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**Statement of  
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**Before the  
Subcommittee on Information Policy, Census, and National Archives  
Committee on Oversight and Government Reform  
United States House of Representatives**

**The 2010 Census Communications Contract: The Media Plan in Hard to Count Areas  
February 24, 2010**

**Introductory Statement**

In 1990, the U.S. Census Bureau conducted its decennial count of individuals residing in the United States. The count disproportionately missed ethnic minorities, children, and immigrants. Asian Americans were among the disproportionately undercounted due to obstacles including cultural and linguistic barriers. For Census 2000, with the hard work of the Census Bureau on outreach initiatives in collaboration with the national community education outreach projects by many community based organizations, as well as a first-ever paid media campaign, the Census Bureau was able to improve its count of the U.S. population. However, the undercount persisted for many of the same communities.

As the 2010 Census fast approaches, it is clear that the undercount is again an issue that must be addressed, with even more challenges facing the Census Bureau. The Census Bureau is hoping to address many of these challenges through its Integrated Communications Campaign, which it has implemented based on lessons learned from the first ever paid media campaign for the 2000 Census. While we commend the Census Bureau for moving forward and learning from past successes and failures, a review of the communications campaign shows areas where improvements can be made to achieve an even more accurate count of our population. This written testimony will discuss the history of the “Hard to Count” (HTC) Asian communities, the ramifications of undercounting this population, barriers that exist for HTC Asian communities and the importance of media as a tool in communicating with the HTC Asian communities. I will also provide an assessment of the 2010 Census Integrated Communications Campaign, and its potential for reducing on the Asian undercount, and provide suggestions about additional methods that should be utilized to ensure the Census message is disseminated throughout the Asian constituencies.

## **Organizational Background**

The Asian American Justice Center (AAJC) is a national non-profit, non-partisan organization that works to advance the human and civil rights of Asian Americans through advocacy, public policy, public education, and litigation.

AAJC has three affiliates: The Asian American Institute (AAI) in Chicago; the Asian Law Caucus (ALC) in San Francisco; and the Asian Pacific American Legal Center (APALC) in Los Angeles, all of which have been engaged in working with their communities to ensure an accurate count during past decennial census. APALC is a Census Information Center and established a Demographic Research Unit to make Census 2000, and other relevant research, more accessible to the growing Asian American and Pacific Islander community and the organizations that serve it. APALC also led the California statewide collaborative effort on census outreach and education in 2000. AAJC also has over 100 Community Partners serving their communities in 24 states and the District of Columbia.

Together with our Affiliates and our Community Partners, AAJC has been extensively involved in working to eliminate the problems that have historically resulted in undercounting and underreporting of Asian Americans in federal data collection and analysis efforts, and in particular the decennial census count. AAJC conducted an extremely successful national Census 2000 outreach and educational project focused on the Asian American community. Through this project, AAJC and its Affiliates distributed over 750,000 linguistically and culturally appropriate community education materials and hosted or participated in over 865 community education activities, including panel discussions, presentations and press conferences.

Since the 2000 Census, AAJC has not paused in its efforts to ensure accurate and appropriate federal data collection and reporting on Asian Americans. AAJC has been a member of the Decennial Census Advisory Committee since 2000. In 2005, AAJC became a member of the reconstituted and downsized 2010 Census Advisory Committee. In its advisory role, AAJC is able to assist the Census Bureau in understanding what research and programs would help the Bureau to effectively address the cultural differences and intricacies in various hard-to-reach communities, particularly in Asian American communities, in order to get the most accurate count possible.

Additionally, AAJC currently co-chairs the Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights' (Leadership Conference) Census Task Force. The Leadership Conference is the nation's oldest, largest, and most diverse civil and human rights coalition, with nearly 200 member organizations working to build an America as good as its ideals. In its leadership capacity on Leadership Conference's Census Task Force, AAJC has kept Leadership Conference's members informed of important census policy issues and has facilitated conversation among the groups to build consensus recommendations for various census policy and outreach issues.

Finally, AAJC is currently engaged in education and outreach efforts around Census 2010. As a member of the Leadership Conference's Census Collaborative, AAJC is partnering with organizations such as the Leadership Conference Education Fund, the National Association of Latino Elected Officials, the National Congress of American Indians and the NAACP to develop and implement a comprehensive national census project.

AAJC is also leading efforts for the Asian American and Pacific Islander community through its recently established nationwide “Fill in Our Future” campaign, along with four other regional and local organizations, to encourage our communities’ participation in the 2010 Census through a national network of community-based organizations. Through the Fill In Our Future campaign, AAJC is re-granting significant funding to twenty-nine local community-based organizations in twenty-one states<sup>1</sup> to ensure that outreach and educational efforts are conducted at all levels to maximize the number of Asian Americans we can reach through materials dissemination, workshops, and trainings and with technical assistance. AAJC has already created the National AAPI Census Advisory Council to help ensure optimal coordination of census efforts by Asian American, Pacific Islander and Native Hawaiian communities around the country through the funding of eleven National Council of Asian Pacific Americans (NCAPA) groups already engaged in educating and outreaching to constituents through their own local affiliates/chapters and extensive networks. The National AAPI Census Advisory Council members will provide their networks with resources available through the Fill In Our Future campaign and serve as members of AAJC’s Speakers Bureau. To assist local and national partners, AAJC, through the Fill In Our Future Campaign, has developed a resource center Web site ([www.fillinourfuture.org](http://www.fillinourfuture.org)) that serves as a clearinghouse for Census 2010 materials, particularly translated materials, created for Asian American and Pacific Islander communities. The Web site also houses Public Service Announcements created across the country and in various languages, including four created by AAJC. The purpose of the clearinghouse is to organize all the information into a single central location so that communities across the country can readily access, download and use the information for educational outreach on the census, and to reduce duplication of efforts. Not only has AAJC been collecting materials created by the Census Bureau and other organizations across the county, AAJC, through the Fill In Our Future campaign, has developed materials and giveaways for our partners, including pens, magnets, mint tins, antibacterial sprays, shirts, bags, and most importantly, translated posters and brochures that provide the nuts and bolts information on how to participate in Census 2010.

AAJC is pleased to provide comments on the 2010 Census communications campaign. AAJC would like to request that this written statement be formally entered into the hearing record.

### **History of undercount of the HTC Asian communities**

Since 1940, the Census Bureau has attempted to measure its ability to accurately count the people in America, first through Demographic Analysis and more recently with a separate coverage measurement survey. Duplicate responses lead to overcounts, while omissions, or missed persons, lead to undercount.<sup>2</sup> Subtracting overcounts from undercounts results in a net

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<sup>1</sup> States include: Arizona, California, Colorado, District of Columbia, Florida, Georgia, Hawaii, Illinois, Louisiana, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Nebraska, New York, Nevada, North Carolina, Ohio, Oregon, Texas, Washington and Wisconsin.

<sup>2</sup> There are two ways to miss a person, thereby attributing to the undercount. First, the Census Bureau could miss a whole housing unit because they do not have the address or they have an incorrect address. Thus, none of the people at the housing unit will be counted. The second way to miss people is for the Census Bureau to fail to capture other people who are within a responding household. These people can be missed for a variety of reasons, including fear of government and outsiders, limited knowledge of English, mobile people and households, and irregular household members such as households with two or more separate families residing there.

undercount or overcount for each census. It is important for the Census Bureau to check its ability to achieve an accurate count through a coverage evaluation program.

For each decennial census from 1940 to 1980, the national net undercount went down, as did the net undercount for specific population subgroups. However, since 1940, there has always existed a differential undercount – that is, non-Hispanic whites had lower undercount rates than people of color, or, stated another way, people of color were missed by the census more often than non-Hispanic whites. The differential undercount was also reduced each decennial census since 1940, until the 1990 census.

The 1990 Census was a watershed moment for the Census Bureau. It was the first census that was less accurate than the one previous since the Bureau began scientific measurements of coverage. The differential undercounts were the highest the Census Bureau had ever recorded. We also learned from 1990 that it was not only African Americans who suffered significant differential undercounts but also Latino Americans and Asian Americans.<sup>3</sup> American Indians on reservations had the highest undercount of any groups in the 1990 census, with an undercount rate over 12 percent.<sup>4</sup> The undercount of children was generally disproportionate. Children made up a quarter of the overall population in 1990, but accounted for slightly more than half of all persons missed by the census.<sup>5</sup> The undercount of children of color was even more disproportionate. For example, the undercount for African American children was twice as high as that for non-Hispanic white children.<sup>6</sup>

In 2000, the Census Bureau worked to improve the accuracy of the count. Unfortunately, it was unclear how well the Census Bureau was able to count people. Despite the fact that the final coverage measurement, the Accuracy and Coverage Evaluation (Revision II) (“A.C.E. Revision II”), results showed a net national overcount of about one-half a percent and a slight overcount of the Asian American population (of 0.75 percent<sup>7</sup>),<sup>8</sup> the Census Bureau itself did not have confidence in its measures of census accuracy in 2000, especially for smaller population groups such as Asian Americans, due in part to its own concerns about its methodology for measuring the accuracy of that count. The Census Bureau cited “troubling anomalies and unexplained results” in its decision not to use the results of its accuracy-check survey to adjust the final census numbers. An expert National Academy of Sciences panel concluded that while undercounts among traditionally hard-to-count communities such as minority groups were likely

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<sup>3</sup> The 1990 census provided the first measurements on the undercounts for Latino Americans, Asian Americans, American Indians and Alaska Natives. In the previous decennial censuses, the only coverage measurements made were for “black” and “non-black.”

<sup>4</sup> Howard Hogan And Gregg Robinson, *What The Census Bureau's Coverage Evaluation Programs Tell Us About Differential Undercount*, U.S. Census Bureau Population Division for the 1993 Research Conference on Undercounted Ethnic Populations (1993),

<http://www.census.gov/population/www/documentation/1993/conference.html>.

<sup>5</sup> Barry Edmonston, *The Undercount in the 2000 Census*, [http://www.prb.org/pdf/undercount\\_paper.pdf](http://www.prb.org/pdf/undercount_paper.pdf).

<sup>6</sup> *Id.*

<sup>7</sup> Technical Assessment of A.C.E. Revision II (2003), <http://www.census.gov/dmd/www/pdf/ACETechAssess.pdf>.

<sup>8</sup> Committee on National Statistics, National Research Council, National Academy of Sciences, *The 2000 Census: Counting Under Adversity* 240-241, 253 (2004) (The A.C.E. Revision II estimated 33.1 million mistakes of all types, including 17.2 million erroneous overcounts (which primarily includes duplications and people counted in the wrong place) and 15.9 million undercounts (e.g. people missed). The report says there were a minimum of 9.8 million duplications).

lower in the 2000 Census than in previous censuses, they also concluded that there continued to be a differential undercount of racial minorities in the 2000 Census. The panel further noted that the seeming overcount of Asian Americans could be attributed, in part, to a relatively high rate of duplication of Asian Americans counted both at home and at their college dorms, which could “offset” an undercount of Asian Americans in communities that are more difficult to count due to lower income, language and other barriers.

Some Asian American subgroups strongly believe there was an undercount of their communities in 2000. This was particularly true for Southeast Asian communities. For example, many community leaders in Long Beach, California believed that the Cambodian population was undercounted in the 2000 Census. As evidence, they cite the fact that local school enrollment data were considerably at odds with the 2000 census data. During that year, school enrollment data showed a population of Cambodian children that was nearly as large as the entire Cambodian population counted by the Census Bureau, while the 2000 census data showed that the Cambodian school-age population accounted for much less than 50 percent of all Cambodians in California. It is clear that the Census Bureau missed a significant number of Cambodian children in the 2000 Census, and it is equally likely that the census missed adult Cambodians in California.

### **Ramifications of undercounting the HTC Asian communities**

The importance of census data to all Americans, and specifically for HTC Asian communities cannot be overstated; census data are critical for our society to function, as it is used for many purposes by many entities. For example, information about age, Hispanic/Latino ethnicity and race are used by the Department of Justice to combat discrimination; by the Department of Health and Human Services to support research on service delivery for children, minorities, and the elderly; and by the Department of Education to conduct studies, evaluations, and assessments of children of different racial and ethnic backgrounds. This information is also used to reapportion political representation and in the redistricting process at all levels. Many federal and state programs use census data to distribute funds for community development. In fact, census data is used by federal agencies to allocate over \$400 billion in federal funds each year for hospitals, job training centers, schools, senior centers, bridges, tunnels and other-public works projects, emergency services and other vital services. Thus, when our HTC Asian communities are undercounted, they do not get the resources and services they deserve and need and do not get the same political voice as those who are counted more accurately.

Additionally, because the census is the richest source of data on Asian American communities, especially for sub-ethnic communities (such as Chinese, Asian Indian and Hmong), undercounts in these communities are particularly detrimental. In many data sets or surveys developed by private, academic and other governmental entities, Asian Americans often find themselves woefully underrepresented. Many data sets or surveys simply lump Asian Americans into the “Other” categories, thereby making it impossible to determine what the landscape looks like for Asian Americans on that particular topic, whether it is health care, educational drop-out rates, or some other important social or political issue. Other times, Asian Americans are able to find aggregated data for the entire Asian American community but those data may not be particularly useful. Because the Asian American community is diverse, comprised of several dozen distinct ethnic groups and a multitude of cultures speaking many

different languages, all of whom have different experiences in the U.S., aggregated data may simply mask problems and concerns for particular sub-ethnic groups who are disaggregated in that data set. For example, Asian Americans as a whole are often seen as wealthy and well educated, but disaggregated data for subgroups reveals a wide array of incomes, poverty rates, and levels of educational attainment — from those doing very well to those struggling on multiple fronts. The Census Bureau is one of the few entities that collects and reports data at the disaggregated level for Asian American sub-ethnic groups. Therefore, an inaccurate count of Asian Americans means that communities will not be able to track the well-being of children, families, and the elderly; determine where to locate new highways, schools, and hospitals; show a large corporation that a town has the workforce the company needs; evaluate programs such as welfare and workforce diversification; and monitor and publicize the results of programs, particularly as it all relates to different ethnic subgroups.

### **Barriers to census participation for HTC Asian communities**

The Asian American population in the United States is larger than it has ever been in our nation's history. From 1990 to 2004, the Asian American population doubled in size, growing from seven million to 14 million. Of this rapidly growing segment of the population, about two-thirds are foreign-born, and more than a third of the Asian American population, nearly four million people, is considered limited English proficient (LEP). This combination of factors indicates that a significant sector of the population is at a substantial disadvantage — both linguistically and culturally — when it comes to participation in the census.

The Census Bureau's Asian American focus groups showed that many Asian Americans lacked awareness about the census and had not heard of the Census Bureau.<sup>9</sup> Indeed, many Asian Americans find the idea of the census not only confusing, but invasive and potentially threatening. Asian Americans — especially those who have recently emigrated from countries with oppressive governments — believe that the census is linked to the Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) or the Internal Revenue Service (IRS). The Census Bureau's Asian American focus groups also noted a lack of understanding about the purpose of the census and how the data is used. They also did not recognize any direct benefit to participating in the census to themselves and/or to the Asian American community. Lastly, respondents noted that English-language proficiency issues and the lack of availability of in-language materials functioned as barriers to census participation by Asian Americans.

Even more challenges exist to an accurate count of Asian Americans in the 2010 Census than in previous census counts, increasing the risk of a significant undercount. With continued high immigration, the diversity of the Asian American group has increased and has made them harder to reach through any one medium. The ethnic, religious, language and generational make up of the group has significantly changed since 2000. The Asian American community has grown 26 percent since 2000, with even higher growth rates in regions of the country that do not

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<sup>9</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, *Ethnic and Racial Sub-Population Focus Group Research* (2007), <http://www.census.gov/procur/www/2010communications/final%20report%20-%20asian%20&%20arab-american.pdf> (The report provides detailed findings from focus groups on the following populations: Korean, Vietnamese, Cambodian, Filipino, Laotian, Chinese, Arab, Multi-Racial and Caucasian).

have extensive community infrastructure to assist the Census Bureau. There are generally high levels of mobility among some segments of the Asian American population. Also recent natural disasters and the economic crisis have displaced many people from their homes and have created a more complex, often multi-family household for many people. Asian immigrants are increasingly reluctant to voluntarily provide personal information to the government in an age of identity theft and in the wake of immigration raids and other dragnets that post-9/11 policies have created, including the use of housing enforcement to identify those who are undocumented.

**Importance of media as a tool in communicating with the HTC Asian communities**

Media is an important tool in communicating with the HTC Asian communities. In particular, utilizing ethnic media<sup>10</sup> is the most effective way to reach a substantial part of Asian communities. In fact, almost 3 in 4 Asian Americans are reached by ethnic media, with 57 percent reached by ethnic television and 43 percent by ethnic newspapers.<sup>11</sup> Additionally, 1 in 4 Asian Americans are reached by ethnic radio. Different Asian ethnic communities respond to ethnic media differently, including which medium is utilized (*see table below*).<sup>12</sup>

	Reach of Ethnic Media	Reach of Ethnic Television	Reach of Ethnic Newspaper	Reach of Ethnic Radio
Chinese	59%	70%	70%	31%
Koreans	61%	54%	64%	27%
Vietnamese	83%	57%	39%	34%
Filipinos	84%	60%	29%	11%
Asian Indians	85%	45%	15%	19%

The reach of Asian ethnic television has increased substantially since 2005, with television programming targeting Chinese, Vietnamese, Koreans and Filipinos increasing its reach to the Asian American adult population by 30 percent.<sup>13</sup> Ethnic radio is also particularly strong in the Chinese, Korean and Vietnamese communities, especially for reaching first-generation immigrants.<sup>14</sup> Newspapers continue to be a strong medium for reaching Asian American populations, with their popularity increasing in many communities, such as the Chinese and Korean newspapers that now reach 70 percent and 64 percent respectively of their adult populations in the United States. Newspapers like Sing Tao, the World Journal, Korea Daily and Korea Times have substantially increased their circulation since 2005. The reach of

<sup>10</sup> See New America Media, *National Study on the Penetration of Ethnic Media in America* (2009), [http://media.namx.org/polls/2009/06/National\\_Study\\_of\\_the\\_Penetration\\_of\\_Ethnic\\_Media\\_June\\_5\\_2009\\_Presentation.pdf](http://media.namx.org/polls/2009/06/National_Study_of_the_Penetration_of_Ethnic_Media_June_5_2009_Presentation.pdf) (Media directed toward a specific ethnic group and often written or broadcast in a language native to the group (e.g., Chinese-language newspapers or Asian television stations)).

<sup>11</sup> *Id.* At 11, 19 (73 percent of Asian Americans are reached by ethnic media).

<sup>12</sup> New America Media, *supra* note 10.

<sup>13</sup> New America Media, *Executive Summary of a National Study on the Penetration of Ethnic Media in America* (2009), [http://media.namx.org/polls/2009/06/Penetration\\_of\\_Ethnic\\_Media\\_Executive\\_Summary.pdf](http://media.namx.org/polls/2009/06/Penetration_of_Ethnic_Media_Executive_Summary.pdf).

<sup>14</sup> Project for Excellence in Journalism, *The State of the News Media 2008, An Annual Report on American Journalism* (2008), [http://www.stateofthemediamedia.org/2008/narrative\\_ethnicalternative\\_audience.php?cat=2&media=11](http://www.stateofthemediamedia.org/2008/narrative_ethnicalternative_audience.php?cat=2&media=11).

weekly and monthly publications that focus on the Filipino and Asian Indian populations has also experienced an increase.<sup>15</sup>

New online media holds the biggest potential for reaching Asian Americans. According to several studies, Asian Americans make up the largest online audience of any ethnic group in the country and are the heaviest and most experienced users, with 75 percent having gone online at one time or another, mostly for news, entertainment and services.<sup>16</sup> Some have placed the number of Asian Americans online at 11 million in 2007, and projects that number will grow to 14 million in four years.<sup>17</sup> The current reach of ethnic Web sites is 35 percent of the adult population, with more than half of all Chinese adults and about one-third of all Korean and Vietnamese adults report visiting sites in their native languages.<sup>18</sup> Although online media has the potential to reach many Asian Americans, it is important to note that many Asian Americans, particularly those in HTC communities, are not internet proficient nor have access to computers.

### **Challenges facing Census 2010 Media Campaign for the HTC Asian American population**

The HTC Asian American population is comprised of more than several dozen distinct ethnic groups and a multitude of cultures speaking many different languages. Moreover, Asian Americans vary generationally, spanning from recently arrived immigrants to those with roots in the community for more than one hundred years. Any communications or marketing plan must be multi-faceted to address the needs of the various ethnic groups, various languages, and various generations. Each individual Asian American sub-ethnic group has intrinsic characteristics that require customization in messaging, treatment and media vehicles based on particular nuances. In addition, there are multiple factors that pose additional challenges for reaching the especially HTC Asian American communities.

A. Geographic Location – A majority of Asian Americans are concentrated in metropolitan areas, which make it easy for marketers to reach them. However, there are Asian-American segments located in remote rural and urban areas that are not known to be Asian-dominant. In addition, migrant communities often have cluster presence as opposed to a significant mass composition.

B. Limited Media Availability – Overall, the Asian American community is teeming with media outlets. There has been a 300 percent surge in the number of Asian American media outlets from 1990 to 2007, with over 600 communication channels.<sup>19</sup> However, there are limited media vehicles available for some Southeast Asian segments comprised mostly of migrants. This is partly because of high illiteracy levels amongst Hmong, Laotian and Mien communities.

C. Language Barrier – There are more than 800 spoken Asian languages and dialects. Seventy-five percent of Asians speak a language other than English at home, creating quite a

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<sup>15</sup> New America Media, *supra* note 13.

<sup>16</sup> Project for Excellence in Journalism, *supra* note 14.

<sup>17</sup> *Id.*

<sup>18</sup> New America Media, *supra* note 13.

<sup>19</sup> Project for Excellence in Journalism, *supra* note 14.

challenge in information dissemination efforts.<sup>20</sup> In addition, older generation immigrants have a different adaptation rate when it comes to speaking/understanding the English language.

D. Linguistic Isolation – Urban and rural isolation insulates communities and there can be little to no incentive to speak English or learn English. This isolation is especially true with elderly and older-adult consumers.

E. Literacy – A significant amount of migrant Asian American populations are categorized as oral or "preliterate" people (those who lack an alphabet and knowledge of basic literacy processes). For example, a majority of the Hmong community did not read and write as late as the 1950s, and many had never seen books or even held pencils. It has also been reported that in some provinces of Laos in the 1970s, the rate of Hmong who did not read or write was as high as 99 percent, while a 1986 study of Hmong refugee families in the U.S. indicated that 80 percent of those surveyed could not read or write Lao, and 70 percent could not read Hmong.<sup>21</sup>

F. Nomadic Rural Populations – Migrant farm worker communities have seasonal jobs and travel constantly. As such, it is challenging to locate these groups as they often reside in temporary camps.

G. Economically Disadvantaged – Low-income individuals, characterized by not having access to a home, telephone and/or transportation, pose significant challenges to information acquisition.

### **Assessment of the 2010 Census Integrated Communications Campaign and its potential impact on the Asian undercount.**

The 2010 Census Integrated Communications Campaign has a fairly extensive campaign focused on the Asian American community, with media buys being made nationally and in 53 additional local markets. (*See Appendix A*). Additionally, the media campaign is being conducted in various Asian languages. (*See Appendix B*). The 2010 Census Integrated Communications Campaign is focused more on the HTC communities overall than the diverse mass community. In 2000, over 50 percent of the budget was spent on the Diverse Mass campaign while less than 50 percent (45%) is being spent for 2010. The Asian share of the budget is slight larger than in 2000, from 9.1% to 10.2%, and an increase in actual dollars from \$10 million to \$13.5 million.<sup>22</sup> However, this increase in budget is somewhat deceiving because the 2010 census dollars have to stretch across more communities and more languages than the 2000 census dollars. In 2000, the paid media campaign covered 11 Asian subgroups and languages: Chinese, Korean, Vietnamese, Filipino, Asian Indian, Japanese, Cambodian, Thai, Hmong, Laotian, and Mandarin.<sup>23</sup> For 2010, the paid media campaign covers 6 additional Asian subgroup communities, for a total of 17 subgroups and 13 languages: Bengali, Cantonese,

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<sup>20</sup> Asian American Health Initiative, <http://www.aahiinfo.org/english/asianAmericans.php#profiles> (last visited Feb. 17, 2010).

<sup>21</sup> The Hmong: An Introduction to Their History and Culture, <http://www.cal.org/CO/hmong/hlit.html> (last visited Feb. 17, 2010).

<sup>22</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, Advertising Budget Census 2000 and 2010 Census, [http://2010.census.gov/news/pdf/advertising\\_budget.pdf](http://2010.census.gov/news/pdf/advertising_budget.pdf).

<sup>23</sup> U.S. Census Monitoring Bd, Report to Congress 19 (1999).

Gujarati, Hindi/Hinglish, Hmong, Japanese, Khmer, Korean, Lao, Mandarin, Punjabi, Taglish, Tamil, Telugu, Thai, Urdu, and Vietnamese. Additionally, there is a substantial increase in new media outlets being utilized in 2010 that were not used in the 2000 Census.<sup>24</sup> Media outlets being used in 2010 include newspaper, magazine, outdoor ads, television, radio, and digital media.

Additionally, the Asian American media campaign is significantly more inclusive than in 2000. Not only are more languages covered, over 750 media outlets are being engaged in this effort. Equally important is that the 2010 Census campaign is being customized so that the advertising campaign is culturally sensitive for each targeted Asian ethnic subgroup, rather than a "one size fits all" generic Asian campaign. This helps to ensure that the HTC members of specific community groups are encouraged to participate in the census, rather than discouraged because of a lack of culturally sensitive media pieces. HTC Asian American communities are also more likely to be reached in 2010 than in 2000 because of the multiple mediums used to target an Asian ethnic subgroup (rather than the limited media types in 2000). Finally, there is an independent confidentiality campaign specifically designed for key Asian groups that deal specifically with confidentiality concerns for the 2010 Census that did not exist in 2000. As noted in the Census Bureau's own focus groups, confidentiality was a major concern for respondents, as well as language barriers – both of which are addressed by this media campaign.

#### Gaps in media plan for Asian Americans

While the Asian American media plan is an improvement from the 2000 campaign, there is still room for improvement. The following are some concerns that AAJC has with the campaign:

- The Asian American community has grown significantly over the past decade, not only in numbers but in diversity of ethnic groups. With a massive increase in Asian American-focused media organizations today than there were in 2000, there is clearly a need for in-language and in-culture media vehicles that appeal to Asian and Asian/Pacific Islander Americans living in the U.S. and the island areas. Despite this significant increase in media, national budgets allocated for Asian and Pacific Islander Americans seemingly was not enough to cover several smaller, but growing AAPI communities, including Indonesians, Malaysians, Burmese, Sri Lankans, and Tibetans.
- It seems that there is no Pacific Islander media campaign for the mainland but rather one simply focused on the islands. This means that many Pacific Islanders residing on the continental U.S. will not be reached by the existing campaign and run a high risk of being missed during the 2010 census.
- Key opinion leaders often read the English-language media, such as Asian Week (online), Asian Fortune and others. These media play a critical role in educating and informing the "grasstops" about what is happening in Washington, D.C. Despite the increase in English-language Asian media, no resources seem to be allocated to support these media organizations.

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<sup>24</sup> See Appendix B.

- Particularly in these tough economic times, states and local governments are having a difficult time dealing with the large number of isolated communities that have distinct language/dialect needs such as the Montagnards, Chams, Iu Mien, and larger communities with language needs such as the Bengali, Punjabi, Gujarati, Tamil, Nepali, Bhutanese and Sinhalese speaking populations from India, Bangladesh, Nepal, Bhutan and Sri Lanka. Few, if any, dollars were seemingly provided for the development of ads or PSAs for these harder to reach communities.
- We have heard that community partners working with the U.S. Census Bureau would like to have greater access to the agencies working on the national and regional media campaigns for the 2010 Census. Since the community partners are committed to support the work of the U.S. Census Bureau and its contractors, a level of trust and transparency is needed in order to ensure that there is a full and accurate count of all communities. Placing too many restrictions on this access has created frustration for all parties and has bred suspicion and animosity that could be prevented. This has unfortunately led to negative media coverage of Census 2010 at a time when we should be encouraging all Americans to fill in their census forms and send them back.
- Finally, we appreciate that the Census Bureau and the Communications Contractor team conducted significant focus group testing, particularly for Asian American communities and doing so in the participants' language. On one hand, we welcome even more focus group testing, particularly for additional HTC Asian American groups. However, we have concerns about whether the focus group testing self-selects participants that do not necessarily represent those hardest to count in our communities. We believe that other methods should also be explored to determine attitudes and barriers to census participation, as well as an evaluation as to how well focus group testing reaches those hardest to count (and/or what can be done to make sure that it does).

**Any additional methods that should be utilized to ensure the Census message is disseminated throughout the Asian communities.**

AAJC would like to commend the Census Bureau for taking steps to address our concerns about reaching Asian Americans who are not fluent in English through their Advance Letter. Initially, the Census Bureau planned to print advance letters notifying residents of the upcoming Census in English only. This was a departure from 2000 when the Bureau included messages in other languages, allowing people to request a Census questionnaire printed in another language. Census partners, particularly those working in immigrant communities, credited the multi-lingual advance letter with increasing Census participation among members of hard-to-count communities. After AAJC and other organizations raised the issue of an English-only advance letter, Director Robert Groves decided to include "in-language" messages in the advance letter, which will be mailed to all households announcing the 2010 Census. The in-language messages will direct recipients to the Census Bureau's Web site, which provides in-language materials, as recommended by the Census Bureau's 2010 Census Advisory Committee's Advance Letter Working Group, led by AAJC.

Not only did the Census Bureau expand their language assistance program by including in-language information on their Advance Letter, they also committed to a four-pronged targeted outreach in local neighborhoods with high concentrations of households that speak Chinese, Vietnamese, Korean and Russian (translated census form languages) through a postcard mailing, expanded partnership efforts, and targeted mailings of language assistance guides through paid in-language media vehicles.

In another move to help ensure that limited English proficient Asian Americans are not discouraged from participating in the 2010 Census, Director Groves swiftly decided to address concerns raised by AAJC and our local partners regarding the troublesome Vietnamese translation of the words “census” and “enumerator” in the Bureau’s literature and forms. In response, the Census Bureau immediately replaced all inappropriate translations from its Web sites.<sup>25</sup> Director Groves also proactively agreed to update the language reference dictionary, which provides translations for commonly used census terms, even though the poor translation of the word “enumerator” did not originate from the Census Bureau, but rather from non-governmental organizations in the field. Because both governmental and non-governmental organizations use the dictionary, we believe that it is one of the most effective ways to ensure culturally appropriate translations for terms related to Census 2010 and future census counts. It is important that the Census Bureau continues to engage community leaders in the planning for Census 2020, which will help to ensure that translation and other culturally sensitive issues are resolved upfront and not when it is too late to make all the necessary changes.

For Census 2010, it is important for the Census Bureau to work with its regional offices to ensure that they are fully able to identify, recruit and hire the best Census employees with the language and cultural skills needed to secure a full and accurate count of all AAPIs living in the U.S. It is important that the census takers recruited and hired are “indigenous” to the communities where they will be working because these workers can bring knowledge of the local language, neighborhood and culture to the field. The Census Bureau should also constantly strive to achieve a more diverse full time workforce both at Headquarters and in the regions. We believe that the Census Bureau must implement a hiring policy that recognizes the importance of having experts on various hard-to-count communities, including the Asian American, Pacific Islander and other minority communities, throughout the Bureau’s operations, so that all efforts by the Census Bureau are culturally appropriate. Otherwise, the Census Bureau runs the risk of offending out of ignorance. For example, regions publicized job opportunities for individuals with bilingual or multilingual skills in: English and Asian. "Asian" isn't a language.

Another concern is how well the regional offices are addressing the needs of Asian communities through their partner specialists and their public relations and outreach efforts. Partnership specialists play a crucial role as a liaison between the Census Bureau and local community organizations, the trusted voices, to ultimately reach those who are hard-to-count. Partnership specialists work proactively to find trusted voices and messengers in HTC communities, such as organizations that provide services in the HTC communities, businesses, churches and other religious establishments, or any other place frequented by HTC individuals

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<sup>25</sup> Unfortunately, with fewer than three months left before April 1, Census Day, the Bureau determined that it could not reprint the Vietnamese Census 2010 questionnaire or language assistance guides, which have already been printed and delivered.

on a regular basis. Well-trained partnership specialists are culturally sensitive to the communities they serve and can help connect the trusted voices. Partnership specialists are also crucial in helping to distribute Census Bureau created materials, particularly translated materials, to community organizations who can ensure that they reach the hardest to count in the places where they can be found. Unfortunately, similar to what we saw in 2000, the quality of partnership specialists varied significantly across regions and not enough specialists have been hired to cover the various communities in certain regions. For example, in Chicago, there was no partnership specialist hired for any Asian American community as of December 9, 2009, despite the fact that the Chicago regional office had two Asian partnership specialists for the 2000 Census and has grown significantly this past decade.<sup>26</sup> By the time the Chicago regional office decided to hire a partnership specialist for the Chinese American community with Chinese language skills in late December, local leaders requested that the regional office hire someone who could work with all the various Asian American communities in the Chicago area. With over 50 Asian American community organizations, associations and religious institutions promoting and educating people about the census, they requested a partnership specialist that could work with all of them and support them in the work they are already doing, rather than someone who could do grassroots level work in only one language. Unfortunately, the regional office did not hire a partnership specialist that could work with all groups and thus have left many Asian American communities without a partnership specialist to assist it, including the nation's third largest Korean-American population. We have also heard other stories from the field regarding the competency and breadth of community knowledge of other partnership specialists. This is not to say that there are not highly qualified and effective partnership specialists across the many regions, but rather that there is inconsistency from office to office. We believe that this leads to the conclusion that there is a need for more training of partnership specialists and community input regarding what is needed locally.

Of equal concern is the lack of coordination between the national and the regional/local outreach and public relations efforts. This concern is one of the driving forces behind AAJC's Fill In Our Future resource center Web site. We believed that a clearinghouse was needed as a way to try and fill in the gaps left by the lack of coordination (and the lack of partnership specialists in some areas) and to help local organizations with materials, particularly those translated into various Asian and Pacific Islander languages. What would be helpful at this time would be for the Census Bureau to provide AAJC with a listing of all the partnership specialists and coordinators as they are selected so that we can provide that information on our resource center Web site and assist in connecting local efforts to the partnership specialists. Also, if provided by the Census Bureau and the regions, we could publicize listings of job opportunities through the Web site and our many partners. Since some regions have done a better job than others in filling their positions, AAJC and its partner organizations could assist in getting the word out and help find candidates.

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<sup>26</sup> Similarly, in Virginia, in response to groups' request citing a need for census specialists for their Korean and Vietnamese communities, the agency hired someone who spoke Chinese. Other communities where specialists were not hired but where there is a need are: the Bangladeshi community in Detroit and the south Asian and Cambodian groups in Philadelphia and Rhode Island. See Hope Yen, *Gaps emerging in US census outreach to immigrants*, THE ASSOCIATED PRESS, Feb. 1, 2010, [http://news.yahoo.com/s/ap/20100201/ap\\_on\\_go\\_ot/us\\_census\\_immigrants](http://news.yahoo.com/s/ap/20100201/ap_on_go_ot/us_census_immigrants).

Another area of concern where AAJC could also be of assistance is making sure that the Census Bureau identifies its Questionnaire Assistance Centers and Be Counted Sites earlier than in 2000, and that it does a better job advertising their locations. If the Census Bureau could provide the information to AAJC, we could ensure that the information is provided on our resource center Web site, which provides information by state and in-language.

Finally, steps must be taken to ensure that deceptive mailings and Internet scams that pretend to represent the Census Bureau and Census 2010 are not used to mislead, misinform and/or swindle Americans. The Census Bureau and many of the community-based organizations conducting Census 2010 education and outreach efforts have warned respondents that the census is not being conducted via the internet or email and have provided instructions of what to do if they believe there is a Web site or email that is fraudulently trying to obtain personal information. Additionally, there have been reports about deceptive mailings that have been sent utilizing the Census 2010 image to confuse recipients of the mailing. For example, it has been recently reported in the media that a fundraising mailer has been mailed from Republican National Committee Chairman Michael Steele that comes in the form of a “survey” that calls itself the “Congressional District Census” with an envelope starkly printed with the words, “DO NOT DESTROY OFFICIAL DOCUMENT” and describes itself, on the outside of the envelope, as a “census document.” Officials from both parties criticized this mailing saying that it could be confused with official correspondence regarding this year’s Census, which in turn could confuse many Americans, particularly those who are hardest to count and result in discouraging their participation.<sup>27</sup> Any attempts to fraudulently or deceptively use the Census 2010 to personal interest or advantage should be investigated and handled as a serious transgression.

## **Conclusion**

On behalf of AAJC, I want to thank the Committee for the opportunity to provide a written statement on the 2010 Census Integrated Communications Campaign. While the Census Bureau has taken important steps to improve its media plan for 2010, including a more inclusive media campaign, there are still areas where improvements could be made that would facilitate a more accurate count in 2010 and ensure full participation by the American public.

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<sup>27</sup> Ben Smith, *Maloney, Clay, McHenry criticize RNC 'census' mailer*, POLITICO, Jan. 25, 2010, [http://www.politico.com/blogs/bensmith/0110/Maloney\\_Clay\\_McHenry\\_criticize\\_RNC\\_census\\_mailer.html](http://www.politico.com/blogs/bensmith/0110/Maloney_Clay_McHenry_criticize_RNC_census_mailer.html).