

# **The 2020 Census:**

## **Why Ensuring A Fair and Accurate Count Matters**

July 18, 2017

*Co-sponsored by*

**CENTER ON  
POVERTY and  
INEQUALITY**  
GEORGETOWN LAW

**CHILDREN'S  
LEADERSHIP COUNCIL**  
Invest in Children. Strengthen America.

  
COALITION ON HUMAN NEEDS

  
The Leadership  
Conference  
The nation's premier  
civil & human rights coalition

**Terri Ann Lowenthal** is a nationally recognized expert on the U.S. census. During a 14-year career as a congressional aide, she was staff director of the House census oversight subcommittee from 1987-94, and has advised the Census 2000 Initiative and The Census Project, Funders Census Initiative, The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights and business and industry data users.



**William O'Hare** has more than forty years of experience in statistical analysis of social and demographic data. Previously a Senior Consultant with the KIDS COUNT Project at the Annie E. Casey Foundation, Bill is the author of *The Undercount of Young Children in the U.S. Decennial Census* (SpringerBriefs in Population Studies).



**Corrine Yu** is Managing Policy Director of The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights and The Leadership Conference Education Fund, and previously served as Director of Special Projects and Director of Education for the Leadership Conference. Before that, Corrine was Director and Counsel for the Citizens' Commission on Civil Rights. She is a leader in efforts to protect and improve the accuracy of the census.



**Deborah Weinstein**

Executive Director,  
Coalition on Human  
Needs

Moderator



**Terri Ann Lowenthal** is a nationally recognized expert on the U.S. census. During a 14-year career as a congressional aide, she was staff director of the House census oversight subcommittee from 1987-94, and has advised the Census 2000 Initiative and The Census Project, Funders Census Initiative, The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights and business and industry data users.



# THE 2020 CENSUS:

## WHY ENSURING A FAIR AND ACCURATE COUNT MATTERS

July 18, 2017

# THE 2020 CENSUS IS STARTING NOW ...

- In 2.5 years ... 2020 Census operations start
  - 3 of 6 Regional Census Centers already open
- In 8 months ... peak 'dress rehearsal' operations start in Providence Co., RI
  - Recruitment ongoing; address canvassing next month
- By April 1, 2018 ... submit census questions to Congress
  - Major revisions?
    - Combined race and ethnicity question
    - New Middle Eastern/North African (MENA) category
    - New same-sex partner and spouse categories (household relationships)
- This week ... state, local, & tribal governments start registering for Local Update of Census Addresses (LUCA) program
  - Review/verify/update address lists: Feb.–May/June 2018
  - Housing unit counts have been posted publicly in advance

9

## GOALS FOR A "NEW" CENSUS: MODERN, CHEAPER, & ACCURATE

1. Promote Internet as primary response option
  - Other response modes: telephone and paper questionnaire
2. Use previously collected government data & commercial data to update 70% of address list and count some unresponsive households (replacing door-to-door visits)
1. Automated, streamlined field operations
  - Half the number of local (area) census offices compared to 2010 (~250)
  - Half the number of census takers/field staff compared to 2010 (~300,000)

10

## POLICY & OPERATIONAL CHALLENGES: *A perfect storm?*

- Insufficient annual funding (appropriations)
  - Congress: "Cap 2020 Census cost at 2010 Census level"
  - Admin funding request for FY18 (~\$1.5b) unrealistically low
  - At risk: census operations specifically designed to reach hard-to-count communities
  - Complex new IT system already over budget
- Threat: amendment to add citizenship & legal status questions
- *Climate of fear* threatens participation in many communities
- Technology challenges: Cyber-security and digital divide
- Resignation of Census Director: *leadership vacuum*
- Threat: amendment to make ACS response voluntary

11

## *THANK YOU!*

### Questions?

Terri Ann Lowenthal  
Census Consultant  
TerriAnn2K@aol.com

12

**William O'Hare** has more than forty years of experience in statistical analysis of social and demographic data. Previously a Senior Consultant with the KIDS COUNT Project at the Annie E. Casey Foundation, Bill is the author of *The Undercount of Young Children in the U.S. Decennial Census* (SpringerBriefs in Population Studies).



---

# Census: Why Ensuring a Fair and Accurate Census Matters

Dr. William P. O'Hare  
July 18, 2017

## Topics to be covered

- Who is undercounted in the Census?
- Why are they undercounted?
- What can we do about it?

15

## Who is undercounted in the Census?

- The importance of differential undercounts
- Many long-standing differentials

16



### 2010 Census Percent Net Undercount by Age, Sex, and Tenure

	Net Undercount Rate
U.S. Total	0.01
Young Children (age 0 to 4)	-4.60
Elderly (age 60+)	1.75
Males	-0.83
Females	1.08
Renters	-1.09
Home-Owners	0.57
Source: U.S. Census Bureau	
Note. In this table undercounts are denoted by a minus (-) sign.	

17

### 2010 Census Estimates of Percent Net Undercount by Race and Hispanic Origin

	Net Undercount Rate
U.S. Total	0.01
Non-Hispanic White Alone	0.83
White*	0.54
Black*	-2.06
Hispanic	-1.54
Asian*	0
American Indian and Alaskan Native*	-0.15
On Reservations	-4.88
Indian Areas Off Reservations	3.86
Balance of U.S.	0.05
Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander*	-1.02
Black Males age 30-49	-10.02
Hispanic Males age 30-49	-5.12
* Race Alone or in Combination	
Source: U.S. Census Bureau	
Note. In this table undercounts are denoted by a minus (-)	

18

# Other At-Risk Groups

- Immigrants
- People in low-income households
- The undocumented population
- People who don't trust government
- Those who do not speak English well
- The homeless
- Those without internet access
- Highly mobile groups
- People living in poor neighborhoods in large cities
- Selected rural areas (Indian Reservations, Border Counties, rural black belt in the South)

19

## Why are they undercounted?

- Many reasons – no single answer to this question

20

# Some reasons people are undercounted

- Housing unit not on Census Bureau's Master Address File (MAF)- Local Update of Census Addresses (LUCA)
  - Multi-unit buildings
- People not included on returned census questionnaire
- Residence rules are unclear – complex households
  - “residentially ambiguity” where do they really live
  - “Usual place of residence” concept used in Census
- Fear of government – resist responding
- Highly mobile populations – renters
- Language issues

21

## What can be done in the 2020 Census?

22

# Framework for addressing 2020 Census?

- W. P. O'Hare (2016) Five Steps for Reducing the High Net Undercount of Young Children in the 2020 Census, *The Census Project*,

<https://censusproject.files.wordpress.com/2015/12/oharepaper-five-steps-for-reducing-child-undercount-summer2016-8-16-2106-final.pdf>

23

## 3 Main opportunities to have impact

- Census Bureau operations
  - Questionnaire design, focus on HTC neighborhoods, call back procedures, use of internet, use of administrative data, etc.
- Census advertising/outreach/partnership
  - Census partnership program
  - Census complete count committees
- Outreach independent of the Census Bureau
  - “trusted voices” in the local community
  - Culturally sensitive messages
  - Local support in places that are familiar

24

## New resources from The Leadership Conference (<http://civilrights.org/census/>)

- Resources from The Leadership Conference
  - Prototype for young children
  - Fact Sheet with overview of problem and issue
  - Tables for states, large cities, and congressional districts
- Use for advocating with leaders
  - Need for Census Bureau funding
- Use for targeting outreach efforts
- Use for raising public awareness--media

25

# THANKS

Contact Information  
Bill O'Hare  
[billohare1@gmail.com](mailto:billohare1@gmail.com)

26

**Corrine Yu** is Managing Policy Director of The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights and The Leadership Conference Education Fund, and previously served as Director of Special Projects and Director of Education for the Leadership Conference. Before that, Corrine was Director and Counsel for the Citizens' Commission on Civil Rights. She is a leader in efforts to protect and improve the accuracy of the census.



The Leadership Conference  
on Civil and Human Rights



## **The 2020 Census: Why Ensuring A Fair and Accurate Count Matters**

**July 18, 2017**

**Corrine Yu**

## What's at stake?

- Equal representation: apportionment and redistricting
- Fair allocation of public, private resources - \$600 billion
- Implementation, monitoring, and enforcement of civil rights laws
- Inform policy debates and decisionmaking
- Consequences of a “bad” census are too high to ignore: disproportionately high undercounts that skew statistics for the next 10 years

## It's not too late!

- Urge Congress and the administration to provide adequate funding
- Urge nomination of nonpartisan, qualified Census Bureau director and quick confirmation
- Urge Congress to oppose harmful riders (addition of citizenship/legal status questions; making ACS voluntary)
- Engage with national, state, and local groups with the census

## We can help!

- The Leadership Conference's Census Task Force; Census "kitchen cabinet" for state groups
- Materials available at [www.civilrights.org/census](http://www.civilrights.org/census)
  - *Counting for Dollars*; analysis of the use of Census-derived data by 16 large federal programs
  - Hard-to-count fact sheets
  - Citizenship and immigration questions fact sheet
  - LUCA (Local Update of Census Addresses) fact sheet
  - Census Toolkit

## Thank you!

Corrine Yu

The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights

[yu@civilrights.org](mailto:yu@civilrights.org)

[www.civilrights.org](http://www.civilrights.org)