



*Message  
From the Director  
U.S. Census Bureau*

Every decade since 1790, the U.S. Census Bureau has conducted a constitutionally mandated census to determine the number of people living within the United States and our territories. These data are used by our nation's leaders to help make vital decisions on behalf of all residents, including reapportionment and redistricting. Census data also affect how more than \$300 billion in federal funds are distributed to tribal, state, and local governments each year.

Your participation in the 2010 Census program is voluntary. However, many government officials and community leaders understand that their participation is vital to help ensure an accurate and complete count of their community.

The Census Bureau is strongly committed to the most accurate and efficient census in 2010. With your help, we will ensure every resident is counted once—only once—and in the right place. We look forward to partnering with you to obtain an accurate count for your community.

Sincerely,

Steve H. Murdock



## WHY DO WE TAKE THE CENSUS?

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- The U.S. Constitution (Article I, Section 2) mandates a headcount every 10 years, of everyone residing in the United States: in all 50 states, Puerto Rico, and the Island Areas. This includes people of all ages, races, ethnic groups, citizens, and noncitizens. The first census was conducted in 1790 and has been carried out every 10 years since then.
- The next census occurs in 2010. The population totals from this census will determine the number of seats each state has in the House of Representatives. States also use the totals to redraw their legislative districts.
- The U.S. Census Bureau must submit state population totals to the President of the United States by December 31, 2010.
- The totals also affect funding in your community, and data collected in the census help inform decision makers how your community is changing. Approximately \$300 billion in federal funding is distributed to communities each year.

### ***Will the 2010 Census be the same as 2000?***

No, there are some important changes:

- 2010 Census will be short form only—just 10 easy questions.
- The long form is now part of the annual American Community Survey.
- Handheld computers with Global Positioning System will be used to check our address list in 2009.