

Now is the Time to Start Planning for the 2010 Census

Written by Tony Aiello
Wednesday, 26 August 2009 09:47



Norwalk~The one year countdown to the 2010 Census has begun, and the U.S. Census Bureau is looking to national, tribal, state and local officials, corporations and community leaders to ensure an accurate count. With Census Day quickly approaching - April 1, 2010 - the Census Bureau has already launched a critical national effort that affects the apportionment of congressional seats, and how the federal government annually allocates more than \$300 billion in federal funds to state, local and tribal governments. The participation of community leaders, organizations and local governments can help make the 2010 Census the most accurate in Census history.

The 2010 Census will have one of the shortest census questionnaires since the Census process began in the United States in 1790. The 2010 Census will ask for name, gender, age, race, ethnicity, relationship and whether the householder owns or rents their home. The ten questions will take approximately 10 minutes to complete and the answers will affect people's lives for the next ten years. All personal information collected by the Census is protected by law and strictly confidential.

More than 11,000 state, local and tribal governments have registered for the Local Update of Census Addresses (LUCA) program to update the Census Bureau's address information for their communities. Communities have also begun planning for Complete Count Committees, a team of local government, business and community leaders, who are appointed by a governor for a statewide committee, by a community's highest-elected official for a local committee, or by large corporations that reach large numbers of people within the



communities they serve. Members of the committees work to make sure their communities are counted. During Census 2000, more than 11,800 Complete Count Committees were formed to help develop and implement locally based outreach and recruitment campaigns.

Preparing early for the 2010 Census is a great way for local leaders to learn the makeup of their communities and what they need from local government. Reasons for residents to be aware of the upcoming census and the need to participate are:

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- The federal government uses Census numbers to allocate more than \$400 billion in federal funds annually for community programs and services, such as education, housing and community development, health care, services for the elderly, job training and more.
- State, local and tribal governments use Census information for planning and allocating funds for new school construction, libraries and other public buildings, highway safety and public transportation systems, new roads and bridges, location of police and fire departments, and many other projects.
- Community organizations use census information to develop social service programs, community action projects, senior lunch programs and child-care centers.
- The numbers help businesses identify where to locate factories, shopping centers, movie theaters, banks and offices - activities that often lead to new jobs.
- The Census totals are used to determine how many seats each state will have in the U.S. House of Representatives. In addition, states use the numbers to allocate seats in their state legislatures.

For information about forming a Complete Count Committee, contact a Census Bureau Regional Office at < <http://www.census.gov/field/www> >. More information about the

2010 Census can be found at < <http://www.census.gov/2010census> >.