

# National Urban League Conference

## Director's Remarks as Prepared for Delivery

July 22, 2022

- Good morning, everyone. It's an honor to be here.
- The National Urban League is a valuable, longtime partner to the Census Bureau.
- I'd like to start by thanking you for all you did to help the 2020 Census.
- You informed communities about the importance of the Census, and they listened. They listened because of the effective advocacy work you do on behalf of Black people. They listened in the midst of a Pandemic and had a brutal impact on communities of color. They listened as our country was coming to terms with the deaths of George Floyd and others.
- Indeed, the year 2020 posed a challenging time to launch a census of our population, but that was the Census Bureau's constitutional charge. And that is exactly what we did.
- But we couldn't have done it alone. We benefitted from the critical help of the National Urban League and other partners. The degree of success we did attain was in large part due to the contributions of your organization and those of other partners. We want to acknowledge your leadership and support... We sincerely thank you.
- Now, the Census Bureau is committed to excellence. We strive for continuous improvement, knowing that all of our statistical products can prove to be highly useful, even though they—like all statistical products—are inherently imperfect.
- The Census Bureau has always produced statistics that offer insight by controlling and understanding uncertainty and error. Data from the American Community Survey can be used to reveal the plight of Black people and communities, revealing inequities in areas such as health, education, housing, employment, wealth, and other policy areas. We provide sister agencies economic data to produce unemployment rates, job creations, wages, inflation, even the data for safety net programs like SNAP, WIC, school lunches, and so on.
- Collectively, our data allow us to know who we are as a nation, and that's critical for our democracy.
- We operate by leveraging our values of scientific integrity, objectivity, independence, and transparency. We also embrace the principles of diversity, equity inclusion and accessibility.
- But let me to focus on transparency.
- Transparency motivates of our assessments of the quality of our statistical products. Communicating the strengths and limitations of our data actually increases their utility. These assessments also provide important insights for improving future data collections.
- To illustrate our transparency, consider our due diligence in documenting the quality of the 2020 census.
- Thus far, we've:
  - Released several assessments of operational quality metrics
  - Commissioned three separate assessments by independent experts
  - Conducted and released findings from a Demographic Analysis and a Post Enumeration Survey
  - And there's more to come.
- Now, our post enumeration survey indicated that people of color were yet again undercounted, but this time at higher levels than in 2010.

- We recognize our obligation to reverse that trend, particularly among young adult Black men.
- We want to work with National Urban League and other organizations to generate ideas and solutions to address the historically undercounted segments of the population. We very much need your help.
- We are rethinking how censuses are done, including how we work with communities of color and underserved communities.
- We seek to build trust through continuous engagement, listening, and incorporating what we hear. We want to relay the value proposition from participating in our census and surveys with examples of how data benefits communities.
- We're also rethinking our Population Estimates Program. This is a big deal. It's these annual estimates that drive the allocation of billions of dollars in federal funding across a decade.
- We've convened an internal group of experts to explore how the results of our quality assessments can help address the undercount issues. This effort will include outreach to stakeholders and experts in the field.
- We look forward to strengthening our partnership with the National Urban League. It's only through our work together that we can better understand how to improve our operations to increase data accuracy and relevance for underserved communities.
- Again, thank you for your engagement, and for your invaluable partnership. It's been a pleasure to speak to you today.