

**PREPARED STATEMENT OF**  
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**Before the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs**

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Chairman Johnson, Ranking Member Peters and members of the Committee, thank you for inviting me to be with you today. I appreciate the support of the U.S. Senate and this Committee's commitment to the U.S. Census Bureau's preparations to conduct the 2020 Census. Speaking for myself and Census Bureau career leadership—we are highly confident that we are on track to achieve a complete and accurate census. Our mission is to count every person living in the United States once, only once, and in the right place. To do this, we must have disciplined people, disciplined thinking and take disciplined actions. We also need to have the right people in the right place doing the right things. We are most appreciative of the support provided by Secretary Ross, this Administration and the Congress. With your continued support, I am confident that we will remain on course to achieve our shared mission of conducting a complete and accurate count of all persons living in our nation.

Thank you for your ongoing efforts to reach out to the constituents you serve and encourage their participation in the 2020 Census. You are vital, trusted voices to your constituents, and they in turn represent trusted voices within their communities. We rely on trusted voices to help make sure everyone living in America knows that participating in the 2020 Census is safe, easy, and important. In this regard, we continuously remind everyone that the Census Bureau is legally required to keep all responses strictly confidential. The Census Bureau has an outstanding record stretching back many decades for keeping responses strictly confidential not only as a matter of law, but also as a matter of organizational culture and professional practice.

Recently, Secretary Ross sent a letter to all members of Congress to encourage that they become 2020 Census partners with the U.S. Census Bureau to encourage participation among your constituents. We followed up with a Congressional Toolkit, offering specific options to reach out to your constituencies. Your staffs have been working with ours collaboratively and productively. We commend their important efforts.

We also could use your help in telling your constituents that we are now recruiting for temporary and term positions. When we conduct our field operations, we hire locally. Please help us find the people we need to hire for the 2020 Census by directing your constituents to [2020Census.gov/jobs](https://2020Census.gov/jobs).

We have made many improvements and innovations over the past decade to prepare for the 2020 Census. We are making progress and experiencing successes that increase our confidence that we will conduct a complete and accurate count. Among the improvements and innovations since 2010 are the following:

- Better technologies and improved processes for canvassing neighborhoods and developing complete and updated address listings and maps;
- New options for responding—by internet, phone or traditional paper forms;
- More language assistance than ever before;
- Expanded and more efficient customer assistance phone centers with instant assistance in English and 12 non-English languages and multi-lingual resources that reach 99.6 percent of our population;
- Hiring nearly twice as many partnership specialists to recruit more than 300,000 partners to help us reach hard-to-count populations;
- Better technologies and more efficient processes for enumerators;
- A very sophisticated and greatly expanded media campaign with new ways to reach people and communities, including hard-to-count populations; and
- Advanced information technologies, security safeguards and privacy protections to strengthen confidentiality protections and practices.

These innovations and our time-tested operations have increased our confidence that we are prepared to continue upholding the Census Bureau's outstanding record of professionalism and security.

The remainder of my testimony will address selected priorities and improvements, and other issues of special interest to the members of this Committee.

### **Regarding the President's Executive Order**

We are reviewing the President's Executive Order carefully to determine the next steps as we work to implement it. I look forward to chairing the inter-agency working group that will be established. The Census Bureau has decades of professional expertise on the methodologies and processes for obtaining and using administrative records for statistics. Above all, as clearly stated in the President's Executive Order, we will maintain the confidentiality of our census data. All census responses and any data sources we obtain will be kept confidential and data will only be released in an aggregated, anonymous format. Title 13 protections apply, and data come to the Census Bureau on a one-way street. No confidential or individually identifiable data is returned to any agency, including law enforcement.

### **Reaching the Hard-to-Count**

Congress has long recognized the need to focus on reaching the hard-to-count (HTC) populations across the country, and I know a complete and accurate count depends on reaching those communities more effectively than ever before. That is our key focus in conducting the 2020 Census. Recently, I have had opportunities to visit communities with HTC populations around the country and have seen firsthand that they are present in every state and every congressional district. HTC areas include urban, suburban and rural areas. All states (plus Washington, DC, and Puerto Rico) have specific challenges and needs in reaching HTC areas and groups, and Census Bureau employees and partners are employing new technologies and working smarter and harder than ever before to meet them.

Recent visits where I have participated include northern and southern border areas; city and rural areas in South Carolina, Georgia, and Tennessee, and higher-density urban areas including various boroughs of New York City. A number of these trips have been with Members of Congress, such as when we toured with Senators Udall and Henrich in New Mexico, including border communities and Native American areas such as the Navajo Nation. We have partnered with your staff leadership, such as when I was honored to visit the Chairman's state of Wisconsin and the Ranking Member's state of Michigan. In Detroit, we had a very productive meeting with local officials that included Congresswoman Brenda Lawrence. That visit also included Sunday morning visits to the HTC areas of the city that have experienced the nation's largest declines in population in 50 years—more than one million residents. I

have other trips in the works and look forward to them, as we at the Census Bureau make plans to document HTC needs. On these visits, Census officials and I are learning directly from local partners and stakeholders what needs exist and what innovations and options will assist. Many of the best ideas are coming from local communities.

Our comprehensive communications and partnership efforts focus on educating and motivating members of communities designated as HTC areas (or tracts) because of their relatively low self-response rates in prior censuses. We have documented these areas and will track them continuously while executing the 2020 Census through our web-based Response Outreach Area Mapper (ROAM) tool, which is available to the public. Additionally, the Census Bureau will reach these communities as part of our Non-Response Follow-Up (NRFU) operation should we not receive self-response after numerous mailings.

According to our research, many people in some HTC communities question how responding to the census will make any difference in their personal lives. Also, some populations generally may not be aware of the scope and purpose of the census. Other households may be hard to count because they have concerns about data confidentiality and privacy in dealing with the government.

Our communications campaign is designed to address these concerns. Our advertising team is developing messaging to emphasize the safety of answering the 2020 Census and the tangible benefits for local communities. We will highlight that census data influence how hundreds of billions of dollars in spending at the federal, state, and local levels will be used. This data helps shape innumerable decisions made by the public, private, and not-for-profit sectors daily. For example, during a recent trip to Georgia, we heard from a community that intends to generate participation in the 2020 Census partly because they would like to have population data to make the case to attract a particularly large retail store. Besides government funding policies and practices, job creation and a better quality of life are factors driving grassroots efforts to ensure a complete count in the rural, suburban and urban communities.

We emphasize to all persons and groups that we do not share responses with anyone, including law enforcement. Our messaging will connect the participation in the census to local community needs (e.g., health, education, social services, infrastructure and economic development). Our efforts to motivate respondents to self-respond will continue throughout our operations. During our peak operations in 2020,

we will be able to allocate resources to areas of greatest need by tracking self-responses in real time and identifying wherever self-response rates may be falling below targets. Below are some highlights of how we will reach selected hard-to-count populations.

### **Children**

The final report for the 1850 Census noted that undercounting children has been a concern since the very first census. We have made many improvements since 1850 and several improvements since 2010 to address past experiences in undercounting children, particularly children under the age of five. Our outreach efforts will emphasize the need for respondents to identify and include young children. Messaging about the importance of including all children living in a household will be woven into the communications campaign. The Census Bureau is partnering with national and local education and childcare-related organizations to use other avenues to reach families, teachers, and social service providers and others. We have improved the questionnaire to include more prompts about including young children.

Our improved and expanded efforts to reach hard-to-count populations reach far beyond our communications campaign. The efforts are embedded into how we conduct 2020 Census operations. For example, to ensure we count young children, we are training enumerators to ask specific and probing questions about the presence of children when conducting interviews. They will ask households to make sure that all children are included regardless of living arrangements, including foster children, children living with grandparents, and other living situations.

### **Persons in Rural Areas**

We have plans for rural and other hard-to-count areas that do not have adequate broadband access. Using data from the American Community Survey and the Federal Communications Commission, we identify these areas with lower Internet access, as well as areas with a large proportion of households that are not likely to use the Internet (such as the elderly). We will include a paper questionnaire in our first mailing for these specific areas. Every non-responding household will receive another paper questionnaire on the fourth mailing. The telephone option is also available. In areas without well-established mailing addresses linked to locations (PO boxes, rural routes, etc.), we will hand deliver questionnaires and make sure we know where to follow up if the households do not respond. Additionally, we verified in our 2018

test that our enumerators will be able to use their handheld devices in low connectivity areas, and simply “sync up” once they return to areas with connectivity.

### **American Indian and Alaska Native Populations**

The Census Bureau has conducted 17 tribal consultations with federal and state recognized tribal governments to discuss planning, operations, and communications for American Indian and Alaska Native communities for the 2020 Census. In addition, we will hire local enumerators who understand and represent these communities. We hired tribal partnership specialists earlier in the decade, compared to 2010, to work with tribal nations to appoint tribal liaisons, and to form tribal complete count committees.

### **People Experiencing Homelessness**

We also have specific operations to count persons experiencing homelessness. We work with shelters, soup kitchens, and other service organizations to count the people they serve, and we send enumerators to outdoor areas where people may be staying. In Hawaii, I recently observed the challenges of counting transient persons living outdoors along shores.

### **People Speaking Languages Other than English**

In 2020, we will have more language assistance than ever before for a census. People can respond on the internet and over the phone in English and 12 non-English languages, covering more than 99 percent of all households and 87 percent of limited-English-speaking households. This is an increase from the five languages offered for self-response in 2010. Language guides and additional support materials will be provided in a total of 59 languages. Bilingual, Spanish-English paper materials will be mailed to areas with large numbers of Spanish-speaking households. The advertising, partnership, and promotional materials will be available in English and 12 non-English languages at a minimum. Finally, enumerators are trained in obtaining assistance as needed for those very small populations who only speak a very rare language (i.e., a language that is used in about 1,000 residences or less nationally).

### **People Affected by Natural Disasters**

Unfortunately, our nation has experienced several recent natural disasters. In areas affected by natural disasters, the Census Bureau converts its enumeration operations to “Update Leave,” where Census

Bureau employees deliver questionnaire packages by hand. We are doing this for all of Puerto Rico; hurricane-impacted areas in Northwest Florida (such as Mexico Beach); and Paradise, California, where many housing units were destroyed by fire. This procedure enables residents to respond to the 2020 Census in any of our three modes, by internet self-response, phone, or mail. We update address locations and information and, for those who do not respond, follow up to collect data in our Non-Response Follow-Up Operation. If there are other natural disasters between now and Census Day, we will adapt our plans to facilitate a complete and accurate count in the affected places.

We are aware that some individuals who do not have a usual home elsewhere may be living in transitory locations such as hotels, motels, and temporary areas with FEMA trailers. In these cases, the 2020 Census will implement the Enumeration at Transitory Locations operation specially designed to count transitory populations.

There are many more populations that are hard-to-count. The ones mentioned describe some of the operations we will undertake to reach them. We would be happy to return and brief you or your staff on any other populations of interest.

### **Protecting Confidentiality**

As much as we are passionately committed to counting every person living in America, we are equally committed to protecting the confidentiality of their individual responses. Confidentiality is a core part of the Census Bureau's culture, and we reinforce privacy safeguards across all statistical programs and activities. Title 13 of the U.S. Code provides the strongest protections. The law requires responses to Census Bureau surveys and censuses to be kept confidential and used only for statistical purposes. The same protections apply whether the data are sourced directly from surveys or obtained from other agencies. All staff working at the Census Bureau, whether they regularly work with confidential information or not, take a lifetime oath to protect the privacy and confidentiality of respondent information. Unlawful disclosure is a federal crime punishable by a \$250,000 fine, five years in prison, or both. We do NOT share confidential, personally identifiable information with any other agency, including law enforcement at any level, the Department of Homeland Security, or anyone else. The Census Bureau uses all responses and any data sets obtained from other agencies only to produce anonymous statistics.

We take every precaution to keep individual responses confidential, and we are adopting cutting-edge technologies and methodologies to protect the 2020 Census data. The Census Bureau is planning to adopt disclosure avoidance methods considered by experts to be the gold standard for modern privacy protection in computer science and cryptography. We are resolved to use the best available technologies and methods to protect the privacy and confidentiality of every respondent. Data from the 2020 Census will be protected to prevent disclosure and retain the trust of the American people.

### **Cybersecurity**

The American public must trust that we will protect the data they provide. We have designed our cybersecurity program to protect our networks and systems, ensuring they remain resilient in the face of persistent and evolving cyber threats. A key feature of the security is encryption of data at every stage—in transit over the internet, at rest within our systems, and on the enumeration devices. Also, enumeration devices are secured with multiple credentials, and if a device is lost, it will be remotely disabled and have all its contents wiped.

Our cybersecurity program is designed to adapt and respond to a changing threat landscape. We incorporate protections in our technology, have processes to continuously monitor systems, and have a team ready to respond immediately to any potential threat.

The Census Bureau works with the Department of Homeland Security, the federal intelligence community, and industry experts to share threat intelligence, giving us the most visibility possible to enable immediate action to protect data. With this cooperation, we identify threats early so that we may proactively respond and improve security.

Our developers and security engineers work together to integrate security into systems design and development. Our systems are independently assessed for cybersecurity before deployment, and ongoing testing of cybersecurity capabilities is conducted throughout the time systems are operational.

Security staff monitor our systems for cybersecurity vulnerabilities with industry-leading tools. We continuously test for more than 100,000 known vulnerabilities, with thousands of new potential

vulnerabilities added to the list as on a regular basis. If a vulnerability is identified, or security enhancement required, the security team will act quickly to ensure the most effective security posture.

In the case of an incident, our team will respond immediately to any perceived threat, determine the cause of the threat, and minimize the potential impact to our data and systems. We monitor for web traffic across our systems and are able to take immediate action to detect and contain unusual activity. The systems are designed to contain threats, maintain performance, and to be resilient ensuring respondents are able to continuously respond safely to the census.

### **Systems Readiness**

Our progress with system security is enhanced by our progress with systems readiness. In the 2018 End-to-End Census Test, our systems worked well and integrated effectively, and we are continuing to prepare all 52 systems necessary for the 35 operations by performing robust testing for security, functionality, and scalability. Along with the successful deployment in the 2018 End-to-End Census Test, we have successfully tested the internet self-response system to handle well beyond current projections of concurrent respondents expected at any given time, and we can quickly scale up even further to prevent delays for respondents, as needed.

### **Address Canvassing**

Address Canvassing, our first major field operation that puts the finishing touches on the Master Address File, begins in August 2019, and will continue through October. Approximately 40,000 staff around the nation will verify around 35 percent of our address file. Our in-field canvassing activities are designed to discover housing units whose status could not be clearly determined from in-office work. The remaining addresses have been verified over the decade with an in-office review of satellite imagery, data from the US Postal Service, and other sources. We have also received substantial, and much appreciated, input from tribal, state, and local governments in the Local Update of Census Addresses (LUCA) program. Submissions to LUCA covered 95.7 percent of the population and 95.5 percent of the housing units, surpassing participation from 2010. All these updates together will give us the most accurate and complete address list and maps ever for a census.

## **2020 Communications Campaign**

Motivating households to respond directly to the census themselves is one of the most important things we can do. Self-response saves money and resources and provides better data.

The 2020 Census will benefit from the most robust public communications and partnership campaign in the history of the decennial census. All told, our outreach efforts are designed to reach into every community in the country through paid advertising, public service announcements (PSAs), partnership materials, our innovative Statistics in Schools program, special events and more.

We developed our integrated outreach campaign based on an extensive communications research effort. The Census Barriers, Attitudes and Motivators Study (CBAMS) survey, with a sample size of 50,000 and 42 focus groups, examined communication challenges, and the motivators that could overcome them. More research, including surveys, focus groups, and community representative interviews have helped the 2020 Census refine its messaging, and have guided the development of advertisement and campaign materials. The research underlying the 2020 Census communications campaign is far beyond the norm for industry.

The theme of our campaign, “Shape Your Future. Start Here” has tested very well across all audiences. By communicating the importance of participating in the 2020 Census to local communities, we hope to overcome many barriers that inhibit participation.

We are currently negotiating our national advertising buys. Our media planning at the local level also is well underway. We will spend most of our media campaign dollars at the local level, allowing us to target many different populations and communities, including those in rural areas. The 2020 Census campaign will be seen and heard across every media channel imaginable—from TV, to radio, to bus stations in cities, on billboards along country roads, and through social media platforms. We conducted a wide-open and fair process to receive bids from media companies. We will have media running in Puerto Rico and every designated market area across the country.

Today, we are in the early awareness and education phase of our campaign. We are recruiting partners, national, state, and local. Starting in January, you will begin to see and hear our advertisements, as we

commence the “awareness” phase of our campaign. We want everyone to know that the 2020 Census is coming.

In March 2020, we will begin inviting households to respond to the 2020 Census through a national mailing and hand delivery in parts of the country impacted by natural disasters or other special circumstances. We will activate our online instrument at the time and begin accepting responses by phone. At that point, our media campaign will be focused on motivating people to respond to the 2020 Census and directing them how to do it.

Note that every household will receive a full paper form to respond to the 2020 Census if they have not already responded. Some will receive it in their first mailing, based on areas with low internet access or populations such as the elderly who may not be inclined to respond online. Initial mailings will notify residents in a dozen languages how to obtain further assistance if needed.

In May 2020, we will continue to invite response to the 2020 Census, also reminding Americans that we will begin our Non-Response Follow-Up operation. Our campaign will make sure the public knows that enumerators will soon greet them at their doors if they have not responded.

### **National and Local Partnerships**

Partnership is a critical part of our outreach campaign. We are aggressively recruiting partners to be trusted voices in local communities and at the national level to motivate people to respond. We have hired more than 1,500 partnership specialists at the local level, compared to 800 in 2010. They are working to establish an estimated 300,000 volunteer partnerships at the local and regional levels, focusing on diverse racial, ethnic, religious, and other communities. Among the states, we have near complete participation in our program to form state complete count committees, which has been a major focus for the 2020 Census, building on lessons learned about their effectiveness in 2010.

We also got an earlier start on our National Partnership Program, securing more than 275 national partners and allies to date. Key national partners include the AARP, the American Library Association, the Boys and Girls Clubs of America, the Annie E. Casey Foundation, Partnership for America’s

Children, the National Association of Latino Elected Officials, the National Urban League, the National Black Chamber of Commerce, Volunteers of America, and more.

### **Budget Certainty**

Regarding Census 2020 funding, we are confident the appropriations from Congress to date and the budget request for Fiscal Year 2020, if fully funded, will provide the funding necessary for success. The FY 2020 budget request included \$6.3 billion for the 2020 Census and is in line with the overall operational cost estimate. The timing of funding is key to maintaining our schedule as we move into FY 2020. To remain on schedule, we must have certainty regarding the FY 2020 appropriations at the beginning of the fiscal year. In response to a congressional appropriations request, the Census Bureau submitted a proposal to establish mobile response units—in essence mobile Questionnaire Assistance Centers—where Census Bureau employees would assist individual respondents in hard to count areas fill out their census response online. If funded, we anticipate that this operation could provide key support with enumerating the hard to count population.

### **Cooperation with the Government Accountability Office (GAO)**

The Census Bureau has worked closely with GAO throughout the decade, and their contributions have supported our preparations for the 2020 Census. Earlier this year, I met with Comptroller General Eugene Dodaro and his key staff to discuss our placement on the High-Risk list, which recognizes the scope, complexity, and importance of the 2020 Census. We talked through the Census Bureau's commitment to GAO's key components of a healthy program, and the improvements we have made in areas of vulnerability cited by GAO in their audit: *Lifecycle Cost Estimation, Operational Innovation, and Cyber Security/Systems Readiness*. While work remains ongoing, we have closed 75 of the 106 recommendations made by GAO throughout the decade, and action plans are in place for most of the rest. Our work with GAO will help ensure a successful 2020 Census, and we want to continue our strong and constructive relationship.

## Closing

I want to close with our main message: the census is EASY, SAFE, and IMPORTANT.

It is easy because for the first time, you can self-respond online, by phone, or on paper through the mail. These new options create new efficiencies, relieve burdens, and reassure people that assistance is but a phone call away. Using the new technologies (i.e., internet and phones in addition to paper), it will be the easiest census to respond to in our nation's history. People can reply almost anywhere, at any time.

It is safe because we are using the best technologies and practices to protect data confidentiality and reduce cybersecurity risks. For the 2020 Census, like all of our statistical programs, we will follow the strict federal law protecting the confidentiality of census responses from every person. That is simply how we do business in the Census Bureau—no exceptions.

It is important because the count is used to apportion seats in the House of Representatives; to allocate hundreds of billions in federal funds to state, and local governments; and to guide critical decisions by communities, governments at all levels, businesses, and many others. Especially since the advent of the information age and the recognition of the importance of data-driven policies and practices, the important uses of accurate population data increase daily.

In conclusion, Congress and this Committee are critical and valued partners as we accomplish a complete and accurate count. I look forward to our continued work together. Thank you for your continued support. I will be glad to answer your questions.