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**House of Representatives**  
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**Statement of Ranking Member Patrick McHenry**  
**Subcommittee on Information Policy, Census,**  
**and National Archives**  
**“Census Data and Its Use in Federal Formula Funding”**

**July 9, 2009**

Thank you, Chairman Clay, for holding today’s hearing on the value of census data.

As the Chairman has already stated, the data collected by the Census Bureau is vitally important to the calculation of funding levels and appropriations in federal programs, at the Congressional level and by federal agencies themselves. Data is also used by state and local governments to allocate resources and services, and by the private sector to determine where to invest and develop industry.

The subject of today’s hearing underscores the importance of filling out that Decennial Census form when it arrives in April of 2010 and sending it in – and for us, as Members of Congress, encouraging all of our constituents to do so as well.

Since the Committee last met on this subject in March, the Census Bureau has now wrapped up its address canvassing effort, which Acting Director Mesenbourg, who is here to testify before us today, has called the “cornerstone” of the 2010 Census.

Approximately 140,000 census workers took to America’s streets this Spring to verify addresses and assemble the Bureau’s lists of where Decennial forms will be sent and, if needed, enumerators will visit in 2010. On separate occasions, Chairman Clay and I have stated that we both have unanswered questions about this vast canvassing effort. The outcome of the Decennial Census depends largely on this step in operations, and there is an obvious need to review and assess its successes and failures.

It is my hope that we can bring you in again soon, Mr. Mesenbourg, to evaluate the work the Bureau has done so far in preparation for Census Day before we jump ahead to what will be done with all of the collected data.

That said, today's hearing provides an important opportunity for this Committee to ensure that both census data and federal funding formulas are fair, accurate, and effective.

Chairman Clay, I would like to thank you for raising concerns about the inequities of the Community Development Block Grant Program. I share your concerns. As for how census numbers affect CDBG, I would like to point out that the CDBG funding formula involves many factors and that in the 109th Congress, this Subcommittee published a bipartisan report dealing with that funding formula. The report is still seen as a roadmap of how we can improve the CDBG program by addressing need, and I ask that it be included in today's hearing record.

Again, thank you Mr. Chairman for holding this hearing and I look forward to the testimonies from our witnesses.