

2030 Census Advisory Committee

Deputy director's remarks as prepared for delivery

July 26, 2024

Welcome

- Hello everyone and thank you all for being here today. This is indeed an exciting time as we prepare for the 2030 Census.
- As many of you know, attempting to count every person living in the United States is a major task.
- The planning and execution of every decennial census is informed by research, lessons learned, and stakeholder input, with a wide range of expertise from partners like yourselves and Census Bureau professionals. And of course, extensive testing.
- Each decennial census is different, and they take over a decade of planning and preparation, and the 2026 Census Test is an important part of that preparation.
- For the 2020 Census, much of our testing was focused on proving new technologies and methods—like deploying iPhones rather than paper questionnaires for field data collection. The success of those new technologies and methods gives us the opportunity to focus on procedures and approaches that focus on ensuring we accurately enumerate hard-to-count households and historically undercounted populations.

2026 Census Test

- As Rob mentioned, we announced the six sites for the 2026 Census Test earlier this week. Those locations include:
 - Colorado Springs, CO (selected areas within the metro area).
 - Huntsville, AL (selected areas within the metro area).
 - Tribal Lands Within Arizona (Fort Apache Reservation, home to the White Mountain Apache Tribe, and San Carlos Reservation, home to the San Carlos Apache Tribe).
 - Spartanburg, SC (selected areas within the metro area).
 - Western North Carolina (Cherokee, Graham, Jackson, and Swain counties, and Qualla Boundary, home to the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians).
 - Western Texas (Brewster, Jeff Davis, Pecos, and Presidio counties).
- We carefully selected these sites, using a set of criteria determined by rigorous analysis and research.
- Later this afternoon, you'll hear more about the thorough, data-driven process we used to determine these sites, and, importantly, how each of these sites will help us better accomplish our goal to count every person living in the United States, especially those living in hard-to-count areas.
- We look forward to working with the selected communities, and we appreciate their cooperation. By acting as a proving ground for the testing of our strategies, systems, and operations, they're performing a valuable service for our whole nation.

OMB's Race and Ethnicity Standards

- Other major news we've had in the last few months are the Office of Management and Budget updated race and ethnicity standard.
- On March 28, 2024, the U.S. Office of Management and Budget (OMB) published the results of its review of Statistical Policy Directive No. 15 (SPD 15) and issued updated standards for maintaining, collecting, and presenting race/ethnicity data across federal agencies.
- Among the biggest updates: directives to use a combined race/ethnicity question, the addition of a new "Middle Eastern and North African" minimum reporting category, and a requirement to collect detailed race/ethnicity responses.
- Our findings over the past decade resonate with many of the SPD 15 updates. Based on our extensive research and engagement with myriad communities, organizations, scholars, researchers, and data users across the country, we know a combined race/ethnicity question with a dedicated Middle Eastern or North African response category and an emphasis on the collection of detailed identities for all communities will produce more accurate race/ethnicity data for our nation's population.
- The updates to SPD 15 were informed by robust empirical research; extensive engagement with experts, scholars, organization leaders, and communities across the country; and the successful and meaningful collaboration among federal agency leaders and experts on the Interagency Technical Working Group on Race and Ethnicity Standards.
- We are confident that the updated standards will improve data on race/ethnicity across U.S. Census Bureau programs, and that these new data will better represent the U.S. population's rich racial/ethnic diversity and detailed identities.
- Our race/ethnicity research team is thoroughly reviewing the SPD 15 updates and collaborating with colleagues across the Census Bureau as we begin to develop an action plan to implement the updated standards within the OMB's required 5-year period.
- We expect that updates will be made as expeditiously as possible for all our data collections that include race and ethnicity, such as the American Community Survey and the 2030 Census.
- Throughout this process, we will engage with stakeholders and keep them posted as we develop our implementation plans. We look forward to partnering with you as we implement the updated race/ethnicity standards to provide the most accurate, reliable and relevant data possible about our changing and diversifying nation.

Budget

- Our enacted FY24 appropriation is \$102.5 million less than what we received in FY23.
- Given the challenging fiscal environment, we sincerely appreciate congressional consideration of our funding request.
- With this year's funding and the carryover from FY23, we'll allocate resources to our highest priority requirements.
- We continue our multiyear process of transforming our organization and operations from a survey-centric model to a data-centric model, where we can more readily blend survey data with administrative and alternative digital data sources.
- This approach, and opportunities to expand secure access to administrative data sources—like the National Directory of New Hires, among others—will benefit all Census Bureau programs and provide more timely and relevant data products to stakeholders and the American public.
- Our FY 2025 budget request, which the president released on March 11, totals just over \$1.58 billion for the Census Bureau—or \$195 million over the FY24 enacted budget.
- The FY 2025 request supports the Census Bureau's core operations and invests in new data products, methods, and crosscutting research techniques and enterprise technology.

- Some of the investments in the FY 2025 budget are:
 - The 2030 Census program, which will be transitioning from the Design Selection Phase into the Development and Integration Phase.
 - The 2022 Economic Census data release and planning efforts for the 2027 Economic Census and the Census of Governments.

Conclusion

- I'd like to finish up by saying that we're all in this together. Our efforts and our nation are stronger when we work together towards the common goal of a complete and accurate census.
- I appreciate your support and enthusiasm and look forward to your collaboration.
- Thank you.