

Sample Letter to Constituents

Dear _____,

This is in response to your letter of [Date], regarding your participation in the U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey (ACS).

The ACS is part of the 2010 Decennial Census Program. It is a survey that is sent to a small percentage of our population on a rotating basis. The ACS collects detailed information on the characteristics of population and housing on an ongoing basis. These data were previously collected only in census years in conjunction with the decennial census. During Census 2000 the Census Bureau asked for this detailed information from one in every six addresses. The ACS questionnaire collects nearly the same information and is sent to approximately the same number of addresses over a five-year period. However, since the ACS is conducted every year, rather than once every ten years, it provides more current data throughout the decade.

Questions in the survey are required to manage or evaluate federal and state government programs. For example, information about utilities is used by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, the U.S. Department of Energy, and the U.S. Department of Agriculture to administer their programs. Information on income is required for use by the Social Security Act, the National School Lunch Program, the Low Income Energy Assistance Program, and by the U.S. Department of Education for grant allocation.

This survey is conducted under the authority of Title 13, United States Code, Sections 141 and 193. Response to this survey is required by Section 221 of Title 13. The Census Bureau may use this information only for statistical purposes. Title 13 requires the Census Bureau to keep all information about you and all other respondents strictly confidential. Any Census Bureau employee who violates these provisions is subject to a fine of up to \$250,000 or a prison sentence of up to five years, or both.

If you need more information or have further questions about the survey, please call the Census Bureau's Customer Services Center on 1 (800) 923-8282.

Sincerely,