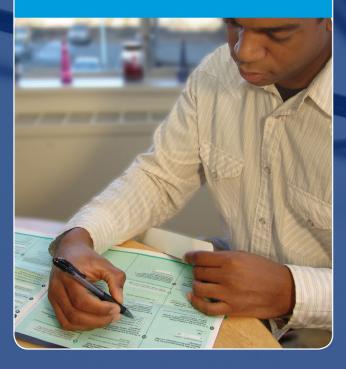
# "Take 10" <u>Turnkey</u> Kit:

Improving the 2010 Census Mail Participation Rate



IT'S IN OUR HANDS



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### **"TAKE 10" AND YOUR ROLE**

Thank you for playing an active role in the "Take 10" initiative. Your support of the 2010 Census is instrumental in inspiring people to fill out and mail back their census forms in a timely manner. The Census Bureau tracks the rate at which 2010 Census forms are returned by mail. This information can be a very powerful motivator in increasing mail participation, thereby decreasing the more costly workload of sending census workers to collect responses in person. The "Take 10" program is about communicating this participation rate information to the public in a motivational way as those rates change on a daily basis.

This initiative spans the most intensive time period of the 2010 Census campaign and your involvement is critical to achieving a complete and accurate count. This turnkey kit includes all the resources you should need to create your own "Take 10" program, conduct community outreach, issue an official "Take 10" challenge in your community, and engage the media to help promote the campaign and the importance of census mail participation. A number of customizable templates are available in the "Take 10" Turnkey Kit section of the 2010 Census Web site. (Look under the "Partners" tab in the "Toolkits" section.)

But first, here is some background on the initiative and information about your role.

### WHAT IS "TAKE 10"?

"Take 10" is a unique government initiative. The Census Bureau will provide all of America realtime data on actual census participation rates on a daily basis.

More than 130 million addresses will receive a 2010 Census form in March 2010. It is vital for each household to complete and return the form by mail so that everyone is counted. Census data are used to reapportion seats in the U.S. House of Representatives and for the subsequent redistricting of state and local governments. Census data also help to determine how more than \$400 billion per year in federal funding is distributed to tribal, state and local governments for services that affect local communities.

To help inspire as many people as possible to return their census form by mail, the U.S. Census Bureau has created the "Take 10" initiative. As part of this initiative, the Census Bureau will ask people to "take 10 minutes" to complete



and return their form by mail, and to do it quickly. After six weeks, in order to meet its statutory deadlines, the Census Bureau must stop accepting mailed forms and rely instead on census workers to go door-to-door to obtain any missing census responses in person.

### **"TAKE 10" TURNKEY KIT**



### WHY IS AN INCREASED MAIL PARTICIPATION RATE IMPORTANT?

Mailing back the form is the easiest and most efficient way to participate in the 2010 Census. An increased mail participation rate is critical to achieve lower overall costs of conducting the census. Obtaining census responses in person is expensive, and about \$85 million is saved for every one percentage point increase in the number of forms returned by mail. Additionally, responses on census forms that are mailed back tend to be more accurate than responses collected in person during follow-up operations.

During Census 2000, partners helped reverse a decades-long decline in mail participation rates. The national mail participation rate by the April 2000 cut-off date was 72 percent. The Census Bureau has closely studied factors affecting mail participation rates and knows that the hurdles faced today are even greater than they were in 2000. We also know that competition and a sense of urgency and responsibility can inspire action.

### WHAT IS MY ROLE?

As part of the "Take 10" program, we ask you – elected officials and Complete Count Committee (CCC) members – to challenge your community to exceed its own mail participation rate from Census 2000. As part of your challenge, you may want to consider engaging other communities or states and rally your community to outperform another community. This friendly competition will give your community a sense of civic pride and inspire people to participate in the 2010 Census. An interactive, Web-based map at 2010census.gov will allow you to track and publicize local mail participation rates on a daily basis, and compare those rates with other areas.

From the time the forms are delivered mid-March until the mail cut-off date six weeks later, the Census Bureau needs your support to inspire and remind people to return their forms in a timely manner. By initiating the "Take 10" program, you can help spread the word about the importance of "taking 10" and help to increase the mail participation rate in 2010. Utilize the resources in this turnkey kit to help you develop your mail participation rate challenge, announce the challenge to your community and inspire census participation.

# YOUR QUICK-START "TAKE 10" ACTION PLAN

### Where do you start?

### It's simple.

### Here – at a glance – is your "Take 10" action plan broken down into six steps.



### Familiarize yourself with 2010 Census messages.

Prepare yourself for media interviews, speeches, meetings and public appearances by familiarizing yourself with key messages about the 2010 Census and the "Take 10" initiative. (See page 8.)



### Enlist the support of groups and organizations in your community.

Approach businesses or other organizations in your community about using their signage to display mail participation rate numbers. Ask businesses to sponsor your challenge and provide rewards to your community if your mail participation rate goal is met. Also, attend local events, give speeches, reach out to Census Bureau partners and work with Regional Census Centers to spread the word about the importance and ease of mailing back the census form. (See page 10.)



### Work with the media.

Partner with the media and ask outlets to print or broadcast mail participation rate data and maps on a daily basis. Ask them to post "Take 10" Web resources on their Web sites. Submit an op-ed or letter-to-the-editor and record public service announcements (PSAs) about the importance of mailing back a census form. Give interviews and reach out to reporters about the mail participation rate challenge you initiated. (See page 12.)



### Issue a challenge.

Issue a challenge to your community to top its mail participation rate from Census 2000. Challenge a counterpart to see whose community can achieve a greater mail participation rate increase. You can make the challenges media-worthy by offering creative prizes. Please note that the Census Bureau does not provide or promise prizes. (See page 14.)



### Conduct door-to-door outreach.

Go to 2010census.gov and identify the areas of your community where mail participation rates are lowest. Conduct door-to-door outreach to encourage people to complete and mail back their census forms. (See page 17.)



### Announce mail participation rate challenge winners.

The Census Bureau will provide the last mail participation rate update on May 3, 2010. At that time, obtain coverage for your local efforts through a press event announcing the local mail participation rate results and celebrating the winner of your challenge. (See page 18.)



**"TAKE 10" TURNKEY KIT** 

### **"TAKE 10" PROGRAM TIMING**

Now that you have your plan outline, here are some key dates with outreach ideas:	
February 2010	Develop your individual "Take 10" outreach plan. Reach out to local businesses, community groups and media outlets about publishing and displaying daily mail participation rate data tables and maps. Also, work with broadcast outlets to record public service announcements. Participation rates from Census 2000 will be posted on the 2010 Census Web site (2010census.gov) for you to see.
March 2010	Issue "Take 10" challenges to other communities, cities or states.
March 1, 2010	Ask the media to start airing your "Take 10" PSAs.
March 15, 2010	Census forms are mailed. Host a local press event to introduce the "Take 10" program and formally issue the challenge.
March 22, 2010	Send out a local media advisory, announcing that daily data reporting has begun. Reach out to media outlets and encourage them to issue daily updates and reminders.
March 22 - May 3, 2010	Mail participation rate data is available daily. Embark on community/door-to- door outreach efforts to areas where mail participation rates are lagging. Share information about resources to help members of your community fill out their form, such as the availability of replacement forms, Questionnaire Assistance Centers and Language Assistance Guides. Issue "tweets" or short e-mail blasts to media with daily mail participation rate developments.
May 3, 2010	Host press events to announce the results of "Take 10" challenges. Thank the community for participating and encourage those who did not fill out their forms to cooperate with census workers when they come to their door. This is important: cooperative respondents will help streamline follow- up operations.

"TAKE 10" TURNKEY KIT

# **STEP 1: FAMILIARIZE YOURSELF WITH 2010 CENSUS MESSAGES**

The census is the largest domestic mobilization our nation undertakes. We must count everyone once, and only once, and in the right place. A complete census count is needed to ensure accurate allocation of funding as well as representation in the U.S. House of Representatives. To ensure a successful 2010 Census, we must increase the mail participation rate. To do so, we must spread the word that mailing back a form is the easiest and most effective way to participate in the census.

The Census Bureau cannot do this alone. We rely on partners, like you, to help us get the word out. We look to you to engage your community and the media, explain the benefits of the census and encourage people to mail back their forms.

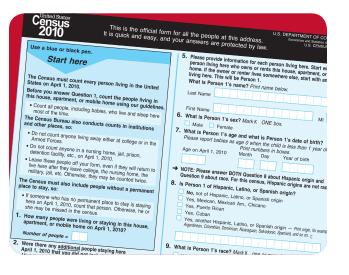
You are a trusted member of your community, and when you speak, people listen. You can help us overcome the strongest barriers to participation and shine light on the benefits an accurate count can bring to your community.

Whether dealing with the media, reaching out directly to members of the community or participating in a "Take 10" challenge, you can deliver messages that will inspire people to take part in the 2010 Census. You can help them understand that mailing back their form is easy, important and safe.

### USE THE FOLLOWING MESSAGES TO SPREAD THE WORD:

### Census participation is easy.

- Mailing back your form is the easiest way to participate in the 2010 Census.
- One of the shortest census forms in U.S. Census history, the 2010 Census form asks 10 questions and takes about 10 minutes to complete.
- Census forms will be delivered or mailed to households in March 2010.
- Upon receipt, complete and return the census form in the postage-paid, return envelope. Responses to the census form should include everyone living at your address; relatives and nonrelatives.
- Census workers will visit households that do not return forms to take a count in person.



### Census participation is important.

- Everyone in the United States must be counted. This includes people of all ages, races and ethnic groups; citizens and noncitizens.
- Census data determine how more than \$400 billion per year in federal funding is distributed to tribal, state and local governments.

### Census participation is safe.

- By law, the Census Bureau cannot share respondents' answers with anyone, including other federal agencies and law enforcement entities.
- All Census Bureau employees take an oath of nondisclosure and are sworn for life to protect the confidentiality of the data.
- The penalty for unlawful disclosure is a fine of up to \$250,000 or imprisonment of up to five years, or both.



### MESSAGES FOR "TAKE 10" ADVOCATES:

- I'm challenging my community to improve upon their Census 2000 mail participation rates because it saves money and ensures an accurate count.
- Join me in taking 10 minutes to mail back your form. It is important to our community because data collected help determine locations for new schools, hospitals and roads. It also will determine how we are represented at all levels of government.
- ▲ About \$85 million is saved for every one percent increase in mail participation.
- ▲ The Census Bureau saves \$60-\$70 per census form that is returned by mail.
- High mail participation rates reduce the number of census workers who must go door-to-door to collect census data.

# STEP 2: ENLIST THE SUPPORT OF GROUPS AND ORGANIZATIONS IN YOUR COMMUNITY

To improve the mail participation rate in your area, you must communicate directly with people in your community. During February 2010, approach businesses and other local organizations to discuss ways in which you can work together to raise awareness of the 2010 Census and the "Take 10" initiative. Some ideas include:

- Ask businesses or other organizations about using their signage to post "Take 10" messages and daily mail participation rate data. Local community centers, train and bus stations, stadiums, arenas and quickservice restaurants are ideal spots for displaying this information. They typically have highly visible signs they can easily update. Businesses without access to large signs can still help spread the word by posting daily updates and other "Take 10" messages on their Web sites. All of this information, including special maps showcasing participation rates, can be found at 2010census.gov.
- Attend local events such as sporting events, festivals, flea markets, parades, farmers markets and fairs. Give speeches or talk to the public about the importance of "taking 10."
- Work with Regional Census Centers to identify Census Bureau partners in your area, meet with them and supplement their efforts.
- Approach local businesses about providing a prize or reward to their customers if the Census 2000 mail participation rate is topped. Rewards could include such things as an hour of free coffee, a 10 percent shopping discount on a particular day, a free performance by a local music or theater group, or free movie tickets to children.

- Leverage your Web site or social networking sites to interact with members of your community.
- Work with local "celebrities" to record PSAs that can motivate the public to pay attention and participate in the "Take 10" initiative.



### USE THE FOLLOWING RESOURCES TO HELP WITH YOUR OUTREACH:



### Web resources

Leverage the Web to educate and interact with people in your community. Refer to the sample Web site copy in this toolkit and ideas for sharing information on social networking sites, such as Facebook, Twitter and MySpace. Web resources are available as separate electronic files in the kit.

#### Sample speech and talking points

Reach out to people in your community and tell them how important it is to mail back their form. Incorporate talking points and information about the 2010 Census and the "Take 10" initiative into speeches or tailor the sample speech to fit your event. The sample speech and talking points are available as a separate electronic file in this kit.

#### Sample newsletter content

Use the sample copy in your own communications or share it with business and community groups to include in their own newsletters. You can customize the copy to include statistics about your area's mail participation rate, update your community on your challenge or provide information about upcoming events. The newsletter copy is available as a separate electronic file in this kit.

### Poster and flier templates

Use the poster and flier templates to create your own materials. Add information about local events or include inspirational messages to encourage people in your community to mail back their form. Distribute them to local businesses and community groups or display the posters and fliers in high-traffic areas. The flier and poster templates are available as separate electronic files in this kit.

# **STEP 3: WORK WITH THE MEDIA**

The media can help you reach members of your community and draw attention to the "Take 10" initiative. Use the media to promote a specific challenge or simply spread the word about the 2010 Census and the importance of mailing back the census form. Here are some tips on how to work with the media:



- In February 2010, approach media outlets and ask them to print or broadcast mail participation rate data tables and maps on a daily basis between March 22 and May 3, 2010. Data tables and maps are available on 2010census.gov.
- Work with broadcast outlets to record PSAs about the importance of mailing back a census form. These should start airing on March 1, 2010.
- Provide content to reporters such as matte releases/drop-in articles, op-eds or letters to the editor.
- Alert the media about any "Take 10" challenges initiated in the area. Remember to mention creative prizes.
- Participate in interviews about the importance of the 2010 Census and encourage your community members to complete and mail back their forms.

# THIS TURNKEY KIT INCLUDES SEVERAL RESOURCES TO HELP WITH YOUR MEDIA OUTREACH:

### Sample press releases and media alert

Use these releases to explain the importance of mailing back a census form and to announce a "Take 10" challenge. Share the releases with local media, post them to Web sites and share with internal and external audiences. Customize the releases to include your own quotes, area mail participation rate statistics and information about local events and mail participation rate challenges. Please do not adjust the quote from the Census Bureau Director. The news releases are available as a separate electronic file in this kit.

### Sample PSA scripts

PSAs are an easy and effective method to encourage members of your community to mail back their census forms. Available as a separate electronic file in this kit, this document contains sample scripts of varying duration. Customize the content as you see fit. As a community leader or elected official, you can record these PSAs yourself or work with local "celebrities," from DJs and news anchors, to athletes and musicians, to record and air the PSAs.

# Sample letter-to-the-editor, drop-in/matte article and op-ed

Reach out to editors and reporters and offer the drop-in/matte article to help them frame their stories. Submit the sample op-ed to a local publication to garner coverage on the editorial page. Submit the letter-to-the-editor to respond to articles the publication recently ran about the 2010 Census. The sample drop-in/matte article, letter-to-the-editor and op-ed are available as separate electronic files in this kit.

#### **Talking points**

Set up interviews with print and broadcast outlets to discuss the "Take 10" initiative, a local challenge and the importance of mailing back census forms. Available as separate electronic files in this kit, these talking points will help you prepare for media interviews.





### **STEP 4: ISSUE A CHALLENGE**

To generate excitement and create a buzz about the 2010 Census, we encourage you to issue mail participation rate challenges to your community.

By creating friendly and fun "Take 10" competitions with creative prizes awarded at the end, your community will become more engaged in and educated about the census process. We want to provide motivation for completing and returning the form and inspire a sense of civic pride. Additionally, the uniqueness of these challenges will garner media attention, which will in turn create further awareness about the 2010 Census.

### BELOW ARE SOME TIPS ON EXECUTING MAIL PARTICIPATION RATE CHALLENGES:

# Determine what kind of challenge you want to issue.

We have separated challenges into two categories: a locally-based challenge where the community must top its own Census 2000 mail participation rate, and a competitive challenge where one CCC or elected official challenges a counterpart to see which community can achieve a larger mail participation rate increase than its own Census 2000 rate.

### Identify an appropriate counterpart.

Make sure the competitive challenge involves peers at the same level. For example, governors should challenge governors, a state CCC should challenge another state CCC, mayors should challenge mayors and so on. Since 2000 mail participation rates varied widely throughout the country, you may want to challenge an area that had a comparable rate to your own to make it more competitive. You can conduct that research at 2010census.gov. Your challenge can also gain added interest by building on pre-existing relationships built around sports rivalries, similar industries or geographic proximity.



# How do I identify a competitor?

Build off rivalries, such as:

- Battle of the twin cities (St. Paul vs. Minneapolis, or Dallas vs. Fort Worth)
- Dairy state vs. dairy state (Wisconsin vs. California)
- Sports city vs. sports city (Boston vs. New York, or Chicago vs. St. Louis)
- Fashion industry vs.
  fashion industry
  (New York vs. Los Angeles)
- Citrus state vs. peach state (Florida vs. Georgia)

### **"TAKE 10" TURNKEY KIT**

### Offer a creative prize.

To generate excitement around the challenge and make the competition media-worthy, offer a creative prize to the winner. For locally-based challenges where communities are simply competing against their own Census 2000 rates, work with businesses to offer prizes for people in the area, such as free goods or discount prices. Please note that the Census Bureau does not provide or promise prizes.

### Determine the goals for each locale.

Regardless of the type of challenge issued, locales should compete to exceed their own mail participation rates from Census 2000. The winner of the challenge is the one with the greatest improvement. In areas where data from Census 2000 are not available, the challenge should be designed to beat the Census 2000 mail participation rate of 72 percent, which was the national rate as of the April 2000 cut-off. Go to 2010census.gov to see your area's 2000 mail participation rates.

### Leverage the media.

Issue a press release and media alert outlining your challenge and explaining the prize. Host a press conference with the competing CCC or elected official. Conduct interviews about the benefits of participating in the 2010 Census, the ease of mailing back census forms and the status of your challenge. Provide daily updates on the mail participation rates to media outlets for inclusion on Web sites, in print and on broadcast news programs. Page 13 describes the media outreach tools available to you as separate electronic files in this toolkit.

### What's the prize?

For locally-based challenges, partner with a business to provide free coffee for an hour, a free performance by a local music group, free movie tickets or a 10 percent shopping discount.

For prizes in the competitive challenges, members of CCCs or elected officials could offer to serve as a mascot in a peer's local parade, perform a community service in the winning community or deliver a supply of goods for which one area is famous. Possibilities include: New England clam chowder, Wisconsin cheese, Kansas City barbecue sauce, Washington apples or California raisins.

# Connect with your community through social media.

Establish a profile on social media sites, such as Facebook, MySpace and Twitter, to communicate directly to the public. Build excitement, encourage participation, provide regular updates on the mail participation rates and drive people to 2010census.gov. Encourage people to share stories about helping raise awareness about the 2010 Census.

### **"TAKE 10" CHALLENGE SAMPLE SCENARIOS**

### USE THESE SCENARIOS TO HELP EXECUTE YOUR CHALLENGE.

### **Competitive challenge in action**

Wanting to leverage her county's competitive nature to encourage people to mail back their census forms, county executive Jane Doe, the head of the largest orange-growing county in Florida, issued a challenge to county executive Joe Smith, her peer in Georgia's largest peachgrowing county. The challenge stated: whichever county achieved the greatest increase over their 2000 mail participation rates would win a truckload of produce from the other county to be donated to a local food bank. Once agreeing to the challenge, Jane and Joe issued press releases outlining the challenge and providing information on the importance of mailing back census forms.

For a month, Jane and Joe issued daily updates about the mail participation rate and inspired their communities through a mix of media outreach, online social networking and public signage. Then, each held a press conference to announce the challenge winner and final mail participation rate numbers. Joe's county won because the county's 2010 mail participation rate exceeded the 2000 mail participation rate by five percentage points (65 percent in 2000 and 70 percent in 2010). Jane's county only improved the mail participation rate by four percentage points (70 percent in 2000 and 74 percent in 2010). Later that week, Joe Smith accepted delivery of the prize, a truckload of oranges, at the county's main food bank.

### Locally-based challenge in action

Wanting his city to improve its mail participation rate from Census 2000, Mayor Pat Jones knew he needed to challenge his community. Jones approached local businesses and asked them to provide rewards to the people of the city if the mail participation rate in 2010 topped the 2000 numbers. On March 15, 2010, the day of the census form mail-out, Jones held a press conference and issued a news release challenging the city to increase its mail participation rate. He stated that, if the county achieved its goal, The Coffee Café would offer free coffee to the city's residents from 9 a.m. to noon on May 8. In addition, Discount Cinema would offer free movie tickets to the first 100 children who visited the theater on May 9.

For the next few weeks, Jones issued daily updates about the mail participation rate and inspired people to mail back their forms through a mix of media outreach, online social networking and public signage. At a press conference on May 3, 2010, Jones announced that the city had met its mail participation rate goal. The city achieved a 68 percent mail participation rate in 2010 compared to a 66 percent mail participation rate in 2000. As a result, the local coffee shop would give out free coffee the following Friday morning, and the local movie theater would provide free tickets for children under 12 the following Saturday.

# **STEP 5: CONDUCT DOOR-TO-DOOR OUTREACH**

From March 22 through May 3, 2010, daily mail participation data will be available at 2010census.gov both in table and map form. You can view the Web-based maps at nine different levels of detail: national, state, county, city, consolidated city, municipality, congressional district, minor civil division and collection tract. Use these maps to determine which areas in your community have the lowest mail participation rates and focus door-to-door outreach there.

This turnkey kit contains the following resources to aid in your door-to-door outreach:

### Poster and flier templates

Use the poster and flier templates to create your own materials. Add information about local events or include inspirational messages to encourage people in your community to mail back their form. Distribute or display the posters and fliers in high-traffic areas. The flier and poster templates are available as separate electronic files in this kit.

### Door drop flier

Designed to inspire and encourage people to mail back their census forms, distribute the door drop flier at residences in areas of low mail participation rates. The door drop flier is available as a separate electronic file in this kit.

### Stickers

Print out the "I took 10 in 2010" stickers and give them to members of your community who completed and returned their census forms. Similar to the "I voted" stickers distributed on Election Day, these stickers serve as both an acknowledgement and a reminder about completing and returning census forms. These stickers are designed to be printed on 1.5" diameter white labels, such as Avery® #8293 for inkjet printers. Labels are widely available at local office supply stores. The sticker template is available as a separate electronic file in this kit.



# STEP 6: ANNOUNCE MAIL PARTICIPATION RATE CHALLENGE WINNERS

The Census Bureau will provide the last mail participation rate update on May 3, 2010. At that time, you should hold a press conference to share your area's mail participation results as well as announce the winner of your challenge.



Prior to May 3, 2010, issue a media alert to local outlets announcing your plan to hold a press conference. On the day of the press conference, distribute a press release with the mail participation rate and detailing the challenge prize. During the press conference, provide specifics about the prize and thank the members of your community for participating. Also, use the press conference as an opportunity to encourage those who did not mail back a census form to cooperate with the census workers who will take the count in person.

The customizable media alert and press release are available as separate electronic files in this kit.



THANK YOU FOR PARTNERING WITH THE CENSUS BUREAU. TOGETHER WE CAN INSPIRE EVERYONE TO "TAKE 10" FOR AN ACCURATE 2010 CENSUS.

"TAKE 10" TURNKEY KIT

# **REGIONAL CENSUS CENTER CONTACT INFORMATION**





### Atlanta Phone: 404-865-1119 Web: census.gov/atlanta Regional director: George Grandy, Jr.



### Boston Phone: 617-223-3800 Web: census.gov/boston Regional director: Kathleen Ludgate



### Charlotte Phone: 704-936-4269 Web: census.gov/charlotte Regional director: William Wayne Hatcher



Chicago Phone: 312-454-2714 Web: census.gov/chicago Regional director: Stanley D. Moore



Dallas

Phone: 512-864-4855 Web: census.gov/dallas Regional director: Gabriel A. Sanchez



Denver Phone: 720-475-3677 Web: census.gov/denver Regional director: Cathy L. Illian



Detroit Phone: 313-396-5144 Web: census.gov/detroit Regional director: Dwight P. Dean



**Kansas City** Phone: 816-994-2100 Web: census.gov/kansascity Regional director: Dennis R. Johnson

### Los Angeles







**New York** Phone: 212-356-3263 Web: census.gov/newyork Regional director: Lester A. Farthing



**Philadelphia** Phone: 215-717-1060 Web: census.gov/philadelphia Regional director: Fernando E. Armstrong



Seattle Phone: 425-908-3002 Web: census.gov/seattle Regional director: Ralph J. Lee