

League of United Latin American Citizens 2024 Conference

Director's remarks as prepared for delivery

June 27, 2024

INTRODUCTION

- Good afternoon, everyone.
- ¡Buenas tardes a todos!
- Es un gran honor estar aquí con ustedes, mis amigos . . . mi familia.
- Y me presento como su director de la Oficina del Censo de los Estados Unidos.
- And I mean that.
- Yes, I did say *your* director.
- Claro que soy Latino . . . Latino de alma y corazón . . .
- But as an appointee, I think of my position as one of public service.
- I—and we at the U.S. Census Bureau—serve the public . . .
- We serve our nation . . . we serve everyone, including you.
- Now, I've been traveling all across our country to engage with anyone willing to have an audience with me.
- I've met with state senators and representatives, with governors and mayors and city council members, with chambers of commerce, universities and community colleges, local community groups, pastors, and I've even visited colonias.
- And in those meetings, I've talked about the value of our data products for improving communities.
- Let me tell you, we have tons of data for you.
- I never get tired of seeing people's eye light up when we explain how the vast amounts of data we offer can help *their* communities solve *their* unique problems.
- I'll talk more about that later, but let me first tell you how honored we were to receive your invitation to be with you today.
- The League of United Latin American Citizens is a cherished and valued partner of the Census Bureau.
- LULAC was incredibly helpful in promoting the enumeration of our nation's Latino population.
- So, I want to acknowledge your contribution and personally thank you for your support and advocacy over the years. <pause>
- Y'know, in 2020, the pandemic totally challenged our society.
- And it heavily impacted our most vulnerable communities.
- When the pandemic's grip on society was strongest, the Census Bureau still had to deploy hundreds of thousands of enumerators to knock on doors across our nation.
- And we did just that . . . but y'know what? We didn't do it alone.
- Without your support, and the support of community group across the country, we couldn't have achieved the measure of success we did attain.

- That's partly why I'm here today.
- Not just to thank you for helping during an enormously challenging period, but also to nurture and to strengthen our continuous partnership. *<pause>*
- Ok, so let's talk about some things that I expect you'd be interested in . . . and I'll start with how we measure race and ethnicity in our censuses and surveys.

Data Equity/SPD 15

- As context, we collect and provide you with data that paint a vibrant portrait of America.
- We're constantly exploring ways to improve data—and that includes measuring things like race and ethnicity.
- For the past several years we've worked with the U.S. Office of Management and Budget (OMB) on revising federal standards for collecting and reporting race and ethnicity data.
- As you may know, OMB published updated standards in March of this year.
- The revisions, the first since 1997, will improve the way race and ethnicity are measured.
- The new standards were informed by robust research; by extensive engagement with experts, scholars, federal agency leaders, and communities across the country.
- The new standards include changes like:
 - Using a single, combined question for race and ethnicity.
 - Encouraging respondents to check all categories that apply so that we pick up multiracial, multiethnic and multi-racial-ethnic peoples, which by the way, includes Afro-Latinos.
 - The changes also add a reporting category for Middle Eastern and North African peoples, which will be separate and distinct from the White category.
- This new approach more easily allows people to tell their own stories about who they are and from their perspective.
- Naturally, the new standards will be absorbed into all Census Bureau programs.
- We're currently in the process of reviewing the updated standards.
- We'll keep you and the public posted on our plans to incorporate them in our censuses and surveys. *<pause>*
- So next, let's talk about my favorite topic—the beautifully increasing diversity of our nation's population.

Changing National Landscape

- As we all know, our nation's constantly changing—it's evolving . . . growing . . . diversifying.
- Let me give you a *probadita* . . . a little taste of what I'm talking about.
- Our 2020 Census revealed that the overall racial and ethnic diversity of our country has increased since 2010.
- And of course, the Hispanic/Latino population has experienced notable demographic changes.
 - The Hispanic population reached 62.1 million in 2020, increasing by over 11.6 million since the 2010 Census.
 - And in the Vintage 2023 Population Estimates released today, the Hispanic population has now grown to just over 65 million!
 - In fact, 75 percent of the entire nation's population growth between 2022 and 2023 was due to Hispanic population growth.
 - In fact, the 1-year Hispanic population growth rate was nine times greater than that of the non-Hispanic population.
 - So, today, about 1 in 5 people in the United States are Hispanic.

- Hispanics as a population are younger than non-Hispanics.
- In fact, the median age of Latinos in 2022 was just under 31, while it was just over 41 for non-Hispanics. That's huge.
- In 2022, just over 1 in 4 of all children in the United States were Latino!
- As a population, *somos joven!*
- Our nation's Latino population is not monolithic . . . we're quite diverse within our own ranks.
- Did you know that in 2020, we had eight Hispanic subgroups exceed a population threshold of a million or more in the United States.
- Colombian and Honduran populations reached that milestone for the first time in census history.
- The other six groups were Mexican, Puerto Rican, Salvadoran, Cuban, Dominican, and Guatemalan.
- Of course, the Mexican population continues to be the largest Latino subgroup by far, accounting for about 58 percent of all Latinos.
- Venezuelans experienced the fastest growth percentagewise among Hispanic groups.
- The Venezuelan population grew by a whopping 181 percent . . . meaning their population size almost tripled. *Fíjate!*
- And here's one more probadita related to Afro-Latinos.
- The 2020 Census counts show that just under 2 percent of Hispanics identified as Black Hispanic *alone*, while just over 4 percent reported being Black Hispanic *alone or in combination with another race*.
- So, here we are—a growing and diverse Latino population whose growth will continue to diversify our already beautifully diverse nation, enriching our nation by adding culture, language, and different perspectives.
- But there's more to our growth than culture . . . there's the impact on our nation's economy.
- Our 2022 Annual Business Survey reveals that the number of Hispanic-owned businesses grew by about 8 percent between 2020 to 2021, totaling over 400,000 businesses.
- This made up just under 7 percent of all businesses in the country, with an estimated \$573 billion in annual receipts.
- These businesses employed 3 million people.
- They generated about \$124 billion in annual payroll.
- And get this—about a quarter of Hispanic businesses are family-owned.
- As you can see, the economic impact of Latinos is significant.
- Indeed, Latinos—as well as all people of color in the United States—are interwoven into the beautiful tapestry that makes up our nation. *<pause>*

Meeting Our Nation's Data Needs

- As our society evolves and grows, our nation and our communities face all sorts of challenges affordable housing, poverty, the need for local economic development and community improvement.
- But challenges are best addressed from a foundation of knowledge, from an evidence base.
- Data-driven insights allow us to make informed decisions.
- And that's where the Census Bureau can help.
- How? Well, we provide a treasure trove of data that can address most policy issues, including our nation's population and housing.

- We offer data at state, county, city, and even census tract levels on such things as race, ethnicity, sex, disability status, income, poverty, education, veteran status, plus housing, and many other key sociodemographic variables.
- I hope you realize that most policy at federal, state, and local levels is developed using data from the Census Bureau.
- Each year, trillions of dollars in federal funds are distributed to states, communities, tribes, and others using our data.
- Data we collect are used for determining free school lunches, SNAP and Medicaid eligibility thresholds, broadband dollars to states, FEMA disaster plans, cost of living increases for Social Security, rates of the incidence of disease, where to invest in roads, fire stations and schools.
- And I'm only scratching the surface.
- Speaking of data . . . as I mentioned earlier, just this morning, we released our Vintage 2023 Annual Population Estimates.
- They're available for the nation, states, metropolitan and micropolitan statistical areas, and counties by age, sex, race, and Hispanic origin.
- And estimates are also available for Puerto Rico and its *municipios* by age and sex.
- Go to census.gov and check them out.
- We also have rich economic data from our 2022 Economic Census.
- We report on businesses by size, industry classification, production and sales, number of employees, and even the race-ethnicity of the owner—all at various levels of geography.
- We're constantly working to better meet your data needs.
- In fact, we have data dissemination specialists whose sole job is to provide training and assistance to the public . . . meaning to *you* . . . on all our products.
- Part of the reason I'm here today is to make sure you understand that value of our data.
- After all, you deserve to make informed decisions.
- And as your partner, we're here to serve you in that capacity, by making sure you are aware of your data . . .

2030 Census

- Ok, next, let's talk about the 2030 Census.
- You might think that's far into the future, but to us it's right around the corner.
- We're doing a lot of exciting work and research to develop the best approach.
- Our main goal for 2030—and for every decennial census—is a complete and accurate count of the nation's population.
- To accomplish that, it's so important that we continuously engage with the public to listen to diverse voices and perspectives.
- We need to work with stakeholders to identify hard-to-find populations and tailor our strategies to reach them in a culturally relevant fashion.
- We're currently conducting 55 research projects to inform the next census plan.
- Several projects focus exclusively on reaching, motivating, and accurately counting historically undercounted populations.
- But attention to historically undercounted populations intersects with many more projects.
- In fact, 40 percent of our projects are investigating how to increase participation of historically undercounted populations.
- And another 16 percent of projects are probing how to improve external engagement, which necessarily includes research to engage historically undercounted populations.

- That means a majority of our projects address our ability to effectively enumerate these critically important people and their communities.
- Now, after the most recent census in 2020, stakeholders asked us to engage more, and to do so earlier in the decade.
- Guess what? We listened, and we're acting on that.
- For example, in 2022, we published a Federal Register notice asking for the public's ideas on how to conduct a better 2030 Census.
- We received over 8,000 comments from people across the country.
- We incorporated a number of those comments into our research and planning.
- For example, we received many comments suggesting that we include culturally diverse training and educational materials for our staff and for communities.
- Please know that we're acting on these and many other suggestions.
- Moreover, we've held a series of community meetings about the 2030 Census.
- These include meetings with community-based organizations, Complete Count Committees, and State Complete Count Commissions; rural and migrant stakeholders; immigrant advocacy groups; disability rights and low-literacy stakeholders; and finally, state and local governments.
- Also, we've created and announced our new 2030 Census Advisory Committee, which will begin meeting this summer.
- You can find these and other resources by simply going to census.gov and searching on "2030 census."
- Please join us on our journey of continuous engagement and learning. <pause>

CONCLUSION

- As you probably know, the Census Bureau has some enormous challenges to face.
- These include public trust of government, misinformation, and privacy concerns.
- But you know what?
- I've always seen challenges as fodder for opportunity.
- You just have to think about them differently . . . to see the opportunity that others don't see.
- By working together, by tapping our creativity, our diverse voices, and our passion for helping each other, I believe we can thrive like never before.
- We can behold data that help improve society by displaying the beautiful mosaic of who we are as a nation.
- Please know that the Census Bureau is here to help you with a bounty of data to inform your decision-making, your planning and advocacy.
- Thank you so much, everyone, for the honor of addressing you.
- Abrazos.