

# Berkeley City and Alameda County Officials Meeting (California)

Director's Remarks as Prepared for Delivery

November 2, 2022

- Good morning, everyone. It's an honor to be here in my role as director of the U.S. Census Bureau. I thank you for the opportunity to address you. I have great admiration of city and county leaders.
- Being an elected official in today's society is a challenge with complexities beyond my limited understanding. I know that in your roles you deal with issues up close and personal.
- You meet constituents in their neighborhoods, in their homes and schools. You hear their stories and understand their problems from their perspectives. And your measure of success rests on their assessments of how you addressed the problems. It's the community engagement across diverse neighborhoods that I admire so much.
- I will tell you that in my new role as director of the U.S. Census Bureau, I too seek closer connections but with Census Bureau partners, stakeholders, and the public more generally. I need to understand the rich, diverse needs of communities from urban and suburban neighborhoods as well as rural counties, farms, and ranches and even tribal lands.
- And of course there are the needs of the federal, state, and local governments as well as the business sector, policymakers, scholars, and so on. But understanding the needs of local communities is really important to me. I'll say a few words about that later.
- As we all know, the pandemic challenged our society and impacted our most vulnerable people and communities. When the pandemic's grip on society was strongest, we still had to deploy a field force to knock on doors across our nation. And we did just that, but we didn't do it alone.
- Without your support, we would not have achieved the measure of success we attained. We recognize and deeply appreciate that. And we learned from it. That is part of the reason I am here today. Not only to thank you for helping during an enormously challenging period, but to continue and indeed strengthen a sustaining, continuous partnership of mutual benefit.
- So in the spirit of strengthening our partnership, let me tell you a little about myself and how I lead the Census Bureau to achieve new levels of data quality.
- You may know that I was a Census Bureau stakeholder and advocate for many years prior to becoming its director. It feels different being on the "other side," so to speak. But all in a good way. I think my roots as a statistician, a policy researcher, and indeed a fellow stakeholder like you offers me a unique perspective in coming to lead the Census Bureau.
- The Census Bureau is committed to producing data that reflects an accurate portrait of America. We are committed to providing you with the quality data you need and that your communities rely on. These data are valuable assets that can help the public and policymakers assess equity and identify underserved communities.
- For example, while the decennial census data provide demographic counts, our American Community Surveys provide a wealth of data by race, ethnicity, sex, disability, income, veteran status, housing, and other key sociodemographic variables to that provide insight into equity. These data are often produced with geography that provides meaning and context to the statistical data produced for your jurisdictions.

- The data we produce inform policymakers working to advance equity and enable them to propose effective, data-driven solutions.
- As I said, we're 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, timely, relevant, and most of all have utility, as in fit for use.
- Moreover, I believe that we promote excellence by embracing equity, diversity, and inclusion in our workforce, our policies, and practices, as well as in how we engage stakeholders and how we gather and incorporate feedback and advice.
- Stakeholder feedback is critical to understanding the needs of our data users and decision-making about how to protect your constituents' personal information while continuing to provide relevant, high-quality data about your cities and their residents.
- Right now, we are seeking involvement from stakeholders like you on the design and planning of the 2030 Census. On August 17, 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 particularly want to hear your recommendations on these five topics:
  1. How can we reach and motivate everyone to respond to the census?
  2. What technology could make responding to the census more user-friendly?
  3. What data sources, or methods of using them, could increase operational efficiency and effectiveness and improve data quality?
  4. What's the best way to contact households to encourage them to respond to the census on their own?
  5. And finally, how can we support people as they respond—whether online, by phone, by mail, in English, or in another language?
- I encourage you to visit our website at [www.census.gov/2030census](http://www.census.gov/2030census) to learn more and submit comments by November 15, 2022.
- We also want to hear from you about group quarters population counts. This summer, the Census Bureau began mailing 40,000 eligible governmental units at the tribal, state, and local levels—including cities—about participating in the 2020 Post-Census Group Quarters Review (PCGQR) operation.
- This is a new, one-time operation that was created in response to public feedback about counting group quarters' populations—an issue that is very important in a college town like this one.
- Under this program, governmental units can ask the Census Bureau to review their own 2020 Census group quarters population counts for facilities they believe were undercounted. If you believe there were group quarters counting issues in your city, we want to hear from you.
- Lastly, I want to draw your attention to the 2020 Census Count Question Resolution (CQR) operation. This operation gives tribal, state, and local governmental units the opportunity to

request that the Census Bureau review their boundaries and/or housing counts to identify errors that may have occurred while processing their 2020 Census Counts.

- Governments can request a CQR review to review legal boundaries, housing count cases, or both. Per federal law, we can't update 2020 Census results, redistricting data, or apportionment counts. But if we find errors related to geographic boundaries or housing placement, we can redistribute revised counts that will give you higher-quality data about your community and apply for future funding.
- CQR can only review data collected and processed during the 2020 Census. It does not collect new data or conduct a recount. If the review process finds errors related to geographic boundaries or housing placement, housing and population counts will be corrected and the revised counts will be redistributed.
- Per federal law, the Census Bureau cannot update 2020 Census results through the CQR operation—or any other operation. However, CQR can correct errors that occurred when processing information that was collected during the census and redistribute a certified, revised count to affected governmental units.
- If the Census Bureau makes any corrections based on a CQR review:
  - It will not change apportionment counts, redistricting data, 2020 Census counts, or any other 2020 Census data products.
  - Tribal, state, and local areas will have higher quality information throughout the decade.
  - The Census Bureau will use the corrected counts in the baseline used to calculate its annual population estimates.
  - Corrected counts can help governments plan and apply for future funding.
- Thank you for your engagement, and with helping to get information on the 2020 Census and other surveys out to your members. Your participation and cooperation is really important in helping us to maintain the excellent data quality that we provide.
- Again, thank you for having me today.