2020 Census:
A Look at How Data Provides Answers to Questions
and How States Work With the Census Bureau to
Ensure Quality Data

Presentation For
National Council of State Legislators Session
Census 2020: What Legislators Can Do to Ensure an
Accurate Count

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What I Will Be Covering
(Stipulating You Can Read Faster Than I Talk)

Why Population Data Matters

• Data dissemination changes and how it relates to the Census

• The Federal State Cooperative for Population Estimates and State Data Center Programs and how they relate to a successful Census for your state

• How the Census is a neutral and important data source and all the work in supporting it is worth it.

• Additional Resources.
Why does population data matter?

- **Fairness** - Once, Only Once, and in the Right Place (National Academies of Science)
- **Program Evaluation**
- **Service levels and provision**
- **Knowing ourselves**
  - Basic demographics
  - Characteristics
- **Range and threshold for markets**
- **Long term trends**
Why the Census Matters to Your Community

• Money
• Control totals for other estimates
  – American Community Survey (Long Form)
    • Child Safety Awareness
    • Transportation Modeling in San Diego
    • Greater New Orleans Community Data Center
  – Current Population Statistics
• Denominator for Rates
The Federal Statistical Agencies Are Neutral Players in Gathering and Providing Information.

Data has always been in the public domain but more so now with internet platforms.
The Census Bureau Gets Help in Gathering and Distributing Good Data Through Partnership Programs

- Federal State Cooperative for Population Estimates
- State Data Center Network
- Governor’s Liaison’s

FSCPE Fall 2017 Meeting
50 Years and Going Strong!
**FSCPE and SDC Partnerships**
- Depending on the state may be the same office or the same person.
- Level of involvement varies by state as well.

**FSCPE**
- Established in 1967 to assist the Census Bureau with state and local population and housing unit estimates (data and estimates review).
- Regarded as demographic experts who provide local knowledge and insight to the Population Estimates Program, the media, and the public.
- Participate in Decennial Count Review.

**SDC**
- Established in 1978 for data assistance to state and local governments and the general public.
- Supported by 200 coordinating agencies and 1,400 affiliates, and consisting of local governments, universities, libraries, etc.
- Supports various Bureau programs including but not limited to BAS, LUCA, Building Permits, Census of Governments, etc.
Potential “Asks” from The Census Bureau to State Partners

- Assistance with the Local Update of Census Addresses (LUCA) Program (Both)
- Performing LUCA (up to Governor to designate)
- Group Quarters’ Address Listing Assistance (Possibly FSCPE)
- Help with other housing situations (Possibly FSCPE)
- Complete Count Commissions or Committees (TBD)
- Assistance with Partnership Programs (Possibly Both)
- Boundary and Annexation Survey (Primarily SDC)
- Participant Statistical Area Program (Possibly Both)
- Count Review (FSCPE)

- These are iterative quality control programs.
- In Nevada’s case Count Review helped bring in between $28 to $42 Million a year in total per capita funding that otherwise might have been missed.
Because the Census is a neutral party for counting the population and providing survey information it can often show you things that one might not know about your community.

For Clark County, Nevada - somewhere between 21,600 and 27,000 non-traditional housing units in 2010
For Washoe County, Nevada – somewhere between 5,600 and 8,100 non-traditional housing units
The American Community Survey provides ongoing survey data that helps look at issues such as the aftermath of the Housing Bubble.
Challenges to A Successful Census

• Census
  • Fewer and Reorganized Regional Offices
  • Partnership specialists local folks with connections
  • Fewer Local Offices
  • Lack of full end-to-end testing
  • Final Questionnaire design pending
  • Funding

• State
  • Turnover of staff at local and state levels
  • Coordination among agencies
  • How to leverage state and local networks
Your State and Census 2020

• Resources (census.gov)
  – Your FSCPE Contact
  – Your SDC Contact
  – Census Quarterly Program Management Reviews

• Funding and other topics
  – The Census Project
  – Funders Committee for Civic Participation – Hard to Count Population Information
Questions?

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