever seen an Indian American represented at any Census event or Census Complete Count Committee meeting.* (Letter dated April 6, 2000, from Asian American Legal Defense and Education Fund to Dr. Kenneth Prewitt)

*The outreach job was too massive for the two Hawaii community partnership specialists especially since the second person was hired in late 1999 and she had to fly between several islands to do outreach. Training each month in L.A. for these specialists took them away for almost one week each time...* (Hawaii Government Complete Count Committee)

*[There was] [l]ittle to no institutional outreach to the significant Bangladeshi and Pakistani communities in New York. The Bureau's advertising campaign completely overlooked these rapidly growing communities. Leaders believe that most of the community still doesn't know what the census is...* (Letter dated April 7, 2000 from Asian American Federation of New York to Dr. Kenneth Prewitt)

*There needs to be both Bangladeshi and Pakistani partnership specialists, who are proficient in Bengali and Urdu...the South Asian community in the Greater Metropolitan area (of New York) is the largest and most concentrated in the nation.* (Letter from the Asian American Legal Defense and Education Fund, dated October 5, 1999, to Alice Chin)

*From the beginning we noticed that the Muslim minorities in general, and the Pakistani community in particular, were ignored in hiring and planning of ... Census 2000... the Pakistani community... has been deprived of their due share in outreach in advertisement and in hiring by the census officials in New York City... We were promised outreach to Pakistani/Muslim communities on March 16th and 17th when thousands of Muslims were gathering in the Islamic Centers for special prayer celebration but it turned out to be a "no show" on the part of the census officials with any explanation... No Pakistani community member has been hired as Community and/or Partnership Specialist despite several promises...* (Letter from Americans of Pakistani Heritage, Inc., dated March 17, 2000 to Dr. Kenneth Prewitt)

**Other groups indicated that the local and regional offices did not communicate well with the community.**

- *An extremely decentralized network of local census offices and partnership, many of whom do not communicate with one another, resulting in the sharing of inconsistent information with community partners about policy and operations... Many community concerns... have fallen through the cracks between operations and partnership.* (Letter dated April 7, 2000, from Asian American Federation of New York to Dr. Kenneth Prewitt)

- *AALDEF reported that in hiring Chinese Partnership Specialists, the Bureau first hired a Mandarin speaking Chinese Specialist, then a Cantonese speaking Specialist, and n o Fujianese speaking specialist. But the Fujiamese community in New York City was the newest Chinese immigrant groups, the most linguistically isolated and therefore the community most in need of specialists.* (AALDEF, An Evaluation of the 2000 Census, New York, NY)

**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

✓ **We strongly recommend that regional office census staff in managerial positions and APA Community Partnership Specialists undergo cultural and linguistic sensitivity training,** and that there be opportunities for local and national community leaders to speak to Bureau staff about effectively reaching the APA community.

✓ **We recommend that local and regional Census Bureau staff invest in meeting with APA community leaders to assess which groups need specific and tailored outreach.** Apparently, in the case of New York, the Census Bureau was working under the impression that targeting the Indian Asian community was sufficient to reach the entire South Asian community. With this approach, however, the different needs of Pakistanis and Bangladeshis were not met by outreach methods solely directed towards Asian Indians. A meeting with South Asian community leaders at the earliest stages of operations might have ensured a better understanding of community dynamics and prevented the criticism and lack of collaboration and participation that ensured.

✓ **We recommend that the Census Bureau incorporate into their budget adequate funding to allow for substantive and effective planning with CBOs that have demonstrated a history or working with undercounted communities.** In addition, Congress must pass legislation that would allocate funding directly to community groups and the request for proposal process must be widely publicized and advertised to community groups across the nation in a timely manner.

✓ **We recommend that the Partnership Specialists in each regional Office should have a general, unified plan, adaptable to each community and region.** We understand that some independence is necessary to allow specialists to cater to the particular needs of their community, but coordination and consistent plans are necessary to ensure adequate and consistent outreach.

✓ **We recommend that the selection criteria for partnership specialists must include existing and growing APA populations, languages and dialects spoken, and English language ability.**

## 3. PROMOTIONAL MATERIALS

Many CBOs did not have the resources to develop materials to distribute at community events or meetings. Some regional and local offices of the Census Bureau provided promotional materials to community organizations or distributed them at community events. Materials included flyers, posters, brochures, fact sheets, mugs, pens, and magnets.

### OBSERVATIONS FROM THE COMMUNITY:

Generally, survey participants indicated that though they had received promotional materials, they were either hard to obtain, insufficient, or not multilingual. 25 participants indicated that their local office had provided them with promotional materials; however, 12 indicated that these materials were insufficient in some manner. Some participants indicated that the in-language materials did not cater to their community's needs.

**Community members either did not receive the promotional materials or did not receive sufficient amounts of the promotional materials**. In Hawaii, for example, promotional items could only be used at events at which Community Partnership Specialists were present, making it difficult for CBOs to conduct census outreach without them.

*Sometimes it was difficult to obtain promotional materials. There are three offices in my region and the offices are very territorial about their promo items. Sometimes the time and effort to try to obtain the items is not worth it. I think that Census Bureau employees sometimes lose sight of the fact that we are trying to help them with outreach. It should not take an extraordinary effort to obtain promotional items...* (San Jose, CA)

*The Census Bureau informed us that promotional items (excluding posters) could only be used at events that a Census Bureau person was participating in such as a Community Partnership Specialist. Since we only had two specialists for Hawaii, the promotional give-aways were limited. We also could not find out what kind of promotional items (i.e. posters) and the amounts that would be available for our committee [Complete Count Committee] members to distribute. This made it difficult to do planning for promotion. Flyers in different languages were not readily available...* (Honolulu, HI)

*Pens, pencils, and mugs... we didn't get most of the promotional materials. By the time we found out about them, most were already gone!* (San Jose, CA)

*The Bureau's in-language posters were no attraction. The promotional items were helpful, but didn't get enough, or they ran out...*(Washington, DC)

- **The in-language materials did not cater to the needs of the community.**

*In-language promotional materials were provided by Complete Count Committee members. Local census representatives were unaware of in-language material* (North Carolina)

*Translations of Asian posters were nil; posters should have been distributed earlier for maximum exposure, not two months before the census* (Chicago, IL)

*The census has prepared many promotional materials; however, for the multilingual materials in print for the Asian communities, your organization [AAJC] has a much more comprehensive offer...* (Oakland, CA)

*If it were not for AAJC's promotional materials in 16 languages, there were not enough materials for the API community that were available from the Census Bureau...* (Tucson, AZ)

**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- ✓ **We recommend that the Census Bureau should make promotional materials more easily available to community groups that are conducting census outreach.** Many of these groups do not have the resources to provide multilingual or cultural messages to their constituents. Producing them in greater amounts and distributing them to groups would be the most effective way of using them.

- ✓ **We recommend that attempts should be made by the Census Bureau to put together a calendar of cultural events in the community prior to distributing promotional materials**. The calendar will direct APA Community Partnership Specialists to receive an additional amount of promotional materials that can be exchanged with community groups at appropriate times.

- ✓ **We recommend that the Bureau should provide multilingual materials in the languages that communities need**. There should be more of an effort to produce these materials and items.

## D. THE ADVERTISING CAMPAIGN

The Census Bureau contracted with Kang & Lee, a subsidiary of Young & Rubicam, to develop an advertising campaign directed to APAs. The campaign produced ads in three phases during which media buys were made in print, radio and television outlets that catered to APAs.

**OBSERVATIONS FROM THE COMMUNITY:**

In concert with the Census Partnership Unit and other localized education efforts, the advertising campaign in the Census 2000 was promising innovation that sought to include many communities that had been historically overlooked. We commend the Census Bureau and highly recommend that the program be re-instituted for Census 2010. Despite the success of the program we provide the following recommendations and observations that will hopefully make future advertising campaigns more effective in including undercounted communities.

**Community groups indicated that the advertising was not as prevalent as expected, and that it did not reach many LEP communities.**

*[Advertising not as prevalent as expected.] Third largest campaign behind McDonalds and Burger King? Didn't seem like it...*(North Carolina)

*If the API community was targeted, I saw few media pieces except for in Asian Week. I think the Census Bureau had a lot of media spots targeting the English speaking community, but I do not think the spots adequately explained the census and its importance...* (San Jose, CA)

*There was a scarcity of television advertisements here* [in Hawaii] *that was a great detriment. The local stations did not have many ads...* (Honolulu, HI)

- **Community groups indicated that the Bureau's advertising campaign ignored certain communities.**

  - *There was little to no outreach to Bangladeshi and Pakistani communities in New York. The Bureau did not seem to consider these communities to be of importance though community groups organized around the census...* (New York, NY)

  - *Muslim community media, specially Pakistani community media was ignored in advertisement campaign, while the Indian media was given an undue and unfair share of the advertisements since last year... Indian owned media and community centers are not only given advertisements and preferences but are also being misrepresented as Pakistani centers...* (Letter from Americans of Pakistani Heritage, Inc., dated March 17, 2000 to Dr. Kenneth Prewitt)
  - *After reviewing the final advertisements, some people felt as though they were oriented toward a West Coast or suburban Asian American audience. The messages were right, but the pictures were wrong... Most importantly, advertising missed key language minorities and regional*

*Asian American groups. Advertisements targeting the South Asian community were only aired in English, the most popular South Asian TV channel in the New York and New Jersey area had few, if any, advertising spots, and there was no appropriation for non-English speaking Indian, Bangladeshi, Pakistani and Indo-Caribbean communities that especially needed advertising assistance considering that there were no partnership specialists hired for these communities.* (AALDEF, An Evaluation of the 2000 Census, New York, NY)

- *Pacific Islanders were excluded as a target audience in the Asian advertising campaign and were outraged by this omission and by the fact that no Census Bureau advertisements were targeted to the Pacific Islander population concentrated in California and Hawaii.* (APALC Census 2000 Report, Los Angeles, CA)

➢ **Community groups believed that better coordination with the Census Bureau would have resulted in a more substantive and thorough advertising campaign.**

- *Of great concern was the Glossary of Terms that was to be a compilation of commonly used, translated terms in various Asian languages. The purpose of the Glossary was to ensure consistent use of translations so that accurate messages could be communicated and to avoid confusion… Despite numerous attempts to expedite the release of the glossary, we did not receive it until its public release on the Bureau's website in mid-September 1999. By this time, many groups, including ours, had already translated slogans as well as many different pieces of literature. The glossary was thus rendered useless by that stage.* (APALC Census 2000 Report, Los Angeles, CA)

- *Many concerns about the advertising campaign could have been averted had there been community feedback and field-testing…[We] urged that community groups be given the opportunity to preview and offer feedback on draft advertisements and to comment on local media placements… Many individuals could have been reached and had their input included…[but] the Bureau was flatly unwilling to accommodate these requests on a national level.* (AALDEF, An Evaluation of the 2000 Census, New York, NY)

**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

**We recommend that the Bureau's advertising campaign staff should consult with community groups before formulating messages and deciding where media buys should be made.** We understand that *Bravo*, the advertising agency that targeted the Latino community, worked closely with Latino organizations to plan the media campaign. However, AAJC and our affiliates were not allowed access to Kang & Lee until late 1999 for various reasons. As a result, we could not provide valuable insights regarding where to place media buys and which ethnic communities should be targeted.

**We recommend that future advertising campaigns provide sufficient information regarding language assistance options.** For example, there was not enough advertising to ethnic communities about the availability of QACs, the advance letter

option or telephone questionnaire assistance. Such information could have been easily incorporated into all of the ethnic ads, especially the print ones.

**We recommend that the Census Bureau incorporate broader community feedback at all stages in developing the advertising campaign, including message and ad development.**

**We recommend that the advertising campaign contain sufficient ads relating to the confidentiality of census responses, the most prevalent reason among Asian immigrants for not participating in the census.** There must be more than a statement referring to the confidentiality of census responses in general ads; instead, there should be ads that discuss *only* the confidentiality of responses. Using credible community leaders to send this message might be another effective method of reaching the immigrant community.

**We recommend that the planning and implementation of the ad campaign must occur simultaneously with the planning and implementation of the Partnership/Outreach campaign.**

**We recommend that for Census 2010, that focus groups and consultations with community leaders from Hawaii, American Samoa and Guam be conducted to ensure that a campaign is tailored to Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander communities.** In Census 2000, the advertising campaign for Native Hawaiians/Pacific Islanders was initially encompassed by the general "Diverse America" campaign.

# IV. CONCLUSION

AAJC will supplement this report with additional observations and recommendations subsequent to the official release of Census 2000 data in the fall of 2000. We hope that this preliminary report will provide initial insights into the APA community's reactions to the Census Bureau's policies, procedures and outreach mechanisms.

For additional information regarding AAJC or our affiliates, or about this report, please contact us:

**ASIAN AMERICAN JUSTICE CENTER**
www.advancingequality.org
**Terry M. Ao, Director of Census & Voting Programs**

**ASIAN AMERICAN INSTITUTE**
www.aaichicago.org
**Tuyet Le, Executive Director**

**ASIAN LAW CAUCUS**
www.asianlawcaucus.org
**Titi Liu, Executive Director**

**ASIAN PACIFIC AMERICAN LEGAL CENTER**
www.apalc.org
**Dan Ichinose, Project Director, Demographic Research Project**

# REDUCING THE UNDERCOUNT IN THE 2010 CENSUS: THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT PERSPECTIVE

**Joseph J. Salvo**
**Director, Population Division**
**NYC Department of City Planning**

Testimony submitted to the Subcommittee on Federal Financial Management, Government Information, and Federal Services and International Security, Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, September 23, 2008.

Good afternoon, Chairman Carper, Senator Coburn, and members of the subcommittee. I am Dr. Joseph Salvo, Chief of the Population Division at the Department of City Planning of the City of New York. On behalf of Mayor Michael Bloomberg, I want to thank you for the opportunity to speak about issues affecting undercount in the 2010 Census. It is important to emphasize, that while I do represent the interests of New York City, the issues I discuss in my testimony are relevant for many small, medium and large municipalities, as well as for a number of the nation's rural areas.

Regardless of your political leanings or assessments about the past performance of the Census Bureau, I think we can all agree that the Bureau is struggling right now with the daunting task of trying to engineer a successful 2010 Census within a very tight timeline. This includes attempts to deal with recent procedural changes in non-response follow-up, technological hurdles involving the block canvass, and less-than-adequate testing of some operations in the dress rehearsal. At this point, those of us on the outside looking in are concerned that the objective of the census not be reduced to "making a census happen," but instead should be focused on "creating a high-quality enumeration" that counts all Americans. All of the Bureau efforts to make the census happen "on time," will be for naught if it fails to enumerate the population of the nation *accurately.*

We have heard the Census Bureau's pledge that the 2010 Census will fully enumerate the population of the nation. I am here today to ask the subcommittee to hold the Census Bureau to its pledge in two areas of concern to those of us who are avid users of the data:

1. **The Census Bureau needs to provide us with their plan regarding how it intends to mail questionnaires to millions of housing units that lack apartment information; information that links a questionnaire to occupants of a housing unit (remember, names are not used to mail census questionnaires).** This affects many communities throughout the nation, where mail delivery may not "cut it" for census purposes.

   This problem has been acknowledged for three decades, in the work of no less than three separate expert panels convened by the National Academy of Sciences. And, to its credit, the Census Bureau has undertaken extensive research in the post-2000 period to explore the best ways of dealing with apartments that are not labeled, in preparation for the March 2009 address

canvass. Indeed, Lester Farthing, the Director of the New York Regional Census office and I have had regular discussions about this issue. In fact, frustration is the order of the day in our conversations, over a resolution that we both believe is at hand, if only the creative energies of the Census Bureau staff are permitted to triumph over bureaucratic hurdles.

The irony is that a consistent listing of housing units in the address canvass will save a lot of grief later on, when census questionnaires are returned, and especially when non-response follow-up is conducted. If apartment designators are inconsistent or nonexistent, follow-up enumerators will not be able to do their job well. Right now, the danger is that, with all of the pressure on the Bureau to keep to its timeframe and with the block canvass of the nation fast approaching, this innovative work may fall by the wayside, with a serious ripple effect on the enumeration itself. A recent GAO report points out that the Census Bureau has repeatedly overestimated the productivity of field workers in the address canvass in urban and suburban areas.[1] They point out that the costs of the address canvass can dramatically increase if the Census Bureau cannot accurately anticipate the number of housing units per hour that can be examined. The problems that exist in small multi-unit buildings can complicate the address canvass and greatly increase costs in many areas, if the Census Bureau fails to implement a strategy to deal with these problematic addresses.

Therefore, I would like to request that the subcommittee ask the Census Bureau if they plan on implementing a procedure in the block canvass to label problematic housing units in small multi-family buildings and, if so, when the details of their plan will be released.

The Census Bureau has built a list of addresses that can serve as the basis for mailing questionnaires and following-up on households that fail to respond. In addition, they have provided local governments with opportunities to conduct a review of this list, by way of the Address List Improvement Act of 1994. It is critical for census purposes that every person be tied to an address, either a residence or facility (in the case of group quarters population). In order for the Census to enumerate someone, there must be a link to an address. This makes

[1] "Census Bureau's Decision to Continue with Handheld Computers for Address Canvassing Makes Planning and Testing Critical" (GAO-08-936) July 2008.

sense, since reapportionment and redistricting are both tied to residence. When this residence is an apartment in a building, exact apartment information is required to place the questionnaire correctly in the hands of the occupants (and to go to that apartment when the occupants fail to respond). The Census Bureau has conducted research on the problems that occur when apartments in small multi-unit buildings do not have apartment numbers, but has yet to announce their plan for conducting the enumeration in places with many of these buildings.

Throughout the nation, there are many neighborhoods with buildings where the mail is delivered using the name of occupants as a "pointer," for the postal worker and for residents. Since census questionnaires do not have any name information, these questionnaires rely on other indicators for accurate delivery. This is usually an apartment designator, a number or other indicator of apartment location (right front, basement, rear left etc). When the Census Bureau builds its Master Address File (MAF) for use in the decennial census, it tries to place identifiers on each apartment in a building. In the case of large buildings with a bank of mailboxes, the task is simple: create a list using the indicators on the mailboxes. Over time, however, strategies among families to make ends meet have resulted in the subdivision of small buildings to accommodate two- three- and four or more families. Listing them in the address canvass is a challenge because doors may not be clearly marked or may not be marked at all (for some examples, see the illustrations at the end of this document). Since mail is delivered using names, the postal service may not have apartment numbers. When the Census Bureau sends mail to these places, the results are often chaotic, since the link between the questionnaire and the housing unit is misleading or nonexistent. Further, when follow-up enumerators go to these places attempting to get responses from those who failed to respond by mail, they frequently have trouble trying to figure out which questionnaire belongs to each apartment.

The research conducted by the Census Bureau has been fairly extensive, involving consultation with local governments, field assessments, and the examination of procedures already in use by Statistics Canada. A solution is at hand, but the details of this procedure have not been made public. Also, there has been only limited reference to the effect of this problem on the productivity and cost estimates from the Dress Rehearsal in San Joaquin, California and

Fayetteville, North Carolina. Even if a thorough evaluation were to occur, however, the results from these sites probably cannot be generalized to the 2009 address canvass for many cities of the nation. About 10 percent of San Joaquin's 223,000 housing units are found in small multi-family buildings (those with between two and nine housing units). Even in Stockton, the largest city in San Joaquin County, about 14 percent of its 97,000 housing units were estimated to be in small multi-family buildings. While hardly trivial, these numbers fail to convey the severity of this problem for address canvassing in many other places in the nation where housing subdivision has been adopted by families who are subsidizing the costs of ownership with tenants. Of Chicago's 1.2 million housing units, over 500,000 units or 43 percent of their housing stock is in buildings that were identified as having between two and nine housing units. Of the 255,000 housing units in Boston, 131,000 or 51 percent are in small multi-family buildings. And, in New York City, of 3.3 million housing units, more than 996,000 or 30 percent were in small buildings. Clearly, in these places and in many others, the Census Bureau will face productivity and accuracy challenges in the address canvass operation of small buildings that can jeopardize accuracy and increase costs.[2]

2. **The Census Bureau needs to be made to deliver on its promise to form meaningful partnerships with local governments.** Even if the Census Bureau has a perfect list of addresses, there are no guarantees that people will respond. The messages delivered by even the most impressive national advertising and communications campaign will be useless unless mechanisms are in place to bring that message directly into the neighborhoods of the nation. This requires an extensive effort, one that may be jeopardized in the current crisis environment.

   To their credit, the Census Bureau staff does have a plan to facilitate partnerships with local governments and other organizations that are capable of delivering the census message at the grassroots level. Ask local census officials or members of local government who have participated in previous censuses, and they will tell you that the census message can be exciting and powerful. This message does not come by way of a national campaign ad on

[2] The estimates just provided may themselves be problematic, since the Census Bureau does not currently have an established procedure in their canvassing and survey operations to accurately label housing units in small multi-family buildings.

television, but by way of pro-active efforts by local community leaders, who understand the power of census numbers, and how they can be translated into benefits for their communities and a voice in decisions at all levels of government.

It is hard to overstate the importance of pro-active community involvement in the census. Threats to privacy have become more real than ever, suspicion of government is commonplace, fear of authority among many of the nation's newcomers is real, language and cultural barriers are common, and economic stress is playing out all over the nation. This situation is ripe for a high level of undercount. And, as has been the case historically, the undercount is most likely to occur among groups and in places that are most in need of the benefits offered by the census: fair shares of political representation and government resources. Now, with more communities of this nation becoming ethnically diverse, the challenge to local census officials and to local governments is unprecedented.

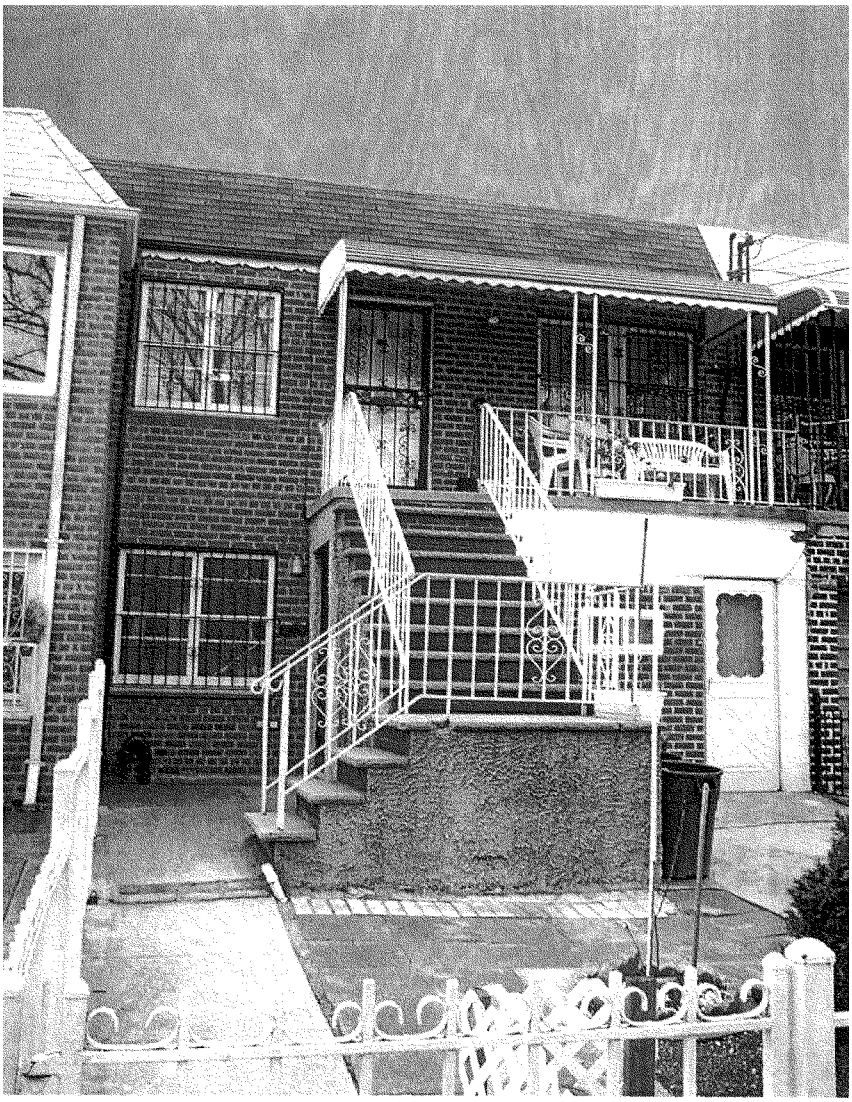
The only way to overcome this is with messages, facilitated by the Census Bureau, provided *by* local neighborhood residents *for* local neighborhood residents. "Buy-in" is best achieved by hiring *local* census workers and accessing their ties to the community. The partnership network needs to involve thousands of partnership specialists throughout the nation, with an adequate budget for promoting activities to engage local communities, ranging from tee shirts or buttons at a community event to participation in an ethnic parade. These are the little things that can make a real difference and translate the census from an abstract concept to a locally purposeful activity.

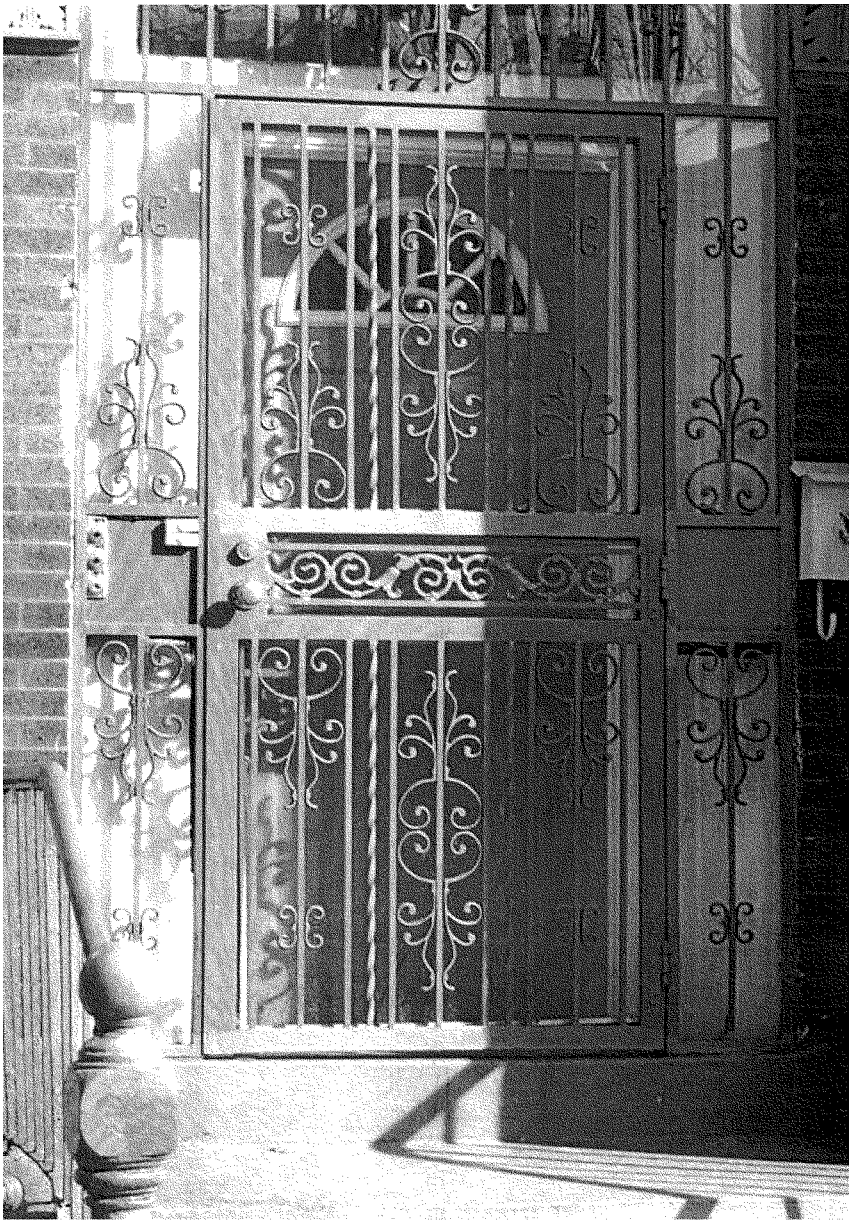
Therefore, I am asking the subcommittee to hold the Census Bureau to its word by requiring that they demonstrate how they plan on reaching out to the locals, in detailed terms. The subcommittee should also ask the local governments themselves and organizations that represent these local governments how they are working in concert with the Census Bureau to take ownership of the census message. Moreover, details on the regional allocation of resources, the timing of delivery of these resources, and the game plan for local media presentation of the census message (especially regarding the plan for ethnic media) should be made available to local governments involved in census preparations.

I want to commend the subcommittee for holding this hearing and their appreciation for the important role that the decennial census plays in the lives of all Americans.

The following four pictures provide examples of buildings that contain housing units without apartment numbers. The first two pictures show a building with three apartments, each with its own separate entrance. Since there are no apartment numbers, the Census Bureau needs to create labels when the building is examined in the address canvass, so that each questionnaire can be "attached" to each individual apartment. These need to be labels that the postal service can use to deliver the questionnaires (e.g. Apt 1R for 1 Right, 2 for second floor etc.).

In the second example, we see two pictures of a larger building with five doorbells and one mailbox, which is common in places where people sort/retrieve their own mail by name of occupant. Putting all five census questionnaires into the single mailbox without apartment designators can cause confusion when trying to "attach" a questionnaire to each apartment, especially when non-response follow-up is required. The Census Bureau can avoid this problem by issuing specific instructions to field workers in the address canvass operation on how to label each apartment using descriptors (e.g. basement, 1F for 1 Front, 2B for 2 Back etc.).





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**Executive Director**
Mr. Arturo Vargas

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**Testimony**

**by**

**Arturo Vargas, Executive Director**
**National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials (NALEO) Educational Fund**

**before**

**the United States Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee**
**Subcommittee on Federal Financial Management, Government Information, Federal Services, and International Security**
**on Reducing the Undercount in the 2010 Census**

**Washington, DC**
**September 23, 2008**

WWW.NALEO.ORG

☐ 1122 W. Washington Blvd., 3rd Floor
Los Angeles, CA 90015
(213) 747-7606
Fax (213) 747-7664

☐ 600 Pennsylvania Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20003
(202) 546-2536
Fax (202) 546-4121

☐ 1314 Texas Ave., Suite 410
Houston, TX 77002
(713) 228-6400
Fax (713) 228-0606

☐ 110 Wall Street, 16th Floor
New York, NY 10005
(212) 480-1918
Fax (212) 480-1697

Chairman Carper, Ranking member Senator Coburn and members of the Subcommittee:
I am Arturo Vargas, Executive Director of the National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials (NALEO) Educational Fund. Thank you for the invitation to appear before you today on behalf of the NALEO Educational Fund to discuss how to reduce the undercount in the 2010 Census.

The NALEO Educational Fund is a non-profit, non-partisan organization that facilitates full Latino participation in the American political process, from citizenship to public service. Our constituency includes the more than 6,000 Latino elected and appointed officials nationwide. We are the leading Latino organization in the area of Census policy development and public education, and we are deeply committed to ensuring that the Census Bureau provides our nation with the most accurate count of its population.

The NALEO Educational Fund was actively involved in outreach to the Latino community for the decennial enumerations in 1990 and 2000. In 2007, we launched the "*ya es hora*" campaign ("It's time"), a comprehensive, multi-year effort to integrate Latinos into American civic life. Our Spanish-language media partners for the campaign include Univision, Entravision, and ImpreMedia, and our national partners are the National Council of La Raza, the Service Employees International Union on citizenship promotion and Mi Familia Vota Educational Fund on voter engagement. The first two phases of this effort involved mobilizing eligible Latino legal permanent residents to apply for U.S. citizenship, and then mobilizing Latino U.S. citizens to vote. In our next phase, after the November election, we will educate all Latinos living in the United States about the importance of being counted in the 2010 Census and promote participation in the enumeration process.

In addition, since 2000, we have served on the Secretary of Commerce's 2010 Census Advisory Committee, or its predecessor, the Decennial Census Advisory Committee, and we have participated in the Committee's discussions surrounding the planning for the 2010 enumeration. Through our strong relationship with our Latino leadership constituency, we have also become

very familiar with the types of Census data that public officials need to govern effectively, and some of the challenges they face in obtaining access to relevant data for their policy decisions.

Mr. Chairman, we need the 2010 Census to produce the most accurate count of our nation's population as possible. Census data are the fundamental building blocks of our representative democracy; Census data are the basis for reapportionment and redistricting. Policymakers at all levels of government also rely on Census data to make important decisions that affect the lives of all Americans. These data help make such determinations as the number of teachers that are needed in classrooms, the best places to build roads and highways, and the best way to provide health and public safety services to our neighborhoods and communities. The accuracy of Census data is also critical for the effective allocation of government funding for schools, hospitals and other vital social programs.

To secure an accurate count of our nation's population, an accurate count of the 45.5 million Latinos who are now the nation's second-largest and fastest-growing population group is imperative. An undercount of such a large segment of the U.S. population means a failed Census. An accurate count of the Latino community is necessary if we are to make sound policies for the economic, social and political well-being of the entire country.

Through our broad range of Census activities, we have gained a deep understanding of what must be done to ensure that Latinos are fully counted in the 2010 Census. We offer the following recommendations:

I. Congress must provide the Census Bureau with sufficient funding to prepare effectively for the 2010 enumeration. Census Day 2010 is less than two years away. The groundwork done in the final year before Census 2010 will, to a large extent, determine its success. To ensure a full count of our population, the Census Bureau must undertake several complex tasks well in advance of the enumeration. It needs a full year to print and address 130 million Census forms. It must open and staff hundreds of local Census offices across the nation. It must recruit and hire the several thousands of workers needed during the peak field operations. Next spring, workers

must canvass every block and road in the country to verify addresses. Any delay in preparations for these activities – even for a few weeks – will impair the Bureau's ability to conduct its Census operations effectively.

In addition, the Bureau faces a particularly daunting challenge with respect to its April 2007 decision to abandon plans to use wireless handheld devices ("HHC's") to collect information from individuals who do not return their Census questionnaires in the mail. The Bureau had initially hoped that their field workers could use these devices to relay information to headquarters obtained during follow-up visits with non-respondents. However, because of technological problems, the Bureau will not be using HHC's for this phase of the enumeration, and will revert back to "pen and paper" methods for its non-respondent follow-up. Thus, the Bureau must now undertake intensive preparations to switch back to this traditional system.

Reverting back to a paper-based system for non-respondent follow-up has important implications for the resources needed by the Bureau and its ability to achieve a full count of the Latino population. For example, the Bureau will need to print additional forms and maps for use in the follow-up operations. It will need to expand its storage facilities. The agency must also hire more enumerators than originally planned, and it will incur greater costs for the overall control system for the follow-up operations. The Bureau will have to intensify its efforts to find enumerators that can reach Latinos effectively – these workers must be familiar with their local communities, and for many Latino neighborhoods, they must be bilingual in English and Spanish.

To ensure that the Bureau can carry out its 2010 Census preparations in a thorough and timely manner, we urge Congress to fund the Administration's revised Fiscal Year (FY) 2009 request of approximately $3.2 billion. We are particularly concerned that if the Bureau does not receive the full amount of this funding, it will shortchange programs that it may consider less "essential" for the enumeration. For example, we believe it is critical that the Bureau develops outreach and education partnerships with community-based organizations that the Latino community trusts. In 2000, the Census Bureau worked together with national and local partners throughout the

nation to encourage Latinos to answer the Census. Our organization, together with schools, local faith institutions and other community groups, were particularly effective in reaching hard-to-count populations, such as immigrants and non-English speaking populations, who lack basic information about the Census or are fearful about the consequences of completing the Census questionnaire. We are particularly proud of the mail back response rates in several Latino-majority communities which were both a tribute to the effectiveness of the partnerships, and a demonstration of the sincere desire among millions of Latinos to make themselves count in 2000.

In order to build upon the successes in 2000, the Bureau and its partners need to lay a strong a strong foundation in 2009 for their joint efforts. The Bureau must identify these partners, develop or strengthen relationships with them, and provide the tools that will be needed for outreach work. The partners need to develop their organizational capacity and infrastructure, and to obtain the resources from philanthropic groups or other sources required to support their activities. Insufficient funding for the Bureau's Partnership Program will significantly weaken one of the most effective tools we have to help ensure the full participation of Latinos and other hard-to-count groups in the 2010 enumeration.

II. The Census Bureau must implement a communications and outreach plan that uses culturally-appropriate outreach materials and takes into account the special challenges in reaching certain Latino sub-groups. As the Census Bureau continues to develop and implement its communications plan for 2010, it must utilize the "best practices" for reaching Latino residents and ensuring that they respond to the enumeration efforts. The Latino community is comprised of many diverse national origin and subgroups, with residents whose origins include Mexico, Central and South America, and parts of the Caribbean. The Bureau must develop outreach materials and strategies that are culturally and linguistically appropriate for these groups. The Bureau's community-based partners can provide invaluable assistance for the agency's efforts in this regard.

It is also critical that the Bureau consult and work with Spanish-language media as it implements its communications plan. Spanish-language media are a trusted source of information for many

of the nation's Latino residents, and these media outlets have extensive expertise in reaching different Latino population groups.

In addition, the Bureau's communications and outreach plans must take into account the special strategies needed to reach rural residents. Many of these residents are migrant or seasonal farmworkers, with limited-English proficiency, who live in temporary or non-traditional housing. The Bureau's outreach plans for these residents must complement the special strategies it must employ to identify rural populations with special needs, and to implement enhanced enumeration efforts within these areas.

In order to achieve a full count in the 2010 enumeration, the Bureau must ensure that the contractor and sub-contractors for its communication plan have the resources necessary to effectively reach all of the diverse segments of the Latino community. These firms need to be able to meet on a regular basis with Latino organizations; create a wide range of promotional materials in language appropriate for Latino audiences; and utilize print, broadcast and digital media in their efforts. In order to accomplish all of the foregoing, the Bureau must provide sufficient funding for communications efforts that target Latinos.

III. Special strategies and preparations will be required to enumerate the nation's immigrant population. Our nation's current debate about the future of its immigration policy has created additional challenges that the Bureau must address in reaching the newcomer population. Some policymakers have adopted a divisive tone and tenor during this discussion, and several states and localities have implemented or are considering measures intended to create hostile environments for immigrants. Some of these measures require local law enforcement agencies to enforce federal immigration laws; others would require apartment owners to check the immigration status of potential renters. This has created a climate which will exacerbate immigrants' distrust of contact with government agencies, including the Census Bureau. Undocumented immigrants, legal permanent residents, and even U.S. citizens who live in households where family members have varying immigration statuses, will be discouraged from answering the Census. The anti-immigrant climate today will harm confidence in the

confidentiality of the Census, and will raise concerns among many residents that the Bureau will use the information they provide in a detrimental manner.

Thus, it is critical that the Bureau develop messages and strategies that effectively communicate the confidentiality of information provided by Census respondents. The Bureau itself must ensure that it reinforces public trust in this confidentiality by strictly adhering to its own privacy principles and mandates, including Title 13 – the Protection of Confidential Information; the Confidential Information Protection and Statistical Efficiency Act, and the Privacy Act of 1974, on the release of data on "sensitive populations" to law enforcement agencies.

In addition, the Bureau must work with agencies at all levels of government – federal, state and local – to promote public trust in the confidentiality of the Census. It is critical that the Bureau work with these agencies and educate them about the kinds of activities which will undermine public confidence and deter hard-to-count populations from participating in the 2010 enumeration.

IV. The Census Bureau must ensure that its Census 2010 workforce reflects the diversity of the nation's population. In order to accurately reach and count our nation's Latino residents in 2010, the Census Bureau must employ a diverse workforce, from its highest managerial positions to its field enumerators. First, the Bureau must strengthen its existing efforts to implement a well-designed and effective recruitment, retention and promotion plan to increase the overall number of Latinos at the Census Bureau. In addition, as the Bureau continues to open and staff its temporary regional offices, it must hire a diverse group of top managers to lead its regional operations.

As noted earlier, the Bureau must hire enumerators who are familiar with their local communities and their residents. For many Latino neighborhoods, these workers must be bilingual in English and Spanish. It is also likely that some individuals who possess the best skills to work as enumerators in the Latino community may not be U.S. citizens. We urge the Bureau to implement a waiver in its hiring practices that would allow work-authorized non-citizens

to take on enumerator positions. This is particularly important for regions of the country where the emerging Latino populations are comprised of large numbers of non-citizens and non-English speaking populations, such as the South.

V. The Census Bureau must be able to quickly adjust its plans based on the outcomes of the 2008 Dress Rehearsal. In 2008, the Bureau conducted its "Dress Rehearsal" in San Joaquin County, California, and several North Carolina counties, which provided the agency its only opportunity to test its integrated 2010 enumeration plan in a Census-like environment. The Dress Rehearsal featured new methods such as bilingual questionnaires and a targeted replacement mailing, new technologies, updated address lists and digital maps, and new strategies for reaching hard-to-count populations. The Bureau must now be ready to make final adjustments to the 2010 plans given the outcomes of the Dress Rehearsal.

For example, the Government Accountability Office (GAO) utilized observations made during the 2008 Dress Rehearsal, together with a review of Bureau and contractor data, to issue recommendations regarding the use of HHC's for address canvassing. (Although the Bureau has abandoned its plans to use HHC's for non-respondent follow-up, it still intends to provide these devices to workers to collect and transmit data when they are in the field verifying addresses). In a July 2008 report, the GAO raised several issues regarding the performance of the HHC's, and the Bureau's basis for determining when this new technology would be ready to meet the agency's operational needs. The recommendations also addressed the need for specific benchmarks and approaches for monitoring and evaluating HHC performance during address canvassing. We urge the Bureau to implement these recommendations as it plans further testing for the utilization of the HHC's, as well as any other "lessons learned" that emerge from its evaluation of the 2008 Dress Rehearsal.

Additionally, the Census Bureau did not include some components of its 2010 enumeration plan in the 2008 Dress Rehearsal. For example, according to GAO testimony before the House Subcommittee on Information Policy, Census, and National Archives delivered in June 2008, there was not a thorough testing of all aspects of the Bureau's non-respondent follow-up

activities during the Dress Rehearsal. The GAO notes that these activities are the single largest field operation in the 2010 Census, and it suggests that the failure to test them under Census-like conditions raises uncertainties about their impact on 2010 operations. We believe that the Bureau must carefully examine all of the key components of its 2010 operations which were not included in the 2008 Dress Rehearsal, and implement effective tests for the components as expeditiously as possible.

VI. Congress must reject any proposals which would prevent the full enumeration of every U.S. resident in the Census. As 2010 approaches, there have been legislative and policy efforts to exclude the undocumented from the Census enumeration. These proposals are contrary to one of the fundamental precepts of our Constitution, which calls for a full count of every person residing in the nation. In addition, they would result in an incomplete and inaccurate Census, which would deprive policymakers, businesses, researchers and the public of the accurate data needed to ensure our nation's future well-being and prosperity. We urge the Administration and all members of Congress to reject these flawed and dangerous proposals.

VII. The U.S. Senate must support a seamless and expeditious transition in the leadership of the Census Bureau once a new Administration takes office in January 2009. It is critical that there be no disruption in the continuity of Census 2010 operations with the advent of a new Administration. It is true that the various components of these operations will be overseen and carried out by career employees who will stay on regardless of changes at the White House. However, the head of the Census Bureau plays a key role by inspiring confidence and trust in the Bureau. Any delay in the Bureau's leadership transition will impair the agency's ability to keep its 2010 operations completely on track.

The NALEO Educational Fund remains committed to being an active and thoughtful partner to this Subcommittee, Congress, the White House and the Census Bureau, in ensuring the success of the 2010 Census, so that our nation can rely on the most accurate data possible. I thank the Chairman, the Ranking Member, and the Subcommittee once again for providing us with the opportunity to share our views today on reducing the undercount in the 2010 Census.

**Post-Hearing Questions for the Record**
**Submitted to The Honorable Steven H. Murdock**
**From Senator Tom Carper**

**"Reducing the Undercount in the 2010 Census"**
**September 23, 2008**

1. **How will the foreclosure crisis impact census address canvassing and the Census Bureau's master address file? How will the Census Bureau handle dwellings that are in foreclosure – will they be retained on the master address file or will they be removed from the list?**

The Decennial Census is both a census of population (occupants of housing units and other types of living quarters) AND a census of housing units. The fact that a particular home is in foreclosure, or is vacant due to a foreclosure, does not affect whether we retain an address on our Master Address File (MAF), nor whether we would add such an address to our file if the Address Canvassing operation discovered the address was not on our list already. We do not try to maintain the occupancy status of addresses on our file because this status can change over time and because we must enumerate all housing units, both occupied and vacant, as part of the decennial census.

2. **According to the Census Bureau, there are an estimated 39,000 local governmental units in the United States. Over 18,000 local governments participated in the Local Update of Census Addresses (LUCA) program for the 2000 Census. What is the Bureau's participation goal for the upcoming decennial?**

An evaluation finding about the 2000 LUCA program was that many small local governments faced challenges and barriers to participation due to lack of resources and expertise. To increase participation for the 2010 Census, the U.S. Census Bureau encouraged governments at all levels within a state to coordinate their LUCA Program participation. The opening up of LUCA participation to state governments further supported this strategy. The 2010 LUCA program began in March 2007, with the mailing of an advance notice announcement letter to the highest-elected official and other contacts in all active functioning governments. In July 2007, LUCA invitation letters and registration materials were mailed to the governments. From November 2007 through January 2008, approximately 11,500 governments completed their registrations and were shipped LUCA review materials.

A total of 24 states submitted address and/or map updates. Participants returned over 8,500 LUCA packages to the Census Bureau with address and/or map updates. By October 2008, these updates were integrated into the MAF and Topologically Integrated Geographic Encoding and Referencing geographic database. Though the number of participating governments is smaller than 2000, the Census Bureau

believes that planned 2010 Census assessments may well show that the geographic area covered by participants and number of addresses reviewed by participants will likely equal, if not exceed, that from the 2000 LUCA program.

3. **Under the Local Update of Census Addresses (LUCA) program, errors in the address list are found by participating local governments, corrected by the Census Bureau, and later added to the master address file. What options does a local government have if the Bureau does not accept these corrections?**

As noted in our answer to question number 2, the Census Bureau has reviewed and processed the 2010 LUCA submissions. The Census Bureau is now preparing to conduct the Address Canvassing (field check) Operation to update the entire MAF, while at the same time validating all LUCA-provided address updates and corrections. The 2010 Address Canvassing Operation, and the subsequent processing of the canvassing results, are scheduled to take place between April and August 2009. The Census Bureau, from early October to early December, will provide feedback material to LUCA participants detailing the Census Bureau's final determination as to each of their submitted address updates. If participants disagree with the Census Bureau's findings, they may file an appeal through an appeals process/office that will be established by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) outside the U.S. Department of Commerce (DOC). The LUCA Appeals Office will review and adjudicate all appeals by March 2010, in time for all upheld appeals to be included in the 2010 Census enumeration efforts.

4. **Two factors that will be vital to obtaining an accurate count in 2010 are public outreach and cultivation of trust. At a time when anti-immigrant sentiments are on the rise, when government data breaches seem to be occurring frequently, and when identity theft is an increasingly common crime, the Census Bureau must use every legal and viable means to instill public confidence in its ability to conduct a thorough Census without putting anyone's privacy at risk. What plans has the Bureau made to address any concerns that might arise during the 2010 Census?**

   Law and a commitment to protect the confidential information we collect, as follows, bind the Census Bureau:

   - We protect the identity of individuals and businesses, starting from the point at which the data are collected and continuing decades after the data are published as aggregate statistics.
   - By law, the Census Bureau cannot share respondents' answers with the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Central Intelligence Agency, Welfare, Immigration, or any other government agency. No court of law, not even the President of the United States, can find out respondents' answers. The same law prevents the Census Bureau from selling or giving away addresses.

- Census Bureau workers are sworn to secrecy. They know that if they give out any information, they can face a $250,000 fine, up to 5 years in prison, or both.
- The Census Bureau workforce understands that safeguarding confidential data—a core part of what we call "data stewardship"—is central to our ability to serve as the leading source of quality data about the Nation's people and economy.
- We continually research and upgrade methods and technology to safeguard data and protect confidentiality.
- The Census Bureau is transparent about the measures it takes to respect privacy and protect confidentiality. The public can find information about data stewardship on the Census Bureau's Web site at <http:///www.census.gov/privacy/>. Questions or concerns about the Census Bureau's protections can be directed to <Dir.Privacy.Office@census.gov>, or by calling 301-763-6560.
- A critical component of our Integrated Communications Program will be to convey this type of information to those who might be fearful of participating in a government survey. We will do this through such initiatives as paid advertising, and partnership efforts with trusted local leaders.

5. **In the past, the Census Bureau has worked with the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) (now United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS)) to refrain from conducting raids during non-response follow-up. What is the status of the Bureau outreach on these issues?**

The 2010 Census is required to count every resident—not just citizens—in the Nation. This is consistent with all previous decennial censuses. The U.S. Constitution mandates the decennial census. The first census law, the Census Act of 1790, was written two years after the Constitution was ratified, and instructed that all inhabitants living in the United States be counted. Since the first census was taken in 1790, the decennial census has enumerated all persons residing in the United States. Any subsequent law has not changed this mandate, and the Census Bureau does not ask about the legal status of respondents in any of its surveys and census programs.

The Census Bureau has never requested that the Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE; formerly INS) refrain from enforcing immigration laws. While previous Administrations sought to have law enforcement raids curtailed in the midst of decennial census field data collection activities, we respect ICE's stated position this decade that they will not suspend raids, even if a decision were made to ask them to do so. At the same time, the Census Bureau will continue to rely heavily on trusted individuals and organizations within hard-to-count populations to ensure those in their community that it's important, and safe, to participate in the 2010 Census.

6. **The Bureau is planning to mail bilingual Spanish/English census forms to neighborhoods with people who may need language assistance in Spanish. It is my understanding that the Bureau plans to send initial bilingual questionnaires to Spanish-speaking households, but does not plan to send bilingual questionnaires during the second mailing. Why is the Bureau not sending bilingual replacement questionnaires to households that received initial bilingual questionnaires and instead sending English-only questionnaires to these households? What is the Bureau doing to reduce confusion among these households?**

Based on work with our print contractors and others in the printing industry, the printing, assembling, and mailing of more than one type of replacement questionnaire, within a very short window of time, just is not possible or feasible. We also note than when we tested the use of a replacement questionnaire earlier in the decennial cycle, we saw no decline or adverse reaction to offering an English-only replacement questionnaire to households that had initially received a bilingual questionnaire. In fact, even when we used an English-only replacement questionnaire for households that initially received a bilingual form, we still saw a significant increase in response due to the use of that replacement mailing. Based on these tests, we do not anticipate that mailing an English-only replacement questionnaire will depress mail response rates.

7. **In September 2007, the Census Bureau awarded a $212 million contract to DraftFCB to coordinate its media and community outreach efforts. At a July hearing before the House Oversight Committee, officials from DraftFCB stated that they need an additional $68 million to conduct a communications campaign that is comparable to the 2000 campaign. They believed that the current budget did not take into account several factors, including media inflation, the increasing degree of difficulty caused by a more diverse population, and declining response rates. How did the Bureau determine that $212 million was the right amount necessary to advertise to the country? How were the funding levels for specific hard-to-count groups determined? What are these funding levels? What actions has the Bureau taken to provide the additional $68 million requested by DraftFCB?**

The initial budget for the 2010 Census communications contract was established early in the decade using the best information we had at the time—the planning numbers for the Census 2000 paid advertising contract. Since that time, the Census Bureau has awarded a contract for an integrated program, which included developing the high-level strategies for paid advertising, partnerships, special events, public relations, and Census in Schools. After full and open competition, DraftFCB was hired to develop and implement the communications program for the 2010 Census. As the DraftFCB plan has developed, and we work with stakeholders to review that plan, we are committed to working with the DOC, the OMB, and the Congress to ensure the communications program for the 2010 Census is both effective and efficient in

reaching the ever-growing and more diverse populations of our country. As I have testified, I am evaluating the funding levels for all aspects of the communications program, and the funding level for FY 2010 still is under consideration within the Executive Branch.

The table below reflects current thinking as of mid-November 2008, regarding the portion of the paid media budget that will be spent on the various audiences. These numbers are still under discussion within the Census Bureau and with our contractors. Additionally, these numbers do not reflect the total effort for each audience segment—only the amount of paid media.

*Comparison of Paid Media Dollars Between Census 2000 and the 2010 Census*
**Nov 2008**

| Target Market | Media Dollars Spent During Census 2000 | Estimated Media Dollars for 2010 |
|---|---|---|
| Diverse America | $57,916,000 | $72,543,000 |
| Black, including African and Caribbean | $17,021,000 | $26,720,000 |
| Hispanic | $18,886,000 | $26,717,910 |
| Asian | $10,016,000 | $10,677,472 |
| American Indian Alaska Native | $2,804,000 | $4,516,712 |
| Emerging markets | $1,508,000 | $2,124,000 |
| Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islanders | $147,000 | $2,829,606 |
| Puerto Rico | $1,298,000 | $3,301,300 |
| Island Areas | $422,000 | $0 |
| Production* | | $20,250,000 |
| **TOTAL** | **$110,018,000** | **$169,680,000** |

*Production costs were included in media allocations for 2000.

8. **The Bureau plans to recruit and test more than 3 million applicants in order to hire almost 1 million temporary employees for operations such as address canvassing and non-response follow-up. To reach the undercounted population the Bureau will need to hire a diverse workforce. What are the Bureau's plans for hiring a diverse workforce? Are there any initiatives in place that are specifically aimed at potential applications from hard-to-count communities?**

   An important goal of our recruiting efforts is to hire local residents to work in their communities and neighborhoods. This is particularly important for hard-to-count areas. The Census Bureau has developed successful strategies to recruit a

diverse workforce, including older workers and members of the Hispanic, African American, Pacific Islander, American Indian, Alaska Native, and Asian communities. Some of these proven strategies that will be implemented at the local level for the 2010 Census include:

- Promoting jobs through retirement organizations, volunteer, fraternal, and membership groups; faith-based and community-based organizations; mainstream and ethnic media (including cable and community access cable), and local and tribal governments

- Creating and maintaining grassroots contacts in all communities and providing tools to facilitate the application process, such as the practice test in English or Spanish

- Hiring thousands of temporary census recruiters (including bilingual workers) who reflect the composition of their neighborhoods and know how to motivate local applicants to apply for temporary census jobs. As an Equal Employment Opportunity employer, the Census Bureau promotes fair hiring practices

- Developing recruiting promotional materials and advertising in multiple languages.

Early analyses of the labor force, local pay rates, and local characteristics are essential, followed by a plan of action and strategies specific to every challenge. The Census Bureau will use our experience and data to create effective recruiting plans specific to each region and Local Census Office (LCO) area.

Additionally, we have developed the 2010 Census Integrated Tract Action Plan (Plan), which will assist in coordinating operational planning efforts, with recruitment, partnership, and enumeration strategies, at the tract level. The Plan includes, for each tract within an LCO (approximate total of 65,000 nationwide), an integrated strategy for staff to select appropriate tactics from a standard set of choices for recruiting, partnership, and enumeration. The choices would be regional/local decisions based on the mail return rate, total housing units, total hard-to-count score, and the associated 12 individual variables, local knowledge, or other relevant local factors. The Plan is especially useful with regards to identifying tracts where linguistic isolation may be a barrier to enumeration. The data is used to assist recruiters in identifying where to recruit for applicants who speak a particular language.

Special efforts are being made for the 2010 Census to ensure that recruiting strategies on federally recognized American Indian Reservations and Alaska Native Villages are successful. Recruiting for census workers will include culturally-appropriate promotional materials, liaisons appointed by the tribal leadership, and temporary census recruiters hired from American Indian Reservations and Alaska Native Villages, who understand how to encourage tribal

members to apply for census jobs. The Census Bureau also works closely with Alaska village elders to refer village residents for Census Bureau work in their areas. Procedures for field operations, including recruiting, were tested in 2006 to help shape plans for the 2010 Census. Initial plans indicate that recruiting for tribal census workers will include:

- Hiring Census Bureau recruiters from American Indian reservations and use them to motivate tribal members to apply for census jobs
- Having LCOs work closely with Tribal Liaisons who are appointed by the tribal leadership
- Designing culturally appropriate recruiting promotional materials for tribal communities.

9. **There has been some concern that partnership specialists were spread too thin in 2000, but that the Bureau is planning to hire roughly the same number – just under 700 in 2010. How will the same number of partnership specialists effectively reach out to an even larger population?**

The regional partnership program is intended to be very focused on the hardest to reach and count populations. We are committed to working with local communities, organizations, and other partners and stakeholders to ensure an effective deployment of partnership specialists. As mentioned above, regarding spending for the communications program (which includes the partnership efforts), the funding level for FY 2010 still is under consideration within the Executive Branch.

10. **Earlier this year, the Bureau announced that, for the 2010 decennial, it would fingerprint and conduct background checks on all temporary employees. In past decennials, the Federal Bureau of Investigation conducted background checks that required it to run workers' names through a criminal database to determine suitability. According to the Department of Commerce Inspector General, fingerprinting an estimated 1.3 million employees could cost hundreds of millions of dollars and would pose a tremendous operational challenge. Does the Bureau still plan to move forward on fingerprinting all applicants for address canvassing and non-response follow-up? When will it occur? How much will it cost? Are there funds in the FY09 budget amendment, other than the $10 million allocated for researching fingerprinting, for fingerprinting during address canvassing?**

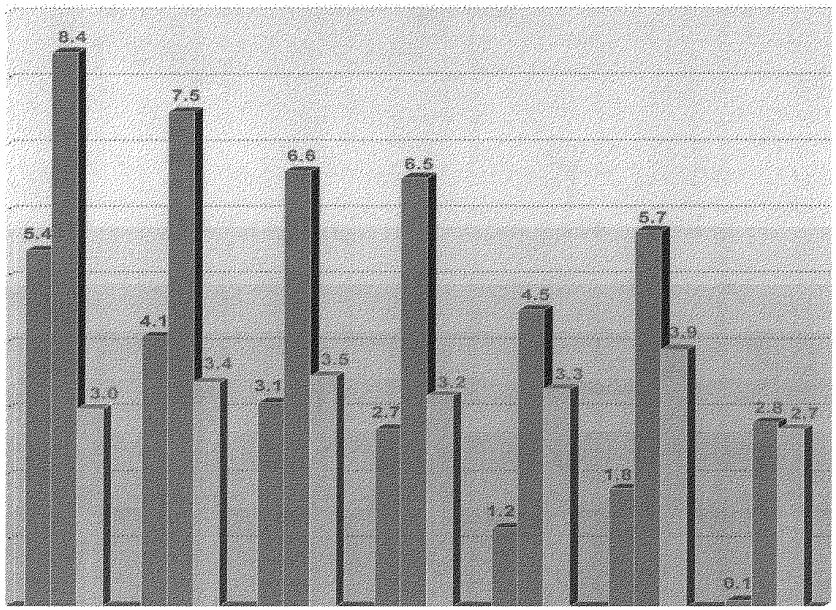
The Census Bureau still plans to conduct fingerprint-based background checks on all applicants. This effort already is underway as we hire staff for our Early Local Census Offices and prepare to hire staff for the Address Canvassing operation. We estimate it will cost $148.4 million over the life cycle to collect and process fingerprints from temporary hires. However, as we implement the program in FY 2009, we may discover the need for changes in the implementation of the

program that lead to changes in funding needs for FY 2010 and FY 2011. There is no additional funding in the budget amendment for fingerprinting, other than the $10 million cited in the question. However, we believe we can cover the costs of fingerprinting in FY 2009 using carryover funding from FY 2008.

11. **At our last hearing we discussed some of the problems that the Bureau had in managing the Field Data Collection Automation contract. Since then, the Bureau has decided to no longer use the hand held computers for non-response follow-up. The computers will, however, be used for address canvassing. The estimated cost of the Field Data Collection Automation contract has increased over the past few months, and at one time was reported to be around $1.3 billion. I am aware that the Bureau is in the process of renegotiating costs with the contractor, and as a result the final costs will be much lower than initially anticipated. How will the cost overrun affect funding for other programs such as the media campaign and the partnership program? Will funds be shifted to from other programs to help subsidize the additional costs?**

As you are probably aware, additional funding was appropriated in FY 2008, and additional funding was requested in FY 2009, so that the needs of the Field Data Collection Automation (FDCA) program and replan could be accommodated without significantly impacting the funding for other aspects of the census. We expect that sufficient funding will be requested in FY 2010 for all aspects of the 2010 Census, including the FDCA contract and the other efforts described in the question.

## Decennial Census Population Net Undercount Rates from Demographic Analysis: 1940 to 2000

| | Year | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 1940 | 1950 | 1960 | 1970 | 1980 | 1990 | 2000 |
| Total | 5.4 | 4.1 | 3.1 | 2.7 | 1.2 | 1.8 | 0.1 |
| Black | 8.4 | 7.5 | 6.6 | 6.5 | 4.5 | 5.7 | 2.8 |
| Difference: Black - Total | 3.0 | 3.4 | 3.5 | 3.2 | 3.3 | 3.9 | 2.7 |

# Decennial Census Population Net Undercount Rates from Demographic Analysis: 1940 to 2000