



U.S. CENSUS MONITORING BOARD
Presidential Members

Final Report to Congress
September 1, 2001

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September 1, 2001

The Honorable Richard Cheney
President
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable J. Dennis Hastert
Speaker
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Mr. President and Mr. Speaker:

Pursuant to Public Law 105-119, the undersigned members of the U.S. Census Monitoring Board (CMB) hereby transmit our final report to Congress.

The following report represents over three years of dedicated service to the cause of an accurate Census 2000. It embodies not only our legacy, but also our belief that the census, as a foundation of democracy, should count every single individual in our great nation. It is also our hope that this final report will serve as a useful roadmap for Census 2010.

We would like to thank President Clinton, House Democratic Leader Richard Gephardt and Senate Majority Leader Tom Daschle for providing us with the opportunity to serve. The Constitution of the United States provided for a decennial census for the purpose of apportioning seats in the House of Representatives. As Presidential Members of the Board, we were honored to have been a part of the historic process for Census 2000.

We also wish to acknowledge the heroes of Census 2000 – the thousands of individuals, local governments and community organizations who tried so hard to achieve a complete count. To the degree that Census 2000 was a success, the Census 2000 partners deserve the lion's share of the credit. We enjoyed working with these and other census stakeholders over the past three years through all phases of the operation. In addition, we are very grateful for the assistance provided to us by the Commerce Department, the Government Printing Office, many Members of Congress and their staffs, and, of course, our own staff and expert consultants at the CMB.

Finally, we want to thank the Bureau for providing office space to the CMB and for accommodating our oversight efforts in Washington and in the more than 50 local offices in all 12 census regions in the country.

Census 2000 posed many challenges, including how to use new technology to achieve a more accurate count, how to stem the tide of non-participation, and how to adjust for the differential undercount evident since the 1940 census.

While our experience with the Bureau was generally good, we must note that the spirit of transparency and cooperation that marked the CMB's relations with the Bureau under former Acting Director James Holmes and former Director Kenneth Prewitt dissolved following the change of Administration in January of 2001.

Our efforts to monitor census operations in accordance with our statutory mandate were met with resistance from the Bureau. Several requests for data – to which we were legally entitled under the CMB's authorizing statute – were delayed or simply ignored. As a result, we were unable to conduct additional research beyond that which is included in this report.

The most significant set of data delayed by the Bureau related to the Local Update of Census Addresses (LUCA), one of the three major initiatives the Bureau cited as having contributed to the operational success of Census 2000. We strongly felt that review of this data and analysis of its effectiveness would have proven invaluable.

This final report details the operational milestones achieved in Census 2000, a set of recommendations for future censuses, a comprehensive analysis of the 2000 Census conducted by Dr. Eugene Ericksen of Temple University, an examination of demographic analysis by Dr. Jeffrey Passel of the Urban Institute, an in-depth forecast of lost Federal funding as a result of the undercount provided by PricewaterhouseCoopers, a brief overview of the Census Partnership Program and a listing of activities conducted by the CMBP.

Since the recommendation of the Executive Steering Committee for A.C.E. Policy (ESCAP) was announced and made official by the Secretary of Commerce, Don Evans, we have attempted to analyze the rationale behind the decision. The ESCAP committee cited inconsistencies between the Accuracy and Coverage Evaluation (A.C.E.) estimates and demographic analysis (DA), and the lack of time available to the committee to resolve these differences.

Dr. Jeffrey Passel, a noted expert in the field, concluded that the Bureau's DA estimate failed to incorporate the best available estimates of immigration and therefore was seriously flawed. Dr. Passel said that had the base DA been somewhat different, "there would have been more attention to the areas of agreement rather than disagreement between the two measures and more attention to the potential deficiencies in Census 2000 itself."

Additionally, in an effort to better comprehend the decision, CMBP invited the participation of noted experts Dr. Stephen Fienberg and Dr. Jay Kadane to join the team of Ericksen and Passel. Their findings were made public and provided the basis for understanding the ESCAP decision. These scientists concluded that given the results of their combined research and the information currently available from the Census Bureau, a more accurate census would have been achieved by adjusting.

In conclusion, despite being unable to access and analyze data withheld by the Bureau, we are nonetheless proud of what we were able to accomplish. In particular, CMBP played a leading role in the discovery, analysis, documentation, and publication of some of the most critical census issues, including:

- The social, political and economic effects of a census undercount;
- The release of estimates of the 2000 Census undercount for all 50 states and many of the country's counties;
- The discovery of the larger-than-expected immigrant population and;
- The vast number of errors, imputations and potential duplications in Census 2000.

Our hope is that the volume of scientific research provided as a result of this initiative will be utilized to gain a better understanding of Census 2000.

And finally, we would be remiss if we did not reaffirm our belief that overall, the Census Bureau's workforce is among the most skilled, dedicated, and nonpartisan in all of government. They perform a tremendous and essential public service, not just every 10 years, but year in and year out.

We are confident that the legacy of the Board will provide Congress and the nation with a valuable perspective leading into Census 2010.

Respectfully submitted,



Gilbert F. Casellas
Co-Chair, Presidential Members



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