

# Alaska Tribal Leaders Meeting

## Director's Remarks as Prepared for Delivery

October 19, 2022

- Good afternoon, everyone. I am Robert Santos, Director of the U.S. Census Bureau. I'd like to give my sincere thanks to all the tribal leaders and their representatives for taking time to join us today.
- I want to particularly thank Nicole Borrromeo (*vice-chair and legal counsel for Alaska Federation of Natives*), who we are very familiar with at the Census Bureau, and I thank you for your service on the Census National Advisory Committee.
- I also want to thank Nicole for getting us on the agenda, and for inviting myself and our census staff to discuss the AIAN data products from the 2020 Census.
- I arrived in Alaska on Saturday and had a wonderful visit with the Sitka Tribal Council to hear their concerns from the 2020 Census and our American Community Survey. And yesterday, we held a tribal consultation hosted by the ANCSA Regional Association in which we gave updates on our 2020 American Indian and Alaska Native data products and the Federal Register Notice that we released in August asking for public input on the 2030 Census.
- We welcome future tribal consultations with your tribe and village council, and I am glad we have been invited here today to provide you information and hope you can help us with your input on our 2020 AIAN data products.
- It's so important for the Census Bureau to hear input from the communities that use our data, I know that your time is valuable, and I look forward to your thoughts and feedback during this conversation.
- We want you to know that these sessions are very important to us at the Census Bureau.
- We recognize that we need to listen more and to listen continually. Our work with you is of the highest importance, and we seek to strengthen our nation-to-nation relationships with all tribes.
- We're committed to providing the quality data you need, data that your communities rely on.
- We deeply value your participation as an American Indian and or Alaska Native data partner and your feedback on our data products.
- For example, we are in the early stages of planning for the 2030 Census and your input is critical. I encourage you to provide feedback now, through the Federal Register Notice that posted on August 17, 2022, we also have staff here today that can help provide you more information about this important endeavor.
- Your input will help inform our decisions for the next census, including our research, testing and design. With ideas from the tribes and other communities across America, we are aiming to better reach and count historically undercounted people, overcome challenges and encourage everyone to respond to the 2030 Census.
- It is very important to receive your input early in the decade and to hear from as many people and communities as possible. As we get closer to 2030, we'll be much more limited in what we can change. Once we have an operational design—in 2024—we will dedicate our efforts to building and procuring the infrastructure to support, test, and refine it. Now is the best and most impactful time to hear from you.

- We're confident that by working together, we can make progress in a way that meets your needs and helps the Census Bureau produce useful statistics about the Alaska Native population. I welcome future invitations and opportunities to talk with you about how our data can better serve your communities.
- Once again, thank you so much for having me. I appreciate your support and look forward to receiving your ideas. We look forward to a continued partnership with you and all our tribal partners.
- I want to turn it over now to Roberto Ramirez and his staff to give you information on the important aspects of participating in our ongoing American Community Survey.