

National Advisory Committee 2024 Fall Meeting

Director's remarks as prepared for delivery

November 7, 2024

Introduction

- Good morning, everyone.
- As I always do, let me start by thanking our committee members for your service to the Census Bureau and to our country.
- We rely on the volunteerism, the knowledge, and the leadership of experts like you.
- Giving selflessly as a committee member represents public service at its finest.
- After all, we all have a role in helping our country in one way or another.
- For some of us, it's through the federal employment—like our career staff; and it's through commissioned appointments—like mine; or like your service on our advisory committee.
- In a real sense we engage in public service when we participate in our censuses and surveys, or maybe even when we pay taxes or when we vote.
- Yes, these are examples of civic duties, but they actually serve the public good, they serve our country and its people.
- Speaking of voting, let's acknowledge our national election and the millions who participated and fulfilled their civic duties.
- We live our democratic principles through voting, and the people have spoken.
- Many administrations have come and gone since the Census Bureau was established in 1902.
- And throughout that time, the Census Bureau has fastidiously focused on our exquisite mission to be the nation's leading provider of statistical data on our nation's people and economy.
- And that's why we're here today at this National Advisory Committee meeting.
- We have important work to do. So, let's get to it.

New committee members

- OK, I'll start with a few updates.
- First, I want you to know that we're planning to announce additional NAC members by the end of this month.
- Please keep an eye on census.gov for that announcement.
- And let me thank these wonderful incoming members for agreeing to join the committee and to serve our country.
- We'll plan to see them at our Spring 2025 meeting.

Engagements and relationship building

- Next, I'd like to share some progress in our efforts to build public trust and lasting, generational relationships with communities.
- This is especially relevant to historically undercounted and hard to count communities.
- My tenure as director has been principally focused on a continuous public engagement priority at the Census Bureau.
- Evergreen outreach and open communications are precursors to strengthening public trust.
- We—that is, Census leaders, staff and I—have been traveling the nation separately and together.
- We've been meeting and engaging with the public at all levels.
- For instance, between April 2022 and today, I've completed 166 community engagement and outreach trips across the United States.
- While traveling, I've conducted community conversations with the public, made commencement speeches and presentations at colleges and universities, and engaged with numerous stakeholders, community groups, tribes, and elected officials.
- These engagements involved well over 500 separate convenings.
- I'll have a year-end blog that discusses more about this, so stay tuned.
- But here are a couple of highlights.

Black/African American community

- As I stated, we've met with a variety of communities.
- This includes meeting with Black communities.
- This summer alone, I met with Black leaders and organizations in California, in Nebraska, Florida, and Minnesota – as well as with Black members of Congress in Florida and North Carolina.
- These meetings involved meaningful, insightful conversations about how our data can help communities, and how communities are essential partners in completing our mission.
- And next week, I'm scheduled to meet with members of the Congressional Black Caucus and then later with the Census Black Roundtable.
- We look forward to fostering stronger relationships and building trust through dialogue on common goals.
- We've had similar engagements across the nation with Asian, Latino, Middle Eastern, and American Indian and Alaska Native communities, as well as the with rural communities, business communities and public health departments, and others.
- We offer the value proposition of our data for community needs assessments, economic development, and for seeking things like federal grant funding.
- We let communities know that we cannot achieve our mission without their active participation.
- Another aspect of outreach is engaging with students and faculty throughout the country.

- I've engaged with D1 universities, but also done special outreach to historically Black colleges and universities (HCBUs), Hispanic Serving Institutions and Community Colleges.
- We're seeking to deepen relationships with these institutions through partnerships.
- We can benefit from the perspectives of faculty conducting research and build candidate pools to advance a more diverse Census Bureau workforce.

Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with Osage Nation

- Next, there are a couple of milestones with tribes I'd like to mention.
- The Census Bureau and the Osage Nation recently announced a historic agreement to share administrative data.
- The agreement provides a framework for the Osage Nation to share aggregated administrative data directly with us.
- Topics include things like education, military service, household information, employment, health, housing, and income.
- This agreement helps us move towards a more accurate 2030 Census for Tribal Nations.

Meeting with Miccosukee Tribe

- In August, we were invited to the Miccosukee reservation in the Florida Everglades.
- At this meeting, we received permission to collect the first demographic and economic survey data on their tribal lands in 60 years.
- This progress is a testament to the efficacy of our Tribal Relations Specialist program, just as the Osage Nation agreement is a testament to the impact of our Statistical Product First program.
- These two events represent significant milestones of collaboration and trust between the Census Bureau and Tribal Nations.

Disability Convening

- In a similar vein, the Census Bureau recently was involved in a convening of disability community leaders.
- The convening resulted from stakeholder input regarding proposed changes to the American Community Survey disability questions.
- It brought together the federal statistical community, federal departments, staff from the executive branch, and scholars and practitioners in the disability community.
- The convening marked an initial step in a continuous engagement effort to better identify data needs, opportunities, and challenges.

SPD-15

- Also, as you know, OMB's revised Statistical Policy Directive (SPD) 15 on race and ethnicity was released this spring.
- Federal agencies—including the Census Bureau—will adopt these standards as soon as possible, but no later than March 2029.

- To that end, we've begun the work of updating all our censuses, surveys, and forms that collect race and ethnicity data.
- The ACS program will be implementing the new standards in the 2027 ACS data collection cycle.
- If you have any questions about this, please email: SPD15@census.gov.

Conclusion

- I'll conclude by thanking you again for joining us today, and for all your efforts on behalf of the Census Bureau.