

Ethnic Media Roundtable (California)

Director's Remarks as Prepared for Delivery

November 4, 2022

- Good morning. It's a pleasure to be with you here this morning. It's so important for the Census Bureau to hear input from the communities and people that use our data—in particular, people like you who play a key role in communicating with audiences who have historically been hard to count.
- The role of ethnic and language-diverse media is so critical in getting everyone counted. I recognize that reaching people in culturally appropriate ways and in their own language creates trust. So I look forward to your thoughts and feedback during this conversation.
- Before we begin, I'd like to take a moment to introduce two people from the Census Bureau communications team who are here—Ditas Katague, our associate director for communications, and Patricia Ramos, who you may know from her time as a media specialist for the 2020 Census in the Los Angeles Regional Office. She's now supporting the headquarters communications team. I encourage you to reach out to them for any questions or further information you may need. A good way to reach them is by emailing <pio@census.gov>.
- Now, you may know that I was a Census Bureau stakeholder and policy researcher for many years prior to becoming its director. I think my roots as a statistician, a policy researcher, a fellow stakeholder, and even a Latino offer me a unique perspective in leading the Census Bureau.
- I'm a leader who champions diversity, equity, and inclusion—DEI. I've lived them over a 40-year career and seen firsthand that innovation and excellence are advanced by embracing DEI principles.
- An important part of our DEI effort includes seeking out and listening to diverse voices such as yours.
- Now, I believe that we promote excellence by embracing equity, diversity and inclusion in our workforce, in our policies and practices, as well as in how we engage stakeholders.
- We're committed to producing data that provides a rich kaleidoscope of colors to paint who we are as a nation. This includes race and ethnicity data and a host of other data the Census Bureau produce that show how beautifully diverse our nation is. Our data are valuable assets that can be used by policymakers and the public to advance equity.
- In 2021, President Biden announced a federal agenda to advance equity for all, including people of color and others who have been historically underserved, marginalized, and adversely affected by persistent poverty and inequality.
- Because this goal "requires a systemic approach to embedding fairness in decision-making processes," we need quality data about our people and economy to advance equity.
- And it so happens that the Census Bureau is the leading provider of quality data about the nation's people and economy.
- In fact, we're continually striving for excellence. And that can be challenging in our current environment. But even in the face of challenges, I believe that we can find new ways to collect data that are more accurate, relevant and most of all are useful to you and the public.

- Let me talk a little more about how we're doing that:
 - **First, we're committing to data equity.** We created an Equity Data Working Group to assemble Census Bureau data that can help explore disparities and inequities in our society. Check out our web page called Advancing Equity with Data on [census.gov](https://www.census.gov/advancing-equity-with-data).
Also, we're working with OMB to revise racial-ethnic reporting standards; and we're hoping that we can work with OMB on sexual orientation and gender identity. I'll talk more about that in a minute.
 - **Second, we're incorporating diversity and inclusion in our workplace.** Diverse voices are catalysts for innovation, critical thinking, and excellence around issues of who we are as a nation. This results in better data quality, data relevance, as well as advancing equity.
 - **Third, we're engaging with to the full diversity of our stakeholders, including you.** The idea is to create continuous partnerships that build trust and communicate the value of Census Bureau data.
- We worked hard, with thousands of partners—including members of the media like yourselves—to get the word out about participating in the census and why it was important. And those partners were pivotal to the success we did have. They pivoted with us when the pandemic hit, and we needed to change our strategies for outreach and enumeration.
- But despite this, we recognize that we still had an undercount—especially among historically undercounting populations including Latinos, African Americans, Asians, immigrants, AIAN, and impoverished populations.
- So, we're taking the lessons learned from the 2020 Census and doing something special this time around by engaging with stakeholders for the 2030 Census.
- In August, we issued a Federal Register notice seeking public comment on the 2030 Census. We welcome all feedback that can help us provide a better experience responding to the 2030 Census. We're especially interested in learning what we can improve for 2030—and ways we can boost participation in communities of color, rural communities, and tribal lands.
- It is very important to receive public input early in the decade and to hear from as many people and communities as possible. Of course, we will keep talking to communities as we progress, but now is the time to get input into our research and our operational design.
- 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 welcome all feedback that can help us provide a better experience responding to the 2030 Census. We're especially interested in learning what we can improve for 2030—and ways we can boost participation in communities of color, rural communities, and tribal lands.
- We particularly want to hear your recommendations on these five topics:
 - How can we reach and motivate everyone to respond to the census?
 - What technology could make responding to the census more user-friendly?
 - What data sources, or methods of using them, could increase operational efficiency and effectiveness and improve data quality?
 - What's the best way to contact households to encourage them to respond to the census on their own?
 - And finally, how can we support people as they respond—whether online, by phone, by mail, in English, or in another language?

- The deadline for submitting input is less than 2 weeks away, on November 15. You can find more information on the Federal Register notice, including information on how to respond on [Census.gov/2030Census](https://www.census.gov/2030Census).
- I want to mention another engagement opportunity that's occurring right now, around the collection of race and ethnicity data by the U.S. government. As you may know, the U.S. Office of Management and Budget (OMB) maintains government-wide standards for federal race and ethnicity data. The Census Bureau, and every other federal agency, uses these standards that ensure our ability to compare information and data, and also to understand how well federal programs serve a diverse America.
- In June 2022, the Chief Statistician of the United States, Dr. Karin Orvis, identified updating the standards as a top priority and announced that her office would begin the process of revising the standards.
- The statistical standards are being reviewed and revised using tried and true processes, by an Interagency Technical Working Group with experts from across the Federal Government reviewing the Standards, along with critical feedback and input from nongovernmental stakeholders and the public. Ultimately, this will help ensure the Standards better reflect the diversity of the American people.
- The Working Group, through OMB, will solicit public input on its initial proposal for revisions to the statistical standards through a Federal Register notice.
- The Working Group is holding virtual, bimonthly listening sessions to hear directly from members of the public. These sessions are for interested members of the public to present their experiences, thoughts, and opinions on the federal race and ethnicity data standards. These listening sessions began in September 2022.
- If you have questions about the revision process, want to be notified when the Federal Register Notice is published, or would like to schedule a listening session, I encourage you to email OMB at [<Statistical_Directives@omb.eop.gov>](mailto:Statistical_Directives@omb.eop.gov).
- The Chief Statistician will consider the working group's recommendations and public input, and deliver her recommendations to OMB leadership. OMB has the goal of completing the revision no later than Summer 2024.
- I appreciate your support and enthusiasm and look forward to receiving your ideas.