

## **Importance of the 2010 Census to the Nation**

Remarks by  
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April 4, 2008  
Los Angeles, CA

Good morning. It is great to be here. I want to start by thanking Jamey Christy for the invitation to join you all today.

And thank you all for sharing in our celebration of a historic process. In just 24 months, this nation, for the 23rd time since its founding, will conduct a National Census, as described in Article 2, Section 3, of the U.S. Constitution. Each decade, this civic event unites every resident of every neighborhood in every community as we participate in this important undertaking.

In 2010, we will need to count more than 300 million people living in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico and the Island Areas. That is over 130 million households, across four different time zones, and speaking a dramatically rising numbers of languages.

In contrast to prior decades, this Census will collect only short-form data, covering only seven topics, making it easier and faster to complete.

Based on our tests, nearly 70% of households will likely return the form in the mail, leaving millions of addresses for us to visit personally to conduct interviews with the residents. To do that, we will need to hire tens of thousands of temporary employees across the nation.

We cannot do this alone. Regional and local partners, like those here today, are key to helping us get the best workforce and the broadest possible participation in being counted. We need you to ensure a complete and accurate count. Your outreach efforts are particularly vital here in California, given the state's increasingly diverse and rapidly growing population.

The result of the monumental task we have before us translates into enormous political and financial consequences for each county, city and neighborhood. This is a serious responsibility for all of us.

As we do each decade, without exception, the national population count will be delivered to the President by January 1, 2011, for reapportionment of the seats in the House of Representatives, and the population for the 50 States and their jurisdictions will be delivered to the Governors and the State Legislatures by April 1, 2011, for redistricting the states and localities.

To ensure the success of our democracy, we must have an accurate head count. We need to count people once and only once, and in the right place.

Equally important, the Census population counts determine the distribution of Federal and State dollars to localities, some \$300 billion each year.

The work that this regional census center conducts from now through 2010 will help the census be thorough and accurate.

I welcome the people gathered in this room because your interest and participation are vital to this effort. We need your help in getting everyone to mail back the form when they get it, and for those that do not, to provide the information to our enumerators. Thank you in advance for that effort.

On behalf of my colleagues at the Census Bureau and the Department of Commerce, I am grateful for the opportunity to be here and share in the opening of the Los Angeles Regional Census Center and partnership kick-off.