

**OPENING STATEMENT  
OF  
HON. MADELEINE Z. BORDALLO  
OF GUAM  
JOINT HEARING**

***Information Policy, Census, and National Archives Subcommittee  
Oversight and Government Reform Committee***

***Insular Affairs Subcommittee  
National Resources Committee***

***“CENSUS DATA: SPECIAL ISSUES RELATED TO U.S. TERRITORIES”***

*Wednesday, May 21, 2008  
2154 Rayburn HOB  
10:00 a.m.*

Good morning. First, I thank you, Chairman Clay, and you, Chairwoman Christensen, for convening this joint oversight hearing today to examine the issues affecting the fulfillment of the mission of the Bureau of the Census with regard to the territories. This is an important subject, because the work and products of the Census Bureau are routinely relied upon by decision-makers in both the public and private sectors to make informed decisions about finances, organization of resources, and employment, among other matters. The Census Bureau performs a critical role in the functioning of our society, and its work in partnering with the territories to collect and disseminate data deserves to be strengthened.

We know the Census Bureau has a long history, and that since its inception it has adapted to meet the needs and challenges of a growing country, and responded to emerging demands for information about demographic and socio-economic trends in population. The territories must not be left behind as the Census Bureau prepares the Decennial Census required by our Constitution, and its development of other special surveys.

The territories present unique challenges including multicultural and multilingual populations, as well as geographic disbursement of our populations, in some cases among several islands. Furthermore, there is a void in historical data for the territories. This makes sound public policy decision-making very difficult and sometimes results in disparities in treatment of Americans residing in the territories as compared with Americans residing in the 50 States under certain federal programs.

I look forward to the testimony today, and I am most interested in learning how the Census Bureau plans to address the important issues that the Governors and the Committees have raised. Further, I hope that Chairwoman Christensen, will keep the record open for written responses to some concerns and other Members may wish to

make regarding the work of the Office of Insular Affairs to conduct the enumeration of citizens of the Freely Associated States residing in Guam, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, the State of Hawaii, and American Samoa. I know that this enumeration is not the main focus of today's hearing, but it is nonetheless a relevant and timely issue, and I would appreciate the opportunity to receive responses for the record. Again, thank you Chairman Clay and Chairwoman Christensen, for holding this hearing and for your work on this issue of great national significance.