

**REACHING HARD-TO-COUNT COMMUNITIES IN
THE 2020 CENSUS**

HEARING
BEFORE THE
**COMMITTEE ON
OVERSIGHT AND REFORM**
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
ONE HUNDRED SIXTEENTH CONGRESS

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C O N T E N T S

Hearing held on January 9, 2020	Page 1
WITNESSES	
Ms. Vanita Gupta, President and Chief Executive Officer, The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights Oral Statement	8
Mr. John Yang, President and Executive Director, Asian Americans Advanc- ing Justice Oral Statement	10
Mr. Arturo Vargas, CEO, NALEO Educational Fund Oral Statement	12
Mr. Kevin J. Allis, Chief Executive Officer, National Congress of American Indians Oral Statement	14
Mr. Marc Morial, President and Chief Executive Officer, National Urban League Oral Statement	16
Mr. Darrell Moore, Executive Director, Center for South Georgia Regional Impact, Valdosta State University Oral Statement	19

- * The prepared statements for the above witnesses are available at: <https://docs.house.gov>.

INDEX OF DOCUMENTS

The documents listed below are available at: <https://docs.house.gov>.

- * Letter to Mr. Dillingham on the practice of hiring people; submitted by Rep. Connolly.
- * Letter from Mr. Dillingham on the practice of hiring people; submitted by Rep. Connolly.
- * Unanimous Consent: Mr. Moore's PowerPoint presentation; submitted by Rep. Hice.
- * Unanimous Consent: 2018 Census Bureau Report; submitted by Rep. Raskin.
- * Unanimous Consent: Article, *The Hill*, "Deportations Lower Under Trump Administration Than Obama;" submitted by Rep. Cloud.
- * Unanimous Consent: Article, "The Census Could Undercount Those Who Do Not Have Internet;" submitted by Rep. Tlaib.
- * Unanimous Consent: Supreme Court Case - Brief of Businesses and Business Organizations; submitted by Rep. Porter.
- * Letter of Support: YMCA.
- * Letter of Support: Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights.
- * Letter of Support: May 2019 Census Bureau Report on the Undercounted.
- * Letter of Support: Report - People with Disabilities.
- * Letter of Support: The Urban Institute.
- * Letter of Support: Epic.org.
- * Letter of Support: AANPH.

REACHING HARD-TO-COUNT COMMUNITIES IN THE 2020 CENSUS

Thursday, January 9, 2020

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND REFORM,
Washington, D.C.

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 10:05 a.m., in room 2154, Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. Carolyn Maloney, [chairwoman of the committee] presiding.

Present: Representatives Maloney, Norton, Clay, Connolly, Krishnamoorthi, Raskin, Rouda, Wasserman Schultz, Sarbanes, Welch, Speier, Kelly, DeSaulnier, Lawrence, Plaskett, Khanna, Gomez, Ocasio-Cortez, Pressley, Tlaib, Porter, Haaland, Jordan, Gosar, Foxx, Meadows, Hice, Grothman, Comer, Cloud, Gibbs, Higgins, Norman, Roy, Miller, Green, Armstrong, and Keller.

Chairwoman MALONEY. We will come to order. Without objection, the Chair is authorized to declare a recess of the committee at any time.

With that, I will now recognize myself to give an opening statement and Mr. Gomez will follow me with a minute and the same will be given to the ranking member.

Good morning. Thank you to everyone for being here today to discuss a topic which is vital to our democracy, the decennial census.

The 2020 census is imminent with counting set to begin in Alaska in less than two weeks and across the country on April 1.

The Constitution requires every person to be counted, every single person living in the United States of America. Not just citizens, not just people of a particular political party or race. Absolutely everyone.

I am gravely concerned that the Census Bureau may not be prepared to meet this high bar and that the 2020 census could leave communities across the country undercounted, underrepresented, and underfunded.

The Government Accountability Office and the Department of Commerce Inspector General both agree that the census is not where it should be.

Sadly, under President Trump, we are forced to ask whether the failure to address these concerns is due to incompetence or is intentional.

The Census Bureau has been plagued by delays in hiring thousands of census workers needed to ensure every person is counted. These delays hurt hard-to-count communities the most because out-

reach from trusted voices and nonresponse followup are essential in these communities.

The administration's anti-immigrant policies and its illegal effort to add a citizenship question have made an accurate count even harder to obtain by sowing fear and distrust in communities across the country.

But this appears to be the point. As Republican operative Thomas Hofeller, the so-called Michelangelo of redistricting, put it, adding a citizenship question would be, and I quote from him, quote, "advantageous for Republicans and non-Hispanic whites," end quote.

Ultimately, the administration's goal in trying to add a citizenship question seems to be to take the hard-to-count and make them the uncounted.

This is why I introduced a bill last year, the Census ID Act, to remove the citizenship question and codify the process by which questions are added to the census form.

When the Supreme Court ruled that the attempt to add the citizenship question was illegal, the administration refused for almost two weeks to accept the outcome before finally following the law.

Even still, the president is trying to use administrative records to collect citizenship data. But this has nothing to do with the 2020 census.

The Census Bureau needs to make clear that everyone can participate in the census without fear, that doing so will not hurt them or their family, and that their personal data will be secure.

The Census Bureau also faces a host of new challenges as it executes the largest census in history and the first to be conducted almost mostly and entirely online.

Cyber threats, limited broadband access, reduced language assistance, and gaps in outreach efforts all threaten the success of the census.

Data from the census will determine the apportionment of every seat in the House of Representatives and the allocation of, roughly, \$1.5 trillion in Federal funding.

An undercount means fewer Federal dollars for communities that need the most, including for essential services like Medicaid, children's health insurance, foster care, and schools.

An undercount would also mean less representation for these communities at every level of government. If you are not counted, you are not represented.

Some states, including California and my home state of New York, are trying to fill the gaps in the Census Bureau's efforts to reach hard-to-count communities. I applaud these efforts and urge every state to do the same. The Bureau should coordinate with these states so that limited resources can be used most effectively and efficiently.

To be clear, I believe the career civil servants at the Census Bureau are working hard to achieve the mission of a complete and accurate census.

But they need help and they need it quickly. Our witnesses today know these hard-to-count communities better than anyone. We should value their expertise and pay heed to their recommendations, and I know I will.

In November 2018, my predecessor, our beloved chairman, Elijah Cummings, vowed that ensuring a fair, accurate, and nonpartisan census would be a top priority of the Oversight Committee on his watch, and he was good to his word, and as chairwoman, I intend to honor that commitment.

So, I want to thank everyone for coming and I look forward to their testimony, and I would now like to call on Jimmy Gomez for one minute.

Mr. GOMEZ. Thank you, Chairwoman Maloney.

As we all know, today's hearing is not a theoretical exercise. The 2020 census is just days away and the threat of an undercount is real.

The last census failed to count more than 750,000 Latinos, more than 750,000 African Americans, and more than 50,000 American Indians and Native Alaskans.

I am very concerned that we could see an even bigger undercount in 2020. Many Americans are fearful and mistrustful of their government and overcoming that fear and mistrust requires a massive mobilization effort that we have never seen before.

But the Census Bureau appears to be far behind schedule. An undercount will have an impact on the opportunities available to the people in these communities.

It will mean more people going without health care, fewer resources for childcare, affordable housing, and less money for local schools.

As a committee and a Congress, our message should be simple: Everyone must be counted. I am grateful to each of our witnesses here today, not just for assisting the committee but for your tireless advocacy to ensure that members of your communities are counted fairly and accurately as the Constitution requires.

And with that, I yield back.

Chairwoman MALONEY. The Chair now recognizes the ranking member.

Mr. JORDAN. I thank the Chair.

Before getting to my opening statement, Madam Chair, when we last met I brought up the scathing report that Inspector General Horowitz and the Justice Department brought forward last month—a report where even former FBI Director Jim Comey on national television had to say that he was wrong in his defense of the FBI and how they handled the FISA application process in the Trump-Russia investigation.

You indicated that you would let us know when we were going to have Mr. Horowitz in front of this committee. I mean, understand what he pointed out 17 different times. The FBI—

Chairwoman MALONEY. I thank the gentleman. I thank the gentleman.

Mr. JORDAN. We are still waiting for an answer, Madam Chair, on when we are going to have Mr. Horowitz before this committee.

Chairwoman MALONEY. Well, I would love to give you an answer. And so, the purpose of this hearing is on the census and I appreciate the ranking member's persistence on this issue.

Before the Inspector General's report was released to the public, all members of the Oversight Committee had the opportunity to

read the report and attend a briefing with the Office of the Inspector General.

The Senate Judiciary Committee held a hearing on the Inspector General's report on December 11. The Senate Committee on Homeland Security followed with its own hearing on December 18. The Inspector General testified in both of these hearings and answered numerous questions about the report.

So, I deeply appreciate the ranking member's request and I wrote him a letter on December 6. At this point, I don't think another hearing is necessary and I look forward to working with him—

Mr. MEADOWS. So, Madam Chairman—Madam—

Chairwoman MALONEY.—On areas where we can work together to improve the lives of our constituents.

Mr. MEADOWS. So, Madam Chairman, why don't we have a census hearing over in the Senate then if we are always going to rely on the Senate to have these hearings? I mean, if you are saying—

Chairwoman MALONEY. The gentleman is not recognized.

Mr. MEADOWS. Well—

Chairwoman MALONEY. The gentleman is not recognized.

Mr. MEADOWS. Well, then I have a point of order.

Mr. JORDAN. I think—

Mr. MEADOWS. Then I have a point of order, and I will be glad—because rule—

Chairwoman MALONEY. Recite your point of order.

Mr. MEADOWS. Rule 11 Clause 2(j) Section 1 actually talks about minority hearings and one of the issues that we have had, Madam Chairman, is that we believe that this committee needs to be doing their oversight function.

And I bring up Jack Evans. We have had Jack Evans resign from the D.C. Council. It was the previous chairman along with, I would say, the gentleman from Virginia, Mr. Connolly, and I expressed concern about proper oversight in a minority hearing—hold on.

Chairwoman MALONEY. Will the gentleman cite your point of order?

Mr. MEADOWS. The point of order is, is under that rule we have the requirement for a minority hearing, of which was not noticed properly and was ambiguous at best and did not get to the heart of the matter because it was not conducted. And if the chairman is going to argue that a minority hearing didn't happen—

Chairwoman MALONEY. May I—may I respond to your point of order?

Mr. MEADOWS [continuing]. I will—I will quote another point of order.

Chairwoman MALONEY. We had a minority day of hearings on the D.C.—

Mr. MEADOWS. I would—I would—

Chairwoman MALONEY. Reclaiming my time.

Mr. MEADOWS. No. No. I would appeal the ruling of the Chair. I am going to—

Chairwoman MALONEY. There is no ruling. There is no ruling. There is no point of order.

Mr. MEADOWS. So, is my point of order out of order or not?

Chairwoman MALONEY. You have not stated a point of order.

Mr. MEADOWS. My point of order is that we have violated the rule by not having a minority hearing that was properly noticed.

Chairwoman MALONEY. We had a minority hearing.

Mr. MEADOWS. I appeal the——

Chairwoman MALONEY. You are out of order.

Mr. MEADOWS. I appeal the ruling of the Chair.

Chairwoman MALONEY. Reclaiming my time.

Mr. MEADOWS. I appeal the ruling of the Chair. I have that right. I promise you I have that right.

Chairwoman MALONEY. For a minority hearing—on a minority hearing that we already had on D.C. Statehood?

Mr. MEADOWS. Has Mr. Evans—has Mr. Evans been here?

Chairwoman MALONEY. Mr. Evans was invited to come along with others that were requested by the minority.

Mr. MEADOWS. Then I make a motion that we subpoena Jack Evans.

Chairwoman MALONEY. They did not come, and it is not up to me to get them to come. You invited a guest. It is up to the minority to get them there.

Mr. MEADOWS. Well, you are the chairman. I would make a motion that we subpoena Jack Evans and have him come in. If we want to do proper oversight, I make a motion that we subpoena Jack Evans.

Chairwoman MALONEY. The gentleman has not stated a proper point of order.

Mr. MEADOWS. Well, the gentleman has stated a proper point of order. Now, whether she wants to rule on it or not, I can assure the parliamentarian I will be glad to go back and forth with her if she wants to go ahead and put on her mic.

Chairwoman MALONEY. The parliamentarian says it is not a proper——

Mr. MEADOWS. I promise you that I have stated a proper point of order.

Chairwoman MALONEY.—Is not a proper point of order.

Mr. MEADOWS. I appeal the ruling of the Chair.

Mr. HIGGINS. Madam Chair?

Chairwoman MALONEY. The gentleman has not stated a proper point of order.

Mr. MEADOWS. All right.

Chairwoman MALONEY. It is the ranking member's time. The ranking member is recognized for his opening statement.

Mr. JORDAN. Madam Chair, I yield.

Mr. MEADOWS. It is your time, Mr. Ranking Member.

Mr. JORDAN. Well, let me go back to—and we have got lots of concerns, Madam Chair. Let us just—let us just be honest, and not only with the fact that Mr. Evans has stepped down and we have yet to have him in front of this committee, but also, as I raised earlier, the issue of Mr. Horowitz's report, which, again [stated], 17 different times the FBI misled the FISA court.

Let me just read something. Let me just read something. The Chair talked about the Senate having hearings. But I thought this committee, which has oversight for every single Inspector General in our government—and we are talking now about the Justice Department Inspector General—this is what the public order from the

FISA court judge, Judge Collyer, what she had to say after Mr. Horowitz's report last month.

The frequency with which representations made by FBI personnel turned out to be unsupported or contradicted by information—

Chairwoman MALONEY. The gentleman—excuse me, Ranking Member.

Mr. JORDAN. No. No. No. No. The time is mine. The time is mine.

Chairwoman MALONEY. You are recognized for an opening statement on the census.

Mr. JORDAN. The time is mine, Madam Chair.

Mr. MEADOWS. He—oh, my gosh.

Mr. JORDAN. And all I know is during your opening statement the time didn't even run. You told me you were going to give us the same opportunity during our opening statement.

Let me go back before I was interrupted and read Judge Collyer's statement in her public order after Mr. Horowitz's report.

The frequency with which representations made by FBI personnel turned out to be unsupported or contradicted by information in their possession and with which they withheld information detrimental to their case calls into question whether information contained in other FBI applications is reliable.

Let us put that in plain English. They lied so much to the FISA court the judge is saying, how can we trust other representations you have made to this court. That is what she said.

After Mr. Horowitz's report, and to date the Chair doesn't even want to have a hearing. The chairman's response was, oh, the Senate had a couple hearings. That is good enough.

Even though this committee has jurisdiction over every single Inspector General in the government. That is why we want Mr. Horowitz here for a hearing.

Used to happen when Republicans were in charge. We brought in the Inspector Generals after a big report. But I guess things are different. I guess things are different. Mr. Evans should have been here.

Mr. Horowitz should have been here already. Unfortunately, obviously, the chairwoman is not going to do that.

In my remaining time I do want to address the situation of the census. Madam Chairwoman, thank you for convening this hearing.

Oversight of the census is one of this committee's core responsibilities. However, I worry that since last January Democrats have been more—much more focused on using our committee to attack the Trump administration than on addressing fundamental good government oversight like preparedness for the census.

The census determines the apportionment of seats in the House, it dictates how Federal funds are distributed to states and localities, and it provides crucial details about the size, vitality, and mobility of our population.

This data serves as the gold standard for researchers and statisticians to better understand trends in American life.

When we were in the majority, Republicans held several hearings about census preparedness dating back to 2015. Mr. Meadows chaired many of those.

In 2018 alone, Republicans convened five hearings or briefings about the census. We looked at important topics like information technology preparations, cybersecurity preparedness, and we sought to understand how the Bureau was getting ready for the first census that will allow people to submit responses online.

But rather than conducting similar meaningful oversights, the Democrats have spent a year trying to stop one simple question: Are you a citizen? One question.

Since obtaining the majority in January 2019 the Democrats have held only one hearing on the 2020 census that did not focus on the census citizenship question. Just one.

After all these months, I still don't understand why Democrats do not want to know how many U.S. citizens are living in the United States. It is a question that has been on our census before.

It is a question asked numerous nations—asked by numerous nations around the world and it is a question the United Nations encourages countries to ask. And, frankly, if you go talk to any of our constituents and ask them should we ask on the census if you are a citizen, the person on the street that you would talk to would say, well, of course—aren't we already doing that.

And you would have to say yes, we are. We have been doing it for 200 years, until now. Democrats baselessly argue that the question is designed to scare immigrant and racial communities in an effort to undercount those populations.

That is not correct. The Census Bureau conducted a test in the summer—last summer—to study the operational effects on self-response of including a citizenship question and found that there was no difference—no difference in self-response rates between forms with and forms without a citizenship question.

Let me say that again. There was no difference in self-response rates between forms with and forms without a citizenship question.

In July 2019, following a Supreme Court decision, the Trump administration removed the citizenship question from inclusion on the 2020 census. The Democrats want you to believe this was because the question was fundamentally inappropriate and the court vindicated their position.

But in fact, the Supreme Court held the Trump administration had the authority to ask the question about citizenship on the census but took issue with the administration's process for doing so under administrative law.

The Founders included a decennial census in the Constitution to ensure our government is responsive and accountable to the people, not to aid in assisting in political ambitions.

I hope that today we can stop playing partisan games, get back to the fundamental oversight that is needed to accomplish the census's stated goal—to count everyone once, only once, and in the right place.

As we examine hard-to-reach populations today, we should ensure census does its best to count everyone.

Thank you, Madam Chair. I look forward to hearing from our witnesses and would yield back.

Chairwoman MALONEY. Thank you.

I would like to introduce our witnesses. We are privileged to have a rich diversity of witnesses on our panel today that can testify regarding their hard-to-count communities.

Vanita Gupta is the president and chief executive officer of the Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights.

John Yang is the president and executive director of the Asian Americans Advancing Justice.

Arturo Vargas is the chief executive officer of the NALEO Educational Fund.

Kevin Allis is the chief executive officer of the National Congress of American Indians.

And Marc Morial is the president and chief executive officer of the National Urban League.

Darrell Moore is the executive director of the Center for South Georgia Regional Impact at Valdosta State University.

And if you would all please rise and raise your right hand I will begin by swearing you in.

Do you swear or affirm that the testimony you are about to give is the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

[Witnesses are sworn.]

Chairwoman MALONEY. Let the record show that the witnesses answered in the affirmative. Thank you, and please be seated.

The microphones are sensitive so please speak directly into them and, without objection, your written statement will be made part of the record.

And with that, Ms. Gupta, you are now recognized for your opening statement. Thank you.

STATEMENT OF VANITA GUPTA, PRESIDENT AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER, THE LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE ON CIVIL AND HUMAN RIGHTS

Ms. GUPTA. Chairwoman Maloney, Ranking Member Jordan, and members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify today. And thank you, Chairwoman Maloney, for your leadership in calling this hearing to reach hard-to-count communities in the 2020 census.

The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights believes a fair and accurate census is among the most important civil rights issues of our day.

Not only is the census essential to apportioning political power but the data also influence significant Federal funding for services like schools, fire departments, and hospitals.

It is the bedrock of our democracy and has enormous impact on the Nation's ability to ensure equal treatment under law.

The 2020 census is likely to be the largest, most difficult enumeration in our Nation's history. The U.S. population is increasingly diverse geographically, culturally, and linguistically.

The Census Bureau must meet the growing challenges that threaten to undermine the enumeration. And even with carefully planning, the Bureau has historically undercounted certain communities in the census, notably, people of color, young children, people experiencing homelessness, and renters. And for some populations,

for example, young children under the age of five, the undercount has grown progressively worse.

Now additional populations such as rural residents and older Americans may experience increased vulnerability because of the first high-tech census.

Households may not participate in the census for reasons including mistrust of government, limited language access, data confidentiality concerns, and lingering fear following the failed attempt to add a citizenship question to the census.

Hard-to-count communities are in every state and district, from large urban areas to rural and remote communities, including American Indian tribal lands and reservations.

And that is why the Leadership Conference launched Census Counts, a nationwide campaign to drive strategies—outreach strategies, to hard-to-count communities through a network of trusted national and local messengers and to complement and strengthen Census Bureau efforts.

Census Counts' national organizations, some of whom are represented here today, include people and networks who live and work in communities most at risk of being missed in the census.

Together, we are training and educating community leaders about the census, translating materials into languages the Bureau will not, as well as monitoring Bureau activities to ensure that they are best serving hard-to-count populations.

Our campaign, States Count Action Network, works with coalitions in all 50 states and D.C. to reach hard-to-count populations and encourage them to participate in the census.

We are grateful to congressional leaders for your bipartisan efforts in 2019 to ensure sufficient funding for the 2020 census.

The Bureau must update its operational plan now with input from key stakeholders and Congress, and use the additional funding to meet the goals set by Congress.

The window of opportunity to ensure a successful census in all communities is closing fast and we urge the committee and the Census Bureau to closely track and address the following concerns.

First, the Bureau has to meet the challenges of the first high-tech census by ensuring IT readiness and addressing the digital divide, cyber attacks, and disinformation campaigns.

The Bureau must update Congress on the status of system readiness to build confidence at a time when many people are skeptical and even fearful of government and data security.

Further, our coalition has observed intentional efforts to suppress census participation in social and traditional media. Under pressure from the Leadership Conference, other civil rights groups, and Congress, tech companies have started to fight disinformation and misinformation that is preying on people's fears.

Both the Bureau and tech companies must be transparent about their plans to counter census interference and ensure that these policies are strictly enforced.

Targeting communications and advertising outreach to hard-to-count communities is also really critical and we have concerns right now.

Stakeholders are concerned about the Bureau's paid media—plan that it isn't robust enough to do the necessary outreach and encourage full participation among hard-to-count population groups.

The Bureau's 2020 Census Partnership Program will play an essential role in building trust, raising awareness, and increasing participation in the census, and the Bureau has to provide more information to help Congress and stakeholders determine whether it is on track to meet the program's stated goal, including its target number of partnerships.

And last, the Bureau has to have accessible physical presence in hard-to-count communities. Stakeholders urgently need more information and a deployment plan on the Bureau's proposed Mobile Questionnaire Assistance Center initiative. With \$90 million provided by Congress, the Bureau needs to hire more staff and create a larger footprint, including mobile and fixed locations, to be effective.

When people—when your constituents are not counted in the census they remain invisible for the next 10 years and there are no do-overs. We have to get it right the first time.

The Leadership Conference looks forward to working with all members of the committee to ensure a cost-effective, secure, and above all, fair and accurate census in every one of our Nation's communities.

Thank you.

Chairwoman MALONEY. Thank you.

Mr. Yang?

**STATEMENT OF JOHN YANG, PRESIDENT AND EXECUTIVE
DIRECTOR, ASIAN AMERICANS ADVANCING JUSTICE**

Mr. YANG. Thank you very much, Chairwoman Maloney, Ranking Member Jordan, and thank you all for hosting this hearing.

Asian Americans Advancing Justice, AAJC, is part of a national affiliation that has independent affiliates in Atlanta, Chicago, Los Angeles, and San Francisco, and includes community partners—over 160—in 33 states and the District of Columbia.

We maintain a permanent census program that monitors issues related to the census, outreach to our community regarding these issues, and educating policymakers about these important issues.

We have also served for the Census Bureau on numerous community advisory committees since 2000, including most recently two three-year term stints on the National Advisory Committee for race, ethnicity, and other populations.

We are also proud to partner with Ms. Gupta and Mr. Vargas. We are one of the co-chairs for the Leadership Conference's Census Task Force.

I appreciate this opportunity to testify and speak specifically about the Asian-American Native Hawaiian Pacific Islander community with this next decennial and the ability of the Census Bureau to reach this community.

Now, at the outset, it is important to talk about why our community is important. It is a growing minority group. It is the fastest growing minority group, growing by 46 percent since the 2000 census—the 2010—and growing by similar rates since 2010.

Now, although there is a model minority myth that Asian Americans uniformly are largely, educated, exceed average incomes, the reality is that many in our community, especially Southeast Asians—Native Hawaiian Pacific Islanders—suffer significant gaps with respect to income and education. It is only through accurate census data can we understand this rapidly and changing demographic and the needs for this community.

Now, when the administration proposed to add the citizenship question to the 2020 decennial census without any testing, we knew right away that we had a five-alarm fire, and although we put out that fire through litigation to successfully prevent that question from appearing on the 2020 decennial census, we know that damage has been done.

Like any fire, the damage that is done takes time for it to be repaired. Getting immigrant families to respond to the census, understand the census is complicated under any circumstance.

The aftermath of the citizenship question debacle and the continuing anti-immigrant rhetoric that we see, this task has become formidable. There is significant confusion and distrust about the administration's intent and the Census Bureau has been limited in its response to these challenges.

Second, although the Census Bureau has made some improvements to their language support program, there are still severe gaps that need to be overcome.

With respect to the online response option, the only Asian languages covered are Chinese, Tagalog, Korean, Vietnamese, and Japanese. Significantly, there also is no written response option in languages other than English and Spanish.

And although there are language assistance guides provided in additional languages, there is no coverage for Native Hawaiian Pacific Islander languages and other important Asian languages.

Third, hiring for the partnership programs and for census takers has been slow and inconsistently inclusive of underserved communities.

Among the barriers that have been encountered is the emphasis on online applications, backlogs on background checks, and insufficient outreach to our communities with respect to job opportunities.

Only recently the Bureau announced the ability to hire census takers that would not be limited to U.S. citizens but other people that have work authorizations.

Although this is, clearly, favorable to serve our demographic, the fact that it came so late minimizes the potential benefits that this brings.

Likewise, field officers and partnership specialists need to be trained adequately to ensure that they provide consistent responses to different questions about census policy.

Thus far, we have seen from the field that too often inconsistent responses have been provided. For the communications campaign that Ms. Gupta alluded to, that is an important role.

We only recently understood the full media bias in mid-December and just yesterday the Census Bureau briefed us specifically on the Asian-American plans in this respect.

Now, previously, one of our concerns had been the lack of any media campaign targeted to the South Asian community, and

Chairwoman Maloney, Representative Meng, and others have addressed this concern to the Census Bureau, for which we appreciate.

Just yesterday, the Bureau announced that it would be providing some outreach to Hindi and in Urdu. So, we see that as a favorable development. But we need to understand more details about what that media campaign would entail.

Nevertheless, we also remain very concerned by the limited number of languages that are provided in the media campaign and the apparent lack of micro targeting of communities other than the five Asian languages for which online responses would be accepted.

We believe that that approach is insufficient to address these communications issues, especially with communities that, while English proficient, would receive messages better than are ethnically and culturally tailored.

In conclusion, there are still numerous challenges to ensuring that the Asian-American Pacific Islander community is fully counted. We appreciate the efforts that have been made so far but there is more work to be done.

Thank you very much.

Chairwoman MALONEY. Thank you very much.

Mr. CONNOLLY. Madam Chairman?

Chairwoman MALONEY. Mr. Vargas?

Mr. CONNOLLY. Madam Chairman?

Chairwoman MALONEY. Mr. Vargas is recognized.

Mr. CONNOLLY. Madam Chairman, I have a unanimous—

Mr. MEADOWS. That is your side.

Mr. CONNOLLY. I just wanted to enter something in the record by unanimous consent.

Chairwoman MALONEY. Sure.

Mr. CONNOLLY. I am sorry?

Chairwoman MALONEY. The gentleman can enter whatever he would like.

Mr. CONNOLLY. I thank the Chair.

I just have some correspondence between myself and Mr. Dillingham on the practice of hiring people, especially following Mr. Yang's testimony, in terms of non-English speakers. I would ask that it be entered into the record at this time.

Chairwoman MALONEY. Without objection.

Mr. CONNOLLY. I thank the Chair.

Chairwoman MALONEY. OK. Thank you.

All right. Mr. Vargas is recognized.

**STATEMENT OF ARTURO VARGAS, CHIEF EXECUTIVE
OFFICER, NALEO EDUCATIONAL FUND**

Mr. VARGAS. Thank you, Chairwoman Maloney, Ranking Member Jordan, and members of the committee. Thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today with regard to census 2020 preparations.

NALEO Educational Fund also has been an advisor to the Census Bureau since 2000 and we are preparing to undertake a massive independent campaign to promote a full count in the 2020 census.

I would like to stress that we respect the work of the Census Bureau and as a national partner are coordinating for a successful census.

I would also like to share my growing antipathy for the term hard-to-count populations to describe some of the populations we represent, when in fact what makes people hard to count are the enumeration strategies that the Census Bureau uses.

My remarks this morning are a summary of more extensive remarks to the committee. Of the issues addressed in my written testimony, there are three I would like to underscore today.

One, there has been damage done by the citizenship question debacle and a remedy is needed. The Bureau's 2019 research shows there is heightened sensitivity among several groups to a census form with a citizenship question. Our research from the Rhode Island end-to-end test and from the past three months also show that the citizenship question debacle has created and continues to foster fear and doubt.

Many Latinos are resistant to participate in the census because they believe there will be a citizenship question on the form, despite its absence, and many fear how the data would be used.

This is exacerbated by a hostile environment toward immigrants propagated by this administration. Our research also shows that the Census Bureau has a trusted brand and we believe it should use its favorable perception it holds to deliver credible messages about the content on the 2020 census form.

However, we have observed the Bureau has been instructed not to discuss the citizenship question. The Census Bureau outreach staff must be directed to advise the public that there will be no citizenship question on the 2020 census.

Having been briefed on the Bureau's communications campaign, we are impressed that the Bureau and the contractors understand the challenge.

Yet, we are deeply concerned that the LatinX outreach approach is almost exclusively in Spanish and there is no specific campaign to reach Latinos who consume information in English.

NALEO Educational Fund and others will do all we can to fill these gaps. But the task of repairing the damage and reaching all Latinos must not be borne by us alone.

Two, the Census Bureau should prepare for a significant demand for a paper form, ensure the online mobile response option is effective, and implement an effective assistance program.

Our research shows that Latinos prefer to respond to the census using paper or online. Our end-to-end assessment also shows that many Latinos participated in the test through in-person enumeration.

Thus, the Census Bureau must be adequately prepared to provide a paper form to all who prefer this response mode and ensure that there is a sufficiently prepared, skilled, and culturally competent enumerator work force.

Many of the Latinos we surveyed expressed a preference to participate online and data show that Latinos are most likely to access the internet via a mobile device.

Thus, the Bureau must ensure that the online response mode is user friendly and with the load capacity to meet the demand.

Finally, we continue to believe that a Census Bureau initiative to provide live in-person assistance is essential. The Bureau needs to act quickly to stand up a well thought out mobile questionnaire assistance centers program, which Congress has funded, in addition to standing up traditional questionnaire assistance centers.

Three, there persists a design flaw in the collection of Hispanic origin and race data. One aspect of the 2020 census that has not received adequate congressional oversight is the failure to modernize the collection of data on Hispanic origin and race.

Our research reveals that there is a significant confusion among Latinos about how to answer the 2020 census Hispanic origin and race questions.

The Census Bureau recognizes that the two-question approach to collecting data on race and ethnicity that it has used since 1980 is flawed.

Researchers have warned that by using a two-question design the 2020 census will show that, quote, “some other race,” unquote, will be the Nation’s second largest racial group, a category OMB does not even recognize.

Nearly all of the respondents to “some other race” will also have indicated that they are Hispanic. The Census Bureau carried out a comprehensive research and consultation process to develop a better way for collecting data on race and ethnicity.

The Bureau recommended a combined question approach for 2020. In early 2018, we learned that the Bureau’s recommendation had been gathering dust due to inaction by OMB’s Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs. Congress must investigate OIRA’s inaction and the future of collection of race and ethnicity data.

Millions of Americans will not understand how to answer the 2020 questions on Hispanic origin and race. Many will leave the question or both questions blank, compromising the quality of data and increasing costs to provide a complete census.

The Census Bureau’s communications program must include information on how to complete these questions to overcome the design flaws.

Again, thank you for the opportunity to share our comments with the committee. I look forward to your questions.

Chairwoman MALONEY. Thank you.

I now recognize Kevin Allis for five minutes.

**STATEMENT OF KEVIN J. ALLIS, CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER,
NATIONAL CONGRESS OF AMERICAN INDIANS**

Mr. ALLIS. Good morning, Chairwoman Maloney, Ranking Member Jordan, and members of the committee.

I am Kevin Allis and I am a tribal citizen of the Forest County Potawatami community in Wisconsin. I am also the chief executive officer of the National Congress of American Indians and on behalf of NCAI I thank you for holding the hearing and reaching hard-to-count communities in the upcoming 2020 census.

I am the son of a woman who grew up on a hard-to-reach Indian reservation in the 1940’s, 1950’s, and early 1960’s, the grandson of a chairman of a tribe who raised these concerns in the late 1950’s and early 1960’s.

NCAI was founded in 1944 and my grandfather interacted with this organization in the 1950's and 1960's about this topic and many, and NCAI is the oldest and largest national organization serving the broad interests of tribal nations and communities.

Tribal leaders created NCAI in response to termination and assimilation policies that threatened the existence of tribal nations.

Since then, NCAI has fought to preserve the treaty and sovereign rights of tribal nations, advance the government-to-government relationship, and remove historical and structural impediments to self-determination.

There has been much success, yet there is much more work to do for Indian Country to fully realize the promises this Nation made, this body of Congress made, and this country owes to Indian Country in its treaty and trust responsibilities.

Like all other governments, tribal nations strive to build strong economies and ensure the health and well being of their citizens. A full and accurate count in the census is absolutely vital to these efforts.

Twenty-twenty census data will do three important things: whether American Indians and Alaska Natives have an equal voice and are accurately represented in the American political process, whether there is fair distribution of the billions of dollars of Federal funding to tribal nations and communities across the United States, and whether the tribal nations have accurate data for programmatic and resource-related decisionmaking that their tribal leaders make that are central to their status as sovereigns.

Given the importance of census data, the prospect of yet another undercount of American Indians and Alaska Natives is deeply concerning.

American Indians and Alaska Native people, especially on reservations and in villages in Alaska, have been historically underrepresented in this census.

In 2010, the U.S. Census Bureau estimates that American Indians and Alaska Natives living on reservations or in these villages were undercounted by 4.9 percent. That is more than double the undercount of the next closed population group.

It is a fact that American Indian and Alaska Native populations are among the hardest to count. Not only does a significant portion of our population live in these hard to count tracks; we also exhibit many of the factors that contribute to communities being hard to count.

Additionally, a Census Bureau survey in our own message testing found issues affecting American Indian and Alaska Native census participation to be including mistrust of government, concerns related to privacy, and perceptions that participation would not lead to anything.

The Census Bureau, as a Federal agency, has treaty and trust obligations to overcome these challenges and provide a complete and accurate count for Indian Country.

As it stands today, tribal nations are concerned that we will again see an undercount in 2020. The decision of the Census Bureau to focus efforts on online enumeration is a significant risk as many communities and individual households in Indian Country do not have access to the internet.

This strategy, along with the need for trusted voices on the ground in tribal communities, emphasize how critical it is for the Census Bureau to allocate resources to hire and retain American Indian and Alaska Native enumerators and partnership specialists.

Yet, with just a few weeks before an enumeration begins in Alaska, it is still unclear whether this goal has been reached.

Moreover, we are also concerned about the delays in the Census Bureau's American Indian and Alaska Native advertising campaign recommendations.

Indian Country has been working tirelessly to ensure an accurate and complete count. However, efforts are not to replace those or absolve the U.S. Census Bureau of its responsibility to use its staff and resources to ensure a full enumeration of American Indian and Alaska Native populations.

As such, NCAI recommends that Census Bureau makes steps to implement the following actions.

Immediately address delays in hiring American Indian and Alaska Native enumerators and partnership specialists to enhance the utilization of trusted sources for Indian County population to rely upon.

Reallocate resources to address needs for more communication actions to ensure a complete enumeration of American Indian and Alaska Native populations.

Increase communications to tribal communities on what resources are available to ensure their participation is complete.

Increase media buys in more diverse areas for tribal communities. Ensure that data collected about American Indian and Alaska Native households and individuals is accurate and accessible after the implementation of a planned new disclosure avoidance mythologies.

So, in conclusion, in closing, I urge this committee to continue conducting oversight during the Census Bureau implementation of the 2020 census.

This will help ensure a complete and accurate count for the indigenous people of this country that have been here forever.

Thank you.

Chairwoman MALONEY. Thank you. Thank you.

I now recognize Mr. Moore for five minutes. Morial.

Mr. MORIAL. Morial or Moore? Moore?

Chairwoman MALONEY. Morial.

Mr. MORIAL. Thank you.

**STATEMENT OF MARC MORIAL, PRESIDENT AND CHIEF
EXECUTIVE OFFICER, NATIONAL URBAN LEAGUE**

Mr. MORIAL. Good morning, ladies and gentlemen, Chairwoman Maloney, and Ranking Member Jordan. I am Marc Morial. I serve as president and CEO of the National Urban League.

I previously served as mayor of New Orleans, a Louisiana state senator, and chairman of the 2010 Census Advisory Committee. I am proud to be here today and thank you for the opportunity.

The National Urban League was founded in 1910 as a non-partisan nonprofit civil rights organization dedicated to the economic empowerment of African Americans.

We work through a network of 90 affiliates in 36 states and the District of Columbia. We serve 2 million people a year. We assist them in finding jobs and becoming homeowners and starting small businesses in many very important areas.

I will speak today about the undercount of African Americans and the challenges in the upcoming census and how the National Urban League is mobilizing to ensure a complete and accurate count.

I want to thank the committee and I want to thank the leadership for ensuring that the census 2020 has been better funded. The census has been historically underfunded for most of the past decade.

What has been the significance of this? It has caused operational and IT delays, recruitment and hiring challenges, the cancellation of critical tests to improve the 2020 census count.

Your leadership on this issue is in the best interests of all of the American people and I encourage you to continue to exercise your oversight responsibilities.

We have witnessed the browning of America in real time, from California to Connecticut, from Florida to Alaska. We have witnessed the growing needs of our communities as a gap between those who have and those who have not has increased.

We see the true faces of the undercount every day, their children. They are black. They are brown. They are the formerly incarcerated. They are immigrants who are black, who are brown, and of other races.

They are the homeless and the gentrified. They are the digital illiterate and the digital homeless, those with no internet address or access to speak of.

The census is a big deal. The Founding Fathers were brilliant in ordaining that all the people in the United States be counted every 10 years.

Fifty years ago, in 1970, my predecessor, Whitney Young, Jr., who was executive director of the National Urban League, testified before the then Subcommittee on Census and Statistics, a part of the Committee on Post Office and Civil Service.

At that time, he spoke passionately about the need for a full and complete count of black and underserved communities.

His testimony about the 1970 census is oddly familiar to the discussion today. He talked about inadequate assistance for completing the forms, poor community outreach, the lack of Spanish language forms, inadequate outreach in education to reach minority populations.

He noted that the 1960 census—60 years ago—missed one in 10 black people, including one in six black men. Fast forward to 2020.

And while there is much to applaud about the 2020 census, the technological advancement and operational modernizations, we and my co-panelists see too many parallels to the 1970 census and even more uncertainties.

In 2010, a million children, disproportionately black and brown, didn't show up in the census. An alarming six out of 10 black children between the ages of zero and four were completely missed.

The undercount of black and brown children has grown exponentially and the economic and political consequences of this are grave. African American men are still missed in staggering numbers.

In the 2010 census, fully 3.9 million African Americans were completely missed. Approximately 700,000 formerly incarcerated men and women reenter our communities each year. They must be counted. We must count the digital divide in rural and poor, rural and urban poor communities and those with low digital fluency who require a paper questionnaire and an enumerator's knock on the door.

We have to anticipate disinformation social media campaigns designed to mislead communities and communities of color about the census and sow seeds of fear about census participation.

Community and outreach in education has been hampered by the failed citizenship question which heightened distrust and fear of the census in immigrant communities.

Now, we have worked with the Census Bureau to help achieve an accurate 2020 count and we do commend the rank and file and those in regional offices and partnership teams for the work that they have done.

But let me talk about the gaps. Significant hiring delays and backlogs are going to impact the door-to-door enumeration. Let me make this point.

The Census Bureau's own research shows that notwithstanding the internet access and the phone access, 40 to 60 percent of Americans are going to wait until an enumerator knocks on the door.

If in fact the Census Bureau does not hire a significant number of enumerators on a timely basis, the enumerator portion of this census will not succeed and the impact will be an undercount in black communities, in brown communities, in Asian communities, and in rural communities. Those hiring delays are going to affect indigenous communities.

I want to say a few other things about the paid advertising program and I want to make this point. We have had an opportunity to look at that advertising program.

Our concern is that the timing of the advertising program is misaligned with the enumerator process. So, right now—

Chairwoman MALONEY. Wrap up. Your five minutes is over. If you could wrap up.

Mr. MORIAL. Yes. I am seeing 1:37 on the clock.

Mr. MEADOWS. Over.

[Laughter.]

Mr. MORIAL. As you all say, I beg your indulgence.

[Laughter.]

Mr. MORIAL. My final point is that I encourage and—in the question and answer period—would like to explain and illuminate how in fact the advertising program is misaligned with the enumerator portion. It is important that advertising take place while the door-knocking program is ongoing.

Thank you very much.

Chairwoman MALONEY. Thank you. Thank you.

Mr. Moore is recognized.

**STATEMENT OF DARRELL MOORE, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR,
CENTER FOR SOUTH GEORGIA REGIONAL IMPACT, ALDOSTA
STATE UNIVERSITY**

Mr. MOORE. Sorry.

Chairwoman Maloney, thank you, and the members of the committee, for the opportunity to testify today on behalf of rural Americans and, specifically, rural Georgians.

Georgia, like many others, is facing statewide challenges in rural communities—population declines, graying populations, slow job growth, and distressed cities.

Valdosta State University is one of four Georgia regional universities and we have a mission to serve a 41-county service area, primarily in south Georgia.

In 2017, leadership at VSU started talking about how they could have an impact on the reoccurring challenges that all of those communities face, and that could be business, industry, health care, K through 12 education, city/county government, and they came up where the result was they created the Center for South Georgia Regional Impact, and I started working with that organization in 2018.

The mission of the Center is to try to work with all 41 counties to identify opportunities and challenges that they might have and that will all go back to Valdosta State and try to identify resources to help them out.

That could be interns, graduate assistants, class projects, research, professors working on projects. It really just depends on what the need is and it covers all six of our colleges.

We are focused on our 41-county service area and it is a very diverse area. Many of you would probably consider everyone rural but the largest county in our region is Lowndes at 115,000 and we have counties as small as 3,500.

So, what works in one county is not going to work in the other, even though they do have similar issues and challenges.

Our goal is that the communities know what they need best. So, we are trying to find out what they need and then go back and try to find resources to help them out.

One thing that really helped me out, I guess, in the transition is I have had a 25-year background in economic development, and I had a successful career in Waycross, Georgia, and spent the last 21 years in Moultrie in Colquitt County.

While I was in Moultrie, we had about \$325 million in investment and created 3,500 new jobs, and when I left last year we had \$96 million in projects that were under construction and a 3.1 percent unemployment rate, which is pretty strong for a south Georgia rural community.

But one thing that really kind of stuck out as we were looking at what we were trying to do with the Center, and what we were trying to do with a lot of my friends in south Georgia was the Georgia Chamber of Commerce had a presentation called “Georgia 2030” that had been making the rounds with its presentation for probably three or four years.

You don’t have the graphics but if you will look them back up, they have got population projections and job projections through

2030, and those numbers are pretty dire for south Georgia and for rural Georgia.

As you would expect, you are projecting strong population and job growth in Atlanta and many of our hub cities in Savannah, Augusta, Columbus, and Macon. You are projecting minimal growth in some other counties.

But many of our counties in rural Georgia are projecting population losses and job losses, and from an economic development standpoint, that is a death knell.

So, looking back at the mission, the census posed a tremendous opportunity for us to get involved. It was a tremendous challenge for our 41 counties.

I mentioned my career in Colquitt County and one thing that really tied in with what we are doing with the census right now was when I was in Colquitt we had a pilot program with the University of Georgia called Archways and it was a similar premise.

We had a UGA employee that served in Moultrie. We would identify big projects. They would go back to Athens and bring resources back to us. One of our projects was the 2010 census.

So, we really, in 2009, had a Complete Count Committee before we knew there was one. We had a great team in place. We had 30 to 40 people. We had representatives or trusted voices representing every different demographic of the community.

As a result, we had an 8.19 percent in the 2010 census which was, again, pretty strong for a rural south Georgia community.

I parlayed that information and used it in every request for a proposal that we sent out for a new industry, retail, commercial, and continued creating more jobs in our community because companies want to invest where they are going to grow.

What we have done from VSU support is we have worked with local and regional communities. We have met with all 41 counties and tried to help them organize their Complete Count Committees.

Again, everyone is different. What works in one county is not going to work in the other. The demographics are going to be different. The resources are going to be different.

We have assisted with strategies to achieve an accurate count. We have worked with the Governor's Complete Count Committee, their marketing committee. They have hired a marketing firm called Network Planet, UGA, and, of course, the U.S. census reps that are serving our region.

We have done several focus groups with hard-to-count populations, trying to refine our marketing message and we are also providing free marketing support to our 41-county area.

We have got order forms that we sent out. We have got billboards already up in all 41 counties. We have got coloring pages that we are making available through K through 5 systems throughout south Georgia and, technically, throughout Georgia.

We have got table tents that promote the census that are going to be on every restaurant table from Cordele south, all 41 counties.

We have got posters that target how the census impacts business and industry, how it impacts your family, how it impacts children, how it impacts migrant farm workers in agriculture and how it impacts you from a community leader standpoint.

All those media are available in English and Spanish and we also have the ability to provide them in other languages if necessary.

The order forms came back in in November and we currently have order forms for 45,306 table tents, 65,757 posters that will be delivered at no cost to all of our counties next week. We are also doing banners, promotional tee-shirts, and other media to help support them.

I know my time is up. My main goal or our main goal was to make sure every citizen knows how important it is for them, their family, and their community to participate in the census.

Chairwoman MALONEY. Thank you so much, and thank you for all of your efforts. I commend all of our panelists.

I would like to announce today that on February 12 the director of the Census Bureau, Dr. Steven Dillingham, will be appearing before this committee to answer questions about how the Bureau is responding to the many challenges that our panelists outlined today, and with so much at stake a vigorous oversight of the 2020 census is absolutely essentially.

I now recognize myself for five minutes. This year's census will be the largest and most complex in our Nation's history. So, the Bureau has a tough job to ensure that every community gets fully and accurately counted.

Sadly, the current administration admitted or practically admitted that they don't even want to count everyone when they tried to illegally add a citizenship question to the census.

As a result, many cities and states have stepped up to ensure everyone is counted. They have established what is called, and Mr. Moore talked about it and Mr. Morial, Complete Count Committees to identify risks, recommend solutions, and direct state and local funding to areas of hard-to-count at-risk areas.

Mr. Morial, you served in New Orleans as the—on the Complete Count Committee I believe in 1990 you said—and led that committee as mayor in 2000. Would you agree that establishing these committees is the right move and would you recommend this practice to other states and localities?

Mr. MORIAL. It is important that states and localities, and in the case of Mr. Moore, regional economic development organizations understand that the success of the census requires a partnership and the involvement of local elected officials.

What we don't have visibility on at this point is how many cities, how many states, how many counties have in fact created Complete Count Committees and have operationalized them.

One problem with this year's census is that census reduced the number of local partnership offices by 50 percent and these local partnership offices were the connective tissue between the Complete Count Committees and the Census.

So, yes, it is an important strategy and I would encourage it and I would say that in 2000 the city of New Orleans spent money and had its own effort underway with people and advertising and resources.

I know in this instance there are a number of communities and cities who are doing the same thing for 2020—and states.

Chairwoman MALONEY. Thank you.

My home state of New York is doing that. They created their own Complete Count Commission. You pointed out an important point, that they have reduced some support in this area.

Maybe we should get the Census Bureau to do a review of how many Complete Count Committees are out there and that could have a good overview.

Mr. MORIAL. Oh, it would be very helpful.

Chairwoman MALONEY. And this—the New York Count Committee came up with eight risks and challenges which were similar to what you said today—language barriers, the digital divide, hiring issues, and distrust among communities of color. Very similar to what you were saying.

Then they came up with 18 specific recommendations and also put in, roughly, \$60 million in city, state, and philanthropic funding to help make sure that the census was stronger, and we hope that other communities can also take the initiative as you have in New Orleans.

Ms. Gupta, do you believe the Census Bureau should be engaging with these state and local communities to make the Bureau's outreach more efficient and effective? It seems that a better coordination would help. Can you elaborate in this area?

Ms. GUPTA. Yes. These Complete Count Committees are incredibly important. They are actually—the model was developed by the Bureau at its inception to coordinate state and local efforts around the country to get out the count, and we know that actually most states have, indeed, created them. There are five states that have not. They are Louisiana—sorry, four—Nebraska, South Dakota, and Texas. Florida just this week created one.

But, you know, one of the challenges is states can't just nominally create these committees. They also have to put significant funding toward them, particularly because this is going to be one of the most difficult enumerations.

So, Florida created a Complete Count Committee this week but then did not allocate any dollars to it. So, there is mapping.

You know, over two dozen states have allocated and contributed significant state-based funding to help supplement the Federal funding and the work of the Bureau.

But that partnership needs to be really tight, and too many states still have not added additional resources to really get the partnership, trusted messengers, communications, supplemental work out into and as a part of that. So, the Bureau needs to work much more closely with these committees around the country.

Chairwoman MALONEY. Well, I don't have a chance to speak to everyone, but if you could place in writing. I will let Mr. Moore have the last word on how beneficial these Complete Count Committees are. Did you work with them in Georgia?

Put on the mic, please.

Mr. MOORE. Not used to that.

They have been tremendous. We have actually had a Governor's Complete Count Committee since 2017 and, honestly, we have had much more emphasis on the census for 2020 than we did in 2010.

Chairwoman MALONEY. That is right.

Mr. MOORE. In our district in 2010 I don't think we had planned for a lot of support but we do this year.

Chairwoman MALONEY. That is good. Thank you.

Mr. MOORE. There are partners all over. We have tracked I think almost every county—

Chairwoman MALONEY. Well, my time has expired but—and I invite all of the panelists to put in writing their experiences with Complete Count Committees and other ways they think it needs to be expanded. It is as much an important challenge before us, an accurate fair census. Our Constitution requires it. Our government relies on it and our democracy depends on it.

With that, I recognize the distinguished ranking member for five—

Mr. Gosar of Arizona?

OK. Mr. Gosar?

Mr. GOSAR. Thank you, Madam Chairwoman.

Mr. Moore, I mean, I am from Arizona. You are from Georgia. It sounds like you got some pretty good expertise here.

You know, according to the City University of New York's mapping service, 21 percent of the population in my district did not send in their survey, and this same report estimates that 25 percent of the population in my district actually lives in these hard-to-count districts.

Have we learned anything from previous census to combat the waste and the lack of a response?

Mr. MOORE. Sure, and that is one thing that we are trying to incorporate on a county-by-county level or community level in all of our communities.

We have historical data. We know what the response rate was by census track in 2010 so we can tell you where those hard-to-count areas were then, and mostly like if they were hard to count in 1910 they will be in 1920.

We also have maps that show where you have low or limited internet connectivity. So, we are working with our local Complete Count Committees to come up with a plan to target all of those areas and a focused area, a shotgun or a rifle area instead of a shotgun trying to hit everybody else.

We have got several different organizations. Our Georgia libraries are putting up stations where people can come back in, get information on the census, fill out those census [forms] while they are there.

I had a call with the Georgia Farm Bureau about two weeks ago. They are going to do the same thing. We have got family connections, housing authorities, soup kitchens that are all doing similar items.

So, our main goal, again, is awareness and education, trying to make sure people know why it is important and making it easy for them to participate.

Mr. GOSAR. Now, you brought up internet access and, roughly, 17 percent of my—almost 18 percent of my district has no access to—real access to internet.

So, has providing that on the internet service actually expanded the reach or has it made it more convenient for those people to actually do it that are fundamentally falling through?

Mr. MOORE. I think it is probably both. You have a younger demographic right now, which is hard to count—your Millennials that do everything on the phone, do everything on the computer.

We do have maps, and I actually received one from the U.S. Census for all of our counties about two weeks ago. So, we know which areas don't have internet access.

The first mailing for the census is going to start going out March 12. Most people that have internet access are going to get an internet first card encouraging them to go on and participate.

Those areas that they know do not have internet access will get a written form the first time. So, everybody in the country is going to have an opportunity fill that out by the internet with a written form at least once, possibly twice, and or do it by the toll-free number.

Again, you just got to encourage them and promote them, let them know how important it is for them to participate.

Mr. GOSAR. So, now, the census has four hard-to-count categories—hard to locate, contact, persuade, and interview—and these barriers are pertinent to my district.

When you look outside the cities of Prescott, Kingman, Yuma, and what not, a zero to 60 percent mail return rate was issued.

How is that—I mean, I noticed in your comments that it is not a one-size-fits-all. You expanded. Can you elaborate a little bit more and be—

Mr. MOORE. Yes, it is definitely not, and we have got communities—we are serving about 50 counties right now. Some of them the city and the county have taken the lead. Some of them Family Connections, which is a nonprofit family services type organization, is taking the lead. Some of it is in the Chamber and the development authority.

But, really, I think Mr. Morial may have mentioned the trusted voices or possibly Mr. Vargas. You have got to have trusted voices for everybody in your community and we had that in Colquitt County in 2010.

Somebody that listens to me may not listen to you, and vice versa. So, if you have someone that has influence on 50 or 100 people, you need to get them engaged in the Complete Count Committee. Let them know why it is important and get them to go back out and have an impact on the people that they have an influence on.

Mr. GOSAR. Now, I kind of want to step outside of my district and address the fast-growing state of Arizona. Year after year we have seen growth—population increases of 2.2 percent and above.

So, counting as many people as possible is critical for our future. That includes diverse populations, different ethnics, tribal entities.

Do the census efforts effectively address these communities that are identified as hard to reach?

Mr. MOORE. Yes, sir, and that is what—they are trying to develop plans for each community. I know U.S. Census and even state census has hard-to-count populations and all those don't apply to every community.

Again, it is critical for a community to have a robust Complete Count Committee that is very diverse. You have got faith based. You have got business. You have got local media.

You have got people that feel comfortable writing letters or speaking that may have influence on the general community. So, it is important that you come up with a real plan to get everybody to participate.

Mr. GOSAR. I thank the gentleman and yield back.

Chairwoman MALONEY. The gentlewoman, Ms. Norton—from the District of Columbia, Congresswoman Norton is recognized for five minutes.

Ms. NORTON. First, I want to say I appreciate the testimony of all of you. But I must say, Mr. Moore, I appreciate your testimony because it emphasizes the extent to which the census issue has no ideological face.

Indeed, it is against the interests of every member sitting up here to have their own—their own residents not counted because, if for no other reason, the money will not be—money will not go to them.

Understand the money will be appropriated by the Congress. It only means that your district won't get it because you have supported an undercount.

I was amazed to see the ranking member's remarks. Even after a Supreme Court—a conservative Supreme Court has rescued the country from this issue, I would just like to indicate what they said.

The Supreme Court said that the rationale given by my colleagues had been contrived and incongruent with what the record reviews and that conservative Supreme Court is why we are going to have a chance to have an accurate census.

Now, it is not enough to say, look everybody, the question is not on the census. I want to urge every Member of Congress to undertake actions on the internet, in your own district, to try to reverse the message that was out there for two years that alarmed people, remembering that it is always difficult to get an accurate census and that my friends on the other side have made it even more difficult.

So, let me ask you, Mr. Vargas, because I understand that your organization has been studying the issue since the Supreme Court ruling and I am trying to get data or information on the impact, what anybody there—but I understand you have given some thought to this—on the impact of the citizen question on the willingness, as I speak, of citizens to participate in the census.

Mr. VARGAS. Thank you, Congresswoman, for that question.

In October, November, and December, NALEO Educational Fund commissioned research to survey 1,200 Latino adults oversampling Latino immigrants and we held 12 focus groups throughout the country in Oregon, Florida, North Carolina, Wisconsin, Texas, and Arizona to try to assess what the current perceptions are by Latino immigrants toward the census.

We found some important things. One is that the Census Bureau has a positive brand that it needs to use and to fully educate the public about what is and is not going to be asked.

We also learned that there are very significant differences in willingness to participate by Latino citizens and Latino noncitizens. Latino citizens express much more likelihood to say that they will fill out their census forms. Noncitizens less so.

Ms. NORTON. Well, do you think the undocumented and every jurisdiction sitting on this panel has undocumented people—are undocumented people going to participate in this census?

Mr. VARGAS. Congresswoman, this isn't an issue of just undocumented immigrants. These are families where they have mixed status households—U.S. citizens, legal permanent residents, DACA applicants, people of varying immigration status—and there is a fear of why am I being asked now am I a citizen, yes or no, when immigrants are following policy developments day to day and know that there is a campaign against immigrants in the country today.

So, this just has created an environment that does not help the Census Bureau in being able to convince everybody that it is in fact safe and confidential.

That is why we need trusted messengers to speak up and the trusted messengers we have identified are educators, health care providers, minority-led organizations like the ones here on the panel today, and local elected officials.

Those are the individuals we need to empower to speak out and to convince their constituents that participating in the census is safe and confidential and any perceived risk actually is outweighed by the damage done by not participating in the census.

Ms. NORTON. This is very important. This responsibility is on us all and not just census, why don't you do better.

Let me finally ask a question about the administration which refuses to give up on administrative records. I hope people haven't even heard about this.

But do any of you have any information on the executive order or the effect of the executive order to start collecting citizenship data from Federal and state administrative records?

Do you think this will have any impact? I am not trying to give it—I am not trying to give it air time. I just want to know—I just want to know if we have seen any repercussions.

Ms. GUPTA. If I may, Congresswoman. You know, I think it is fundamentally important, building off of what my colleague, Arturo Vargas, just said for people to understand that under Federal law the Bureau is not allowed to release individual data or personal responses that they receive to any other government agency.

But we know that the executive order has created grave concerns that the president is attempting to use that to exclude noncitizens from the population count that states use to redraw district lines.

That would be unconstitutionally blocking communities across the country from fair and equal political representation and Asian-Americans Advancing Justice and MALDEF have actually filed a lawsuit to challenge the executive order.

Ms. NORTON. Thank you. Thank you.

Chairwoman MALONEY. The gentlewoman's time has expired.

The distinguished ranking member, Jim Jordan of Ohio, is recognized for questioning.

Mr. JORDAN. Thank you, Madam Chair. Thank you, Madam Chair.

So, now we can't even debate it. Think of what the—think of what we just heard—what we have heard from testimony from Mr. Yang and Mr. Vargas.

For a year the Democrats told us oh, the citizenship question on the census is bad. It is a bad idea. Even though we have been doing it since 1820 they tell us it is a bad idea. Now today—even though it is not.

Even though when the Census Bureau did a study last summer they saw no difference in self-response rates between forms with the citizenship question and those without the citizenship question.

But now today it is even worse. They said oh, just the fact we had a debate is harmful. Now, think how scary that is.

Mr. Yang and Mr. Vargas both said that and the gentlelady from the District of Columbia just said the same thing. We are not even allowed to talk about it now.

Now, that is really scary—the debate itself about a question that has been asked since 1820. Let us just get the facts straight.

Between 1820 and 1950 it was asked on the decennial census. Between 1970 and 2000 it was asked on the long form census. Between 2000 and today, the Census Bureau has placed it on the American Community Survey.

So, it has been asked every single time. But now today we are not even supposed to debate it. This is where the Left wants to take us.

This is—think of what Judge Alito, previous member, [who] talked about the Supreme Court decision. Here is what Judge Alito said in his decision, concurring in part, dissenting in part. “No one disputes that it is important to know how many inhabitants of this country are citizens.”

He is actually wrong. I think—I think—making a good point but I think he is wrong. Every Democrat on this committee disputes that. The witnesses here in front of us they dispute that, even though all our constituents say yes, we should know how many.

So, Mr. Yang, do you think it is important to know how many citizens are in this country?

Mr. YANG. It is important under the Constitution, Article 1 Section 2, to ensure that all residents are counted under every decennial census.

Mr. JORDAN. That is not the question I asked you.

Mr. YANG. And if there is anything that detracts from that decennial census in terms of offering a fair and accurate count, that is a concern for the—

Mr. JORDAN. So, you disagree with Judge Alito? “No one disputes that it is important to know how many inhabitants of this country are citizens.” Do you think he is wrong? Do you think—

Mr. YANG. That is not the objective of the decennial census.

Mr. JORDAN. Again, that is not what I am asking. Do you think it is appropriate to know how many people in this country are citizens?

Mr. YANG. I would offer no further response because under—we are here to talk about—

Mr. JORDAN. Let the record show the gentleman won’t even answer the question.

So, between 1820 and 1950 when our country asked inhabitants of this Nation, are you a citizen, was that wrong?

Mr. YANG. I dispute what your—your understanding of the history of the question is with respect to the decennial census. We

can—we can offer further testimony. We can offer further testimony.

Mr. JORDAN. So, the Census Bureau today on the American Community Survey should they be asking people the citizenship question. Do you disagree with what the Census Bureau is doing today as we speak?

Mr. VARGAS. May I answer that question, Congressman?

Mr. JORDAN. I addressed Mr. Yang.

Mr. VARGAS. Sure.

Mr. JORDAN. I am trying to get him to answer a question that he refuses to answer.

Mr. YANG. I believe I did offer an answer. It might—

Mr. JORDAN. I asked you a simple question. Is it appropriate to ask a citizenship—is it appropriate to ask—to find out how many people in this country are citizens?

Mr. YANG. It is appropriate to ask—under the census, the census that we are talking about, we are trying to determine the population of the United States and anything that detracts from the fairness and accuracy of that count would not be part of the mission of—

Mr. JORDAN. And then I followed up and said so do you think it is wrong that the Census Bureau on the American Community Survey is asking a citizenship question. Do you think that is wrong then?

Mr. YANG. That is a survey instrument that has been tested in the context of the American Community Survey, which is a long—which previously was the long form and that is different than the decennial 2020 census.

Mr. JORDAN. OK. If you are not going to answer my question let me ask this. Is it okay to debate this issue or do you stick with what you said in your opening testimony and what the gentlady from the District of Columbia said and what Mr. Vargas said, that we shouldn't even have a discussion about it because somehow that may impact what happens on the census?

Mr. YANG. What I said was that the fact that this question was introduced has caused damage to the community and that damage continues to this day, as demonstrated by the studies from Mr. Vargas, as demonstrated by the Census Bureau itself. And so that is what we need to address to ensure a fair and accurate count on the census.

Mr. JORDAN. So, because of that concern you think it is appropriate to limit the First Amendment, limit speech, limit debate in the United States Congress? We shouldn't even have this debate? Is that what you are saying?

Mr. YANG. That is not what I said. I said that what we need to do is to ensure that everybody is counted and anything that has done damage to the fact that everybody would be encouraged to participate in the census, which is something that—

Mr. JORDAN. You said that debate—in your opening statement you said the debate that took place over the last year on whether to include a citizenship question was harmful to what is going to happen on the census and the census count and being able to count the people across this country.

That is what you said. And so what I am asking you is you don't think that debate should have taken place at all then?

You don't think it is appropriate to have that debate in the U.S. Congress about something that, again, has been done in this country since 1820?

Mr. YANG. I believe that you are mischaracterizing what I said—

Mr. JORDAN. I believe you won't answer the question.

Madam Chair, I yield back.

Chairwoman MALONEY. Thank you.

The gentleman from Missouri, Mr. Clay, is recognized for questions.

Mr. CLAY. Thank you, Madam Chair, and thank you for holding this hearing.

Before I get into my line of questioning, I wanted to recognize Mr. Vargas and I saw you had something to contribute to that previous line of questioning.

Would you like to pick it up?

Mr. VARGAS. The point I was going to make is that the Census Bureau does ask in the American Community Survey how many—if you are a citizen.

But the research determined, Congressman, is which questions you ask and when you ask them has consequences. Asking a citizenship question on the American Community Survey is a different experience than asking a question on citizenship on the decennial.

The researchers have determined that the better way to collect citizenship data of the American public is through the American Community Survey, not the decennial census.

Mr. CLAY. Thank you so much for that followup response. Even with our united efforts at an administration seeking to do the right thing the 2010 census missed some 2.1 percent of the black community.

So, I am concerned that the current census sabotage efforts of this administration with their failure to hire, failure to allocate adequate resources, and scare tactics toward immigrants will lead to an unprecedented undercount.

So, I want to thank the chairwoman for shedding a bright light on the issue in today's hearing.

Mr. Morial, you are a veteran of several censuses. What are some of the major challenges that have led to an undercount in black and brown communities in past censuses?

Mr. MORIAL. Historically, the undercount has resulted from the failure to count children completely and adequately, No. 1. The historic undercount of African-American men has contributed to the overall undercount in the African-American community.

But let me focus, because I think it is important, on the 2020 census where we are and why we are where we are. And so we are where we are because there has been historic over the last several years underfunding of the census.

That underfunding has led to the cancellation of a number of tests that the census has done. It has meant the delay and the late effort to begin hiring the enumerators. It has been delays in doing the testing necessary to ensure that this online system works well.

We don't want to have another healthcare.gov with the census.

Mr. CLAY. So, what—

Mr. MORIAL. So, those things—those things—

Mr. CLAY. So, what now—excuse me.

Mr. MORIAL. Excuse me. Let me—let me finish answering Mr. Clay's question.

Mr. CLAY. Go ahead. Go ahead.

Mr. MORIAL. So, the undercount, I think, if we want to narrowly focus this year on what it is necessary to ensure a more complete count, the enumerator portion and the advertising campaign have to be energized.

This committee has to do oversight. I encourage when the census director comes to get to the bottom line on where they are on the hiring of the enumerators because this is the point.

Sixty percent—this is the Census Bureau's research—60 percent of African Americans are going to rely on the door-knocker to provide information, notwithstanding the internet, notwithstanding the telephone, notwithstanding the paper form.

And the numbers for the overall population are in the 40 to 50 percent range. So, the enumerator portion is so critical and if they don't hire the people that they need to hire—see, in 2010 when they were hiring enumerators we were in a recession. Now the situation is different.

Second, in 2010, you could go to a census office and apply for a job. Now you have got to go online. So, all of these barriers. We need to get to the bottom line in terms of where it is in order to ensure—

Mr. CLAY. And I appreciate that response. In your opening remarks you mentioned the media plan. Can you talk about your concerns with the media plan?

Mr. MORIAL. So, right now, the media campaign—we have had a chance to look at some of the—get a early look at some of the commercials that are going to be focused on the African-American community and they—some of them are pretty good.

However, if the advertising stops when the enumerator followup portion of the census begins to take place, then there is no advertising telling—people could have the perception that the census is over.

So, they need to expand the advertising for another, what is it, 45 or so, 60 days so that you have advertising taking place during the entire period that people have the opportunity to respond to the census.

This is an alignment issue. So, again, I encourage, and it is also necessary for the African American population that the advertising not overly rely on digital ads, that it include radio, it include community newspapers, and the like.

Mr. CLAY. Print. Yes.

Mr. MORIAL. So, I encourage you to probe this with the Census Bureau.

Mr. CLAY. My time is up. But I hope my friend from North Carolina understands that the key is communication with the public.

So, I yield back.

Mr. MEADOWS. I will never—I will leave it there.

Chairwoman MALONEY. The gentleman from the great state of North Carolina is recognized for five minutes—

Mr. MEADOWS. I thank—I thank the chairwoman.
I thank the gentleman from Missouri—
Chairwoman Maloney.—for questions.

Mr. MEADOWS [continuing]. For his congenial way of where he communicates. I miss his red glasses. I don't see your red glasses so—you have got gray ones. All right.

So, let me get to the bottom line on all of this and, hopefully, will offer a little bit of help.

I have conducted more census hearings probably than any other Member of Congress in the previous administration and this one. What I do want to get is an accurate count and so I am going to offer a few things that maybe some of you can consider.

Mr. Allis—is it Allis? Here is one of the things I would ask you to do. From the Native American standpoint, if you will help us with the rolls of a few tribes where we can do some sampling to make sure we are reaching those underserved areas.

I happen to have—I believe I had the first Congressional Office on Tribal Lands in the history of our country. I have the eastern band of the Cherokee Indians in my—in my district that I am—I proudly acknowledge their sovereign right.

So, if you will do that and get that to us, we will be glad to do that. I am sure I can find some members on the other side of the aisle to work with us.

One of the concerns I have, just bluntly, is reaching those underserved areas because the internet is not available.

You know, we were talking about 5G yesterday. In most of my district I would just like 1G, let alone 5G. So, if you will do that I would appreciate that.

Mr. Morial, one of the areas that I think that is key is if there is false information that is being put out there in predominantly urban areas that is not something that I have an expertise on.

But if you will get that to us, here is—here is what I would ask of you. I have actually traveled under the previous administration with enumerators that were actually out in the field, one of the few members to have done that. I understand the challenges.

But the other thing is TV advertising is not going to reach the people that we need to reach and I think all of you will agree with that. It just doesn't do it.

So, what I would ask you to do is to come up with something where we can do direct text messaging. You know, it is interesting.

They may not have internet service. They may—but they eventually come into contact most with one of these and where we can do that with credible sources I am willing to work with you.

We have spent over \$500 million trying to do an outreach. Some of that has been—well, not misappropriated but misallocated in terms of concentrating in certain areas.

I am willing to work with all of you on that particular issue. Mr. Moore, you are giving us a great roadmap for rural America. But you are not getting any Federal funding, are you?

Mr. MOORE. No, sir.

Mr. MEADOWS. How many of you are getting any Federal funding as it—either directly or indirectly with your groups in terms of outreach? Raise the hands. Anybody? All right.

Well, we are spending \$500 million on outreach so here is what I—and my commitment to each one of you is that if you will reach out to me I will work with the committee.

But we will work with the Commerce Department because I met with them more times than I care to mention over trying to get an accurate count.

If you will do that—Mr. Morial, if you will do that I will help you. Mr. Allis, if you will help us with Native American.

Certainly, some of the other areas I don't have as much expertise. We don't have a large Asian population in western North Carolina.

But at the same time, if you—I am sincere about getting an accurate count. You know, when we start to focus on the citizenship question we are making—we are making drastic errors and, Mr. Morial, I think you will agree with this.

We have undercounted in 1970. We undercounted in 1980. We undercounted in 1990. We undercounted in 2000. There was a citizenship question then and to suggest that somehow it is uniquely to 2020 is just not accurate.

I mean, I am a numbers guy and I am willing to work with you. But if you all will work with us on how we can reach these underserved and hard-to-reach communities, we will get an accurate count.

Are you all willing to do that?

Mr. MORIAL. I am, you know, open. I think that—when the census director is here I think the extent and the character and the magnitude of their outreach should be probed by the committee.

Mr. MEADOWS. Well, I will probe it. But let me just tell you, I had the previous census director under President Obama here and I expressed great concerns that we were not going to be ready and I didn't want there to be egg on my face because they were not asking for enough money.

We have funded the census at levels that are unprecedented. So, it is not a problem of money. It is a problem of allocation, and if all of you will agree to help us with that, I am willing to call a five-alarm fire to make it work.

Mr. MORIAL. I do want to do this because I want to make the record clear. The Census Bureau does not fund community-based outreach.

Mr. MEADOWS. We have got \$500 million. I beg to differ.

Mr. MORIAL. They don't do a thing to fund—

Mr. MEADOWS. I can tell you, we work with—

Mr. MORIAL. They don't fund organizations that do community-based outreach. They fund their own people.

Mr. MEADOWS. But we fund groups to actually be the—on part of it—I can promise you—as a line item. I have actually talked to the groups. And so we will be glad to clarify that.

Mr. MORIAL. None of us, huh?

Chairwoman MALONEY. I now recognize Congressman Connolly from Virginia for questions.

Mr. CONNOLLY. I thank you, Madam Chairwoman.

And welcome to our panel. I want to go back to an assertion made earlier and ask particularly you, Mr. Yang, to respond because the ranking member would have you believe that for some

mystical reason Democrats just don't like this question about citizenship and it is a harmless question and it is a piece of data we really need.

I thought I heard from your testimony that maybe there was a more malign purpose behind adding a question that formerly has not been asked in the census survey, as I understand it, since 1950.

And it wasn't Democrats who objected, ultimately. It was a court of law. It was a Federal judge who decided that—and he was upheld by the Supreme Court, ultimately, because the Commerce Department in its eagerness to add this question, which we now know from the release of emails, was political inspired to depress and suppress cooperation with the census deliberately to create an undercount of minority populations, especially ones you were talking about and maybe you represent, Mr. Yang.

The fastest growing population, certainly, in my district is Asian American and the fastest piece of that is South Asian.

We want everyone counted, as the chairman said in her opening statement, citizen and noncitizen. The Constitution requires it and fairness demands it.

So, I just want to give you an opportunity. I mean, is this some conspiracy by one of the two political parties to avoid getting data on what otherwise ought to be a simple analytical tool—a question about your citizenship status?

Mr. YANG. Thank you, Mr. Connolly, for that question and I must say that I am proud to be a constituent of your jurisdiction.

Mr. CONNOLLY. God bless you.

[Laughter.]

Mr. YANG. This goes to what Mr. Vargas was saying. Let me correct the record first with respect to the citizenship question.

It is incorrect to say that the citizenship question has appeared on every decennial census for 200 years.

Mr. CONNOLLY. Correct.

Mr. YANG. That is factually incorrect. It has appeared on the American Community Survey which, as Mr. Vargas has testified, is a completely different instrument that has been tested.

Mr. CONNOLLY. And doesn't go to every household.

Mr. YANG. And does not go to every household. It goes to three percent of all households.

Mr. CONNOLLY. Let me just interrupt, if I may, Mr. Yang, to establish your point. Am I correct? The last time it was on the actual census survey was 1950.

Mr. YANG. On the decennial survey was 1950. That is correct.

Mr. CONNOLLY. Yes. So, the idea that it is just customary and ordinary is flat out false. I mean, 1950 is 25 years ago?

[Laughter.]

Mr. YANG. If we can only wish. That is—that is correct. That is correct. Again, the concerns that we expressed in litigation and all our groups expressed was that this question was proposed with no testing and already understanding the Census Bureau itself as research had already presented to us that there was a fear within the immigrant community about information that was being collected about them.

So, to suggest that this question should be—just be introduced willy nilly without any testing caused great concern to us.

Certainly, we—during the course of litigation, as is public now, there have been documents that have been uncovered from Mr. Hofeller that the people testified to earlier—addressed earlier with respect to the fact that including the citizenship question could cause the—be politically advantageous to non-Hispanic whites and, certainly, for my community, Mr. Vargas’s community, and many of our communities. That is a deeply troubling fact.

Mr. CONNOLLY. You also raised the question of other languages and although, clearly, an effort has been made to try to expand the number of languages in which the census is presented, given the pluralistic nature of America and the diversity of so many of our communities, including the one you and I live in, where over 120 languages are spoken, what do you recommend we try to do to maximize participation and get over the language barrier?

Mr. YANG. Well, thank you for that, and I would certainly take Representative Meadows up on his offer to work with him with respect to our community.

It is ultimately the objective for the decennial census to ensure that we have a fair and accurate count of all of America.

What I would offer is even closer coordination with the Census Bureau. We have talked about some of the different aspects in which closer coordination could be helpful.

One of the benefits of technology is that we will have really real-time information about jurisdictions in areas that are not responding at a rate that we would want.

And so at that point community organizations should work with the Census Bureau to figure out what is the best strategy to followup with those communities and that is not a device that would have been available in 2010 or 2000 to the robust degree that we have now.

With respect to languages, again, it is with trusted messengers. Mr. Vargas spoke very eloquently about a number of them.

I would add one more, which is minister, pastors, our churches, and ensuring that they are part of that trusted messenger community that can get accurate information in language information for many of these churches to those communities in a way in which they would respond.

Mr. CONNOLLY. I thank you. My time is up.

Thank you, Madam Chairman.

Chairwoman MALONEY. Thank you.

Mr. Hice—Congressman Hice of Georgia is recognized for five minutes for questions.

Mr. HICE. I thank the Chair.

I would like to begin by thanking each of the panelists for being here. But, Mr. Moore, you are doing a fantastic job in South Georgia and I am deeply grateful for the leadership that you are exhibiting there.

And, Madam Chair, I would like to ask unanimous consent to add to the record—he had mentioned a PowerPoint presentation that none of us got to see.

But I would ask unanimous consent for that to be added.

Chairwoman MALONEY. Without objection, so ordered.

Mr. HICE. Thank you.

It is interesting to me that we are coming to—all of us, I think, on both sides of the aisle agree that what is most important is to get an accurate count.

Yet, what seems to hijack every one of these census hearings is the citizenship question and I, again, would assume that everyone in this room would agree it is important for us as a country to know how many people here who are citizens.

That is about as basic as you can get. It is important for us to have that information. How we go about getting it is—I supposed there is multiple ways for that to be done. But what I get annoyed at is how that issue is used really to attack the president and I don't think that is fair.

I think that is unnecessary and there is no reason for us to create an atmosphere of attacking the president on something constitutionally based as the census is.

I would just urge my colleagues on the other side to just take the politics out of this and let us try to get to the issue of an accurate count.

Mr. Moore, with that, I am grateful for the work that you are doing in south Georgia. Just from a broad perspective, how important is the impact in rural communities to having an accurate census?

Mr. MOORE. Thank you, Congressman. It is critical, especially for us. I live in a community that has a 46,000 population. I have taken notes from all of our speakers and we are all working, I think, on the same primary goal.

Colquitt County is a large agricultural community. We have a large migrant Hispanic population and one thing that really attributed to our success in 2010 as we had a lady named Bertha Riojas that worked with County Extension and she did prenatal programs, food and nutrition programs, finance programs with a lot of the migrant populations and they trust Bertha.

So, she was on our Complete Count Committee and if she told them it was something that they needed to do, they participated in the census.

I think they have even learned from that so this year on the committee they have got representatives from Guatemala and Honduras, Haitian, different subcultures within that group.

But it is critical. We talked about it briefly early on. The census data impacts everything that we do from an economic development perspective.

Mr. HICE. OK. Hit on that. From an economic development perspective, how does the census economic development?

Mr. MOORE. It provides jobs. I mean, I have been in economic development for 25 years. If you have got an industry that is looking at your community they are going to want to make sure that they have people there that can work. They are going to want to go to communities that are growing, have good education, good health care and can provide the workers that they need.

If you are looking at opening up a restaurant or a dress shop, you are going to want to make sure you have consumers that can purchase your goods. They are going to want to go to communities that are growing.

And I am extremely competitive. I always wanted to win the deal but I always wanted all of my neighbors and everyone around me to do well, too, because companies don't look at county lines.

They don't look at city lines. They look at market draws. So, for a work force perspective, we had 21,000 workers in Colquitt County but we had 185,000 workers within a 30-minute drive and that is what we sold.

So, it is critical—again, education, health care, social programs, economic development, your grant data for roads, water, sewer, bridges. Anything you do ties back to economic development.

Mr. HICE. So, I think it is important for all of us to understand that the census has a great impact not only just on our country but on rural communities in particular.

So, with that and with the move this go around to go more online oriented, what is the absence of broadband in so many rural communities—what kind of impact will that have in getting an accurate count?

Mr. MOORE. With us, we have worked on the awareness and education statewide, really. We know which areas don't have broadband. We already know that they are going to get a written form in that initial mailing that comes out on March 12.

They will also get another written form in the fifth mailing that will come back out on April 8 and we have also made arrangements for citizens—I mean, we have talked about Wednesday night suppers at church having tablets there, having computers there that people can fill out the forms, festivals having opportunities to fill out the forms.

Again, your libraries, your farm bureau, your city council, county commission, anywhere that people congregate. And making it easy for them. I think that is what is really critical.

If you explain why the census is important to them, their families, and their community and tell them what it is and what it isn't, most people are going to voluntarily fill it out.

I heard some low numbers earlier as far as response rates before people come to the doors. We have got maps on all 159 counties and many of our counties have gotten 80, 85 percent voluntary response, which is what you want so you don't have to send the enumerators door by door unless we have a really low turnout and low response rate.

Mr. HICE. Thank you. I yield.

Chairwoman MALONEY. Thank you very much.

I will now call on Mr. Krishnamoorthi of Illinois for five minutes for questions.

Mr. KRISHNAMOORTHY. Great. Thank you so much, Chairwoman Maloney and Ranking Member Jordan, for calling this committee hearing. Thank you to our panelists for being here.

I am so glad that all of you are so committed to an accurate census for 2020. I think one very important institution for having an accurate census are our local public libraries.

My family and I are big fans of local public libraries. With three kids you have to be—14, 10 and 3. I joke that with a teenager and a toddler I am ready for anything in Congress.

But we have a few public libraries in our area—Gail Bordon Public Library, Bloomingdale Public Library, and the Schaumburg

Township District Library that are doing an excellent job of going above and beyond to make sure that hard-to-count communities are actually counted during the census.

So, with that, Ms. Gupta, can you speak to the services offered at many public libraries that could help hard-to-count communities respond to the census online such as computers and wifi access?

Ms. GUPTA. Yes. The libraries are actually all over the country some of the most critical partners and institutions rooted in local communities to help get public education out and be providing services to communities around actually filling out the census and the American Library Association has been working with our coalition and members of this committee regarding the Bureau's plan for mobile questionnaire assistance centers and other key issues.

We have expressed some concern about what the Bureau is doing around kind of the lack of information that we have around where those mobile questionnaire assistance centers are going to be.

But the libraries have been incredibly important and we know—we have a map. The community map actually shows around the country where libraries are in hard-to-count communities.

So, we can actually do very targeted outreach. The Bureau can do very targeted outreach based on mapping literally at—within hard-to-count communities about how libraries can play a really critical role.

But we have to make sure the Bureau is actually equipped to do that.

Mr. KRISHNAMOORTHY. Great.

Mr. Yang, in my district library is leading the census outreach efforts there, have partnered with local schools where over 100 languages are spoken in our local public schools.

What are the—what are some of the challenges you see in counting people in places like my district where there is such a wide diversity of languages spoken and how do libraries help facilitate?

Mr. YANG. Well, certainly, libraries, and then you are absolutely right, public schools will play an important role. Oftentimes, public schools, because school districts because they know the composition of their students, which is the emerging population for our entire country, will be able to tailor their language needs even more specifically.

So, for example, my school district offers many languages that are not offered by the Census Bureau. So, working with those schools—I, like you, have young children—I rely on what we call the Thursday folder that comes home with my student.

Even if I don't read all the mail that comes with respect to advertisements, et cetera, I will read everything that comes for my child that is provided by my teacher.

So, if they have statistics in schools' classes, if they have other programs that allow census information, and I know that the Bureau is working with the schools to do things along those lines along with the libraries to make sure that information goes, again, from trusted messengers. That will go a long way toward helping.

Mr. KRISHNAMOORTHY. Great.

Mr. Vargas, you know, one of the things that we fear because of the presence of the citizenship question or the mention of it previously is kind of the fear of institutions.

Do you sense that maybe immigrant communities might be more apprehensive or fearful of using their local public libraries in light of all the discussion around the citizenship question?

Mr. VARGAS. Congressman, I have not seen any data about immigrant perception of public libraries. But I have seen data where immigrants do find credible messengers among schoolteachers, health care providers, local community leaders, faith leaders.

And so we need to engage those leaders in our communities as census Ambassadors as well.

Mr. KRISHNAMOORTHY. And how are we doing that, by the way?

Mr. VARGAS. Well, we are doing it ourselves and through the efforts that each of these organizations represented here are launching their own campaigns in our communities and we are closely coordinating with the Census Bureau.

What we need also is for the Census Bureau itself, for their staff—because they have the resources. We don't. And they have \$500 million that they are allocating to a campaign.

That campaign should, clearly, educate the American public about what will not be asked on the census so that we can help them overcome the fear about providing the government with information that they perceive might be used against them.

So, we need the power of the Census Bureau's resources to do a much more thorough education job of the American public so that they can be confident in participating in the census.

Mr. KRISHNAMOORTHY. Great. Thank you so much.

Thank you, Chairwoman.

Chairwoman MALONEY. Thank you.

Mr. COMER of Kentucky is recognized for five minutes for questioning.

Mr. COMER. Thank you, and before I begin my questioning about my concern for an undercount in rural America, especially rural Kentucky, Madame Chairwoman, with all due respect, I wanted to correct an inaccurate statement that you made with regards to the president wanting an inaccurate count—he didn't want an accurate count.

That is not true. The president represents the majority of working taxpaying Americans who simply want to know how many citizens reside in the United States who are not legal American citizens.

That has absolutely nothing to do with the final count. Every person residing in the United States will be counted in the census and that will apply to the Electoral College.

So, I wanted to correct that inaccurate statement, and I also want to shift gears and talk about my concern for an undercount in rural America.

A 2016 American Community Survey showed my congressional district, the 1st congressional District of Kentucky, as having the greatest share of households with no internet subscription or only dial-up connection.

I am sad to say 29 percent of the households in my congressional district, which is extremely rural, have either no internet subscription or dial-up connection.

That is an unfortunate situation that I place a lot of blame on the last two Kentucky gubernatorial administrations but it is some-

thing that my office is working very hard on. Whether it is the Farm Bill or any other piece of legislation that deals with funding for rural internet access, that is something that we strongly supported in my congressional office.

But as the 2020 census approaches, I echo the concerns that others have raised here about constituents being reached in hard-to-count areas, especially rural America.

The 2020 census is the first time that Americans will be able to respond using the internet and I want to ensure that those with lack of internet and broadband connectivity aren't left out because I think we would all agree that rural America, where the overwhelming majority of lack of internet is, is overwhelmingly Republican.

And we have heard a lot of people express concerns about an undercount in different communities and I just want to echo my concern about an undercount in rural America.

I also have learned that the most difficult population to accurately count are children under the age of five.

Mr. Moore, why do you believe children are undercounted in rural communities?

Mr. MOORE. I think it could be any community and one—and this isn't a real example but it is one that is realistic—you may have a single mother that has three children in her household and her landlord may think there is only one child in that house.

So, when they get that question and it asks how many people are living in the house they may either not answer at all or not be accurate on it. So, you get an undercount in that situation.

And where it really impacts us from a community development level is our schools use that census data for planning.

Mr. COMER. Exactly.

Mr. MOORE. So, if they are looking at that census data and they are expecting a hundred kids to show up for kindergarten the first day—

Mr. COMER. Right.

Mr. MOORE [continuing]. And because we don't have an accurate census count you have 200 children showing up the first day, then you have got classroom shortages.

You have got teacher shortages. You don't have enough books. You don't have enough materials. So, that is just one example and that is something that we share with other people so they can try to come up with a way to address that question if it comes up—you know, why is it important for me to list everybody in my household.

That is why it is critical that you have, again, very diverse large Complete Count Committee that can work with different demographics in the community that have influence with them and that know the answers to the questions.

And I think we have all said it. If people know what it is and what it isn't, most people are going to voluntarily fill out the census.

Mr. COMER. Right.

Mr. MOORE. It is that fear that keeps them from participating voluntarily.

Mr. COMER. You mentioned in your testimony the efforts that you have made in Georgia about recruiting census workers and I just had someone in my district office in Tompkinsville trying to recruit more workers for the—for the census.

My last question—and my time is running out—what is being done to prevent fraud from census takers, either intentionally over counting or intentionally undercounting residents?

Because I know there are a lot of groups in America that are—that are really doing their best effort, and we are too, to try to get every single person counted, for obvious reasons.

Mr. MOORE. U.S. census workers are credentialed and I can't necessarily or accurately address that question. But I will tell you something that I share with many of our smaller communities, and do it briefly. I know we are over time.

In 2010, Colquitt County didn't but a lot of our smaller rural communities had census takers from Atlanta, from Birmingham, and from out of state that were in our communities walking door to door.

That is not a good thing because they are not familiar with the community or the neighborhoods and, honestly, they are not vested.

So, what we did in 2010 in Colquitt and doing throughout Georgia right now is encouraging all of our Complete Count Committees to come up with lists of potential employees and volunteers that can apply for those jobs.

That way you have got somebody local that is vested. They know how important it is for their community. They know the neighborhoods better.

I think somebody mentioned not going into a neighborhood because they didn't feel safe. You will have a lot higher response rate if you get local people hired in those positions.

Mr. COMER. Exactly. I agree completely.

Well, thank you very much.

And, Madam Chair, I yield back.

Chairwoman MALONEY. The gentleman yields back.

Mr. Raskin of Maryland is recognized for questions from five minutes.

Mr. RASKIN. Madam Chair, thank you very much and thanks for calling this important hearing.

Successful voter turnout in an election depends on public trust that people's votes will be counted fairly and a successful civic turnout in a census also depends on public trust, specifically trust that our information will be kept secure and that nothing that we write down, no information we provide, will be used against us.

This trust challenge is a difficult one in an age of social media-drive conspiracy theories and Russia propaganda campaigns to sow distrust among Americans in our society and just the background levels of paranoia about government and politics.

So, that places an extra burden on government not only to act with complete integrity and transparency but also to bring a positive message about democratic government and constitutionally established practices like the census to the people.

So, Ms. Gupta, let me start with you. How do you think a lack of trust in the privacy and security of the census could lead to an undercount in American communities?

Ms. GUPTA. Well, I think there is no question that a lack of trust in privacy could have people basically chill participation in the census if they feel that their data will be misused or turned over to other government agencies and the like. It is why all of our organizations sitting at the table have done so much public education.

We believe the Bureau needs to do more public education about the existing Federal laws, very robust, that safeguard the confidentiality of census data.

The law is clear as day. But as several of my colleagues have said, the specter of the citizenship question really caused people to have even greater mistrust about what the motives were for the census and that is what we are all seeking in our local communities, in our campaigns, to overcome.

There are very good answers, as I said. The Federal law could not be clearer.

Mr. RASKIN. In 2018, the Census Bureau conducted a survey focusing on hard-to-count communities, which found that 28 percent of respondents were very concerned or extremely concerned that their answers on the census would not be kept confidential and 22 percent, or more than one in five, were very or extremely concerned that their answers could somehow be used against them.

And as you are pointing out, none of those things can happen under the law and we want to send the message to people that no information that you put on the census can be used against you and it is secure and it is confidential.

Madam Chair, I ask unanimous consent for the report of the Census Bureau to be entered into the record. I brought a copy with me today.

Chairwoman MALONEY. Without objection.

Mr. RASKIN. Mr. Morial, what kinds of confidentiality concerns do you think might keep some of your constituents or former constituents from filling out a census form?

Mr. MORIAL. I think confidentiality concerns, particularly in the age of the internet and the age of social media, are elevated because of what occurred in the 2016 election, what people hear about hacking.

It is very important that we push back against that through public education, through positive messages, to assert that it is the law that the information that the census collects is confidential and that it is a violation of the law and it is a violation of the criminal laws to expose that.

Mr. RASKIN. That is great.

Mr. MORIAL. I think it is important that the census and any other agencies be vigilant and closely watching and that we will be closely watching and report anything untoward that we might sense.

But we have got to encourage confidence by people as to what the law is to push back against this because it does undermine people's willingness to participate, as you mentioned, in all civic processes—

Mr. RASKIN. Yes.

Mr. MORIAL [continuing]. Both being the census and the like.

Mr. RASKIN. Mr. Allis, can you describe how trust levels in the Federal Government in Indian Country might affect census participation specifically there?

Mr. ALLIS. Yes. Thank you, Congressman, for that question.

So, there is no mystery and everybody knows or at least it is widely known that historically Indian Country has had a little bit of distrust toward the Federal Government, given the way the government has treated American Indians for the past 200 years.

The trust level is impacted negatively by the lack of proper attention given to educating and making the American Indian and Alaska Native population understand the purposes of the census—what it can do, what it can't do, how to properly fill out questionnaires.

And even more important is the communicators that interact with Indian Country—are they—are they knowledgeable enough to understand the culture and traditions in an appropriate manner to be able to communicate and navigate within a very unique population.

When you get folks that don't have that familiarity, they are not trusted voices.

Mr. RASKIN. Well, do you think the Census Bureau is attentive to that concern that you are raising?

Mr. ALLIS. They have identified that as an issue, okay, in their own background. But we have yet to see if they have—we are concerned about the proper resources when it comes to number of enumerators, who they are, are they prepared to go out there and be able to accurately interact with the community.

As we have heard from some of the others, we know that applying for these jobs in this particular has become much more difficult.

It is online. It is a longer process. It is a longer vetting period, and we are not certain that this particular trust aspect within Indian Country will be addressed properly because of that.

Mr. RASKIN. OK. I think my time has expired.

I yield back, Madam Chair. Thank you.

Chairwoman MALONEY. Thank you.

Mr. Grothman of Wisconsin is recognized for five minutes for questions.

Mr. GROTHMAN. Thank you.

The first point I would like to make, and I am a little bit offended here. I think one of our witnesses today said President Trump is anti-immigrant.

In the most recent year available we had 756,000 people sworn in this country legally, which is the highest it has been in several years. And to call a president anti-immigrant when that happens is just a ridiculous partisan slap and not true.

I believe it was Mr. Vargas who said—I am not sure—but at least in my district people of—whose ancestors are south of the border I can think of a lot of them who are very pro-immigrant but do not want people breaking the law.

And insofar as you feel that because you are—represent something called the National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials, I just want to make it clear to anybody else lis-

tening out there today that at least in my district people of descent south of the border do believe in obeying the laws and they would object to the idea that you would imply that President Trump is anti-immigrant because he is for enforcing the laws.

Now, my next comment is seeing the groups we have before us today I think there is an effort in this country to permanently divide America by having people obsess over their ancestry.

There are conflicts here in this building. There are conflicts by occupation, as people want to, you know, have more or less credentialism.

Gun owners are always under attack. I think about a year ago the Knights of Columbus were under attack. We always have the ongoing conflict between taxpayers and tax takers.

But I think when we set up so many groups like this it creates a false narrative that we have going on in America is disagreement by racial background. I disagree with that.

But thinking about that, over time I think, due to intermarriage, we are going to have—it is going to become more apparent that there is less and less of that sort of conflict here and I am going to ask you folks when I fill out the census form or when somebody else fills out the census form how exactly they should fill it out when you have a mixed background.

You know, I can think of several people here who—that I know are, say, one-half Latin and one-half direct European in ancestry. How should you fill out the form if that is your background? We will ask Mr.—Ms. Gupta. We will ask her. Half-half. How do you fill out the form?

Ms. GUPTA. The census allows you to self-identify as to your question around racial background and ethnic background.

Mr. GROTHMAN. So, in other words, there is no rule.

I will give you an extreme example. OK. We have a woman running for president right now, Elizabeth Warren. She was very proud.

She held a press conference that she was, whatever, 1/64th Native American and, apparently, she used that when she applied for a job a while back.

Do you think it is appropriate that she would fill out the form that she is Native American?

Ms. GUPTA. The census permits self-identification.

Mr. GROTHMAN. Do you think it is okay, though?

Ms. GUPTA. I think it should be accurate information.

Mr. GROTHMAN. Do you think that is accurate?

Ms. GUPTA. That self-identification is accurate information.

Mr. GROTHMAN. OK. Well, we will ask Mr. Allis. To be a member of a tribe—I don't know about your tribe but a lot of tribes you have to be at least one-quarter the background of that tribe. But it means you are three-quarters something else.

If somebody who is one-quarter Native American ancestry and three-quarters European ancestry would it be appropriate for them to fill it out European and would it be appropriate to fill them out Native American or how should they fill that out?

Mr. ALLIS. So, my tribe is located just north of your district.

Mr. GROTHMAN. Yes, I know. I know.

Mr. ALLIS. And if you are a member of a federally recognized tribe you have the absolute right to represent yourself as a Native American.

As I—as the other of my colleagues on the panel have accurately stated and which the number of consultations that NCAI has conducted or has hosted with Census Bureau when that question has come up within Indian Country audiences, the answer has been you self-identify in a manner that you think is appropriate, which—it has caused some level of confusion.

OK. But it is the standard statement that is made by folks at the U.S. Census Bureau when addressing that particular question.

And I will—and I will make a little adjustment to or comment—trying to understand. There is no difference in a particular tribe. If you are a tribal member and you are unenrolled and you are enrolled and you are a quarter member or a three-quarters member, you are a tribal member.

Mr. GROTHMAN. Right. I understand. I am just saying the average American if you—I don't think the average American race obsesses like some people here but the average American, I think—if you had a friend who was three-quarters European ancestry and one-quarter Native American, I don't know, that they—okay, thank you.

Mr. YANG. Can I just clarify something very quickly?

You can check as many categories as you want, too. It is self-identification. But you can check multiple categories if you identify in that manner.

Mr. ALLIS. Can I just say one thing about that, Congressman?

There is a lot of quarter blood American Indians in this country and most of the rolls go back to you have to trace somebody back to a roll as far back as the late 1800's. So, we are talking about three to four different generations.

So, Congressman, I would suggest that a quarter blood over three to four or five different generations is a significant amount of American Indian blood in any particular person.

So, whether somebody is a quarter Indian or three-quarters something else is a really kind of interesting way to look at it to question how somebody would identify themselves.

Chairwoman MALONEY. The gentleman's time has expired.

Mr. GROTHMAN. Thank you.

Chairwoman MALONEY. The Chair now recognizes Congressman Sarbanes from Maryland for questions for five minutes.

Mr. SARBANES. Thank you, Madam Chair. I want to thank everybody on the panel. This is a really, really critical discussion we are having today in many respects.

Talking about the importance of being counted is talking about empowerment and justice, dignity and respect.

Ms. Gupta, you are here a lot testifying and you are here because the Leadership Conference provides fundamental advocacy on these important issues of empowerment. I want to thank you for that.

We have had the opportunity of working closely together on efforts to protect and reform our democracy. I thank you for it, especially as it relates to voter suppression and it occurs to me that voter suppression and attempts to reduce census participation are really two sides of the same coin. They are about pushing people,

oftentimes minority communities, out of our democracy when we need to be pulling them into our democracy.

And if you think about it, the two most fundamental ways or opportunities that people in this country have at empowerment or to be counted at the polls and to be counted in the census.

That is the way somebody is able to stand up and say, here I am. I count. I matter. My voice is important.

So, I am very concerned about something that I believe you referenced in your testimony, at least in your written testimony, which is the potential for census-related disinformation efforts.

We talked about the importance of getting good education and information out there and why we need to lean on that as strongly as we possibly can.

But we also have to combat disinformation when it comes to the census process.

Could you discuss what census-related disinformation could look like, how it can be spread, and what the negative effects of it might be?

Ms. GUPTA. Thank you, Congressman, and thank you for your leadership on so many of these issues.

So, we have been deeply concerned about census-related disinformation, which really seeks to persuade masses of people to kind of not participate in the count and disinformation is usually pushed by bad actors with trying to propagate false information to make that viral to scare people away from participating and it can contain false information about who can participate, about when to participate, about how to participate, and it can spread through social media and networks.

The negative effect can be, literally, that countless people count themselves out, meaning that they do not fill out the census as a result and they will then, therefore, miss out on Federal representation, on being represented in state districts and on the—you know, being counted for purposes of schools and hospitals and health care and the like.

We have been—many of our groups have been very actively working with social media companies around ensuring that they have as—that they are developing policies to prevent census interference right now and I can—I can say more about that.

Mr. SARBANES. Yes, let me ask you about that because I gather that last month Facebook announced a new policy on census interference on its platform—disinformation being spread on its platform and said it is not going to allow those kinds of misleading posts that would reduce census participation.

Can you give me a sense of how you think that policy is, whether it is strong enough, whether others can be invited into taking similar kinds of action on these digital platforms?

Ms. GUPTA. Yes. The Leadership Conference and other civil rights groups actually pushed very vigorously with Facebook at the very highest level of the company to ensure and gave very detailed input on what would be required to actually have a rigorous and robust census interference policy.

We commended Facebook when they announced their policy for developing, really, what to date is the most comprehensive policy in the sector for combating census interference.

As you know, we have not been commending Facebook for very much recently but that was a significant achievement.

Facebook announced that they will—that any content that violates their census interference policy will be allowed—will not be allowed to remain on the platforms as newsworthy, even if it is posted by a politician and that was a pretty significant step for the company.

They have created an enforcement kind of protocol and we want to make sure, though, that they are going to continue to engage with stakeholders in meaningful ways such as hosting an external census working group to complement their internal efforts and we have asked the company to share information that they are getting about the targets of particular disinformation campaigns so that the Bureau—the Census Bureau and our organizations can then come in and flood the zone with the accurate information to make sure nobody is lost as a result.

Google and Twitter have both made more general statements that they will treat the census like an election. But we have yet to see the kind of detailed policies that we need to see from them and our hope, now that Facebook has come out with this, is that all social media companies are going to follow—are going to follow suit and we are going to be very, very active in trying to push that both for the census and elections.

Mr. SARBANES. Thank you very much—my time is up—again, for the work of the leadership, to all on the panel.

And, Madam Chair, it might be a good idea for us at some point to have a hearing where we can see what the feedback is on what these digital platforms are discovering in terms of census interference.

With that, I yield back.

Chairwoman MALONEY. That is an excellent idea. We will followup on it.

Mr. Cloud of Texas is recognized or five minutes for questions.

Mr. MEADOWS. Madam Chairman, I have got one point of clarification before—if that is all right with you.

Chairwoman MALONEY. It is all right with me if it is all right with Mr. Cloud. Yes, you—the gentleman is—

Mr. MEADOWS. Well—

Chairwoman MALONEY. The gentleman is recognized—

Mr. MEADOWS. OK. Thank you.

Chairwoman MALONEY.—for your point of information.

Mr. MEADOWS. I think under my questioning earlier I talked about Federal funding and I think it was taken in one context, not the other. And so I don't—I don't want any of our witnesses to perjure themselves.

So, if they would just get with the committee to make sure that you make a full disclosure on Federal funding so it doesn't—I think you were answering what I intended the question to be.

But I know a number of you get Federal funding, and so you may want to clarify that with the committee.

I yield back.

Chairwoman MALONEY. I thank the gentleman.

Mr. Cloud is recognized for five minutes.

Mr. CLOUD. Thank you, Chairwoman, Ranking Member, for holding this hearing. It is a good for us to start off this year on a topic that is very important to our oversight duties.

It is a key function of our republic, a republic of the people, by the people, for the people of having representative government.

And I appreciate the fact that everybody here is unanimous in the understanding that it is vitally important that we count every individual and that we do our due diligence to make sure that happens.

Mr. Moore, I really—you know, I come from Texas and, of course, I think 191 of our 254 counties is rural. The vast majority of my district is rural including, you know, a little town like Taft where the population is about 2,918 people and I had the privilege of visiting there the other day.

I appreciate all the efforts that you have done, the creative ways that you have come up with, talking about potluck dinners on Wednesday and I would just ask that if you could invite us to one of those potluck dinners I would appreciate it. That is good home cooking. So—

[Laughter.]

Mr. MOORE. We would love to.

Mr. CLOUD. I wanted to ask Mr. Morial, do you have anything to add to creative ideas what you, your organization, may be doing to help reach rural counties and maybe some of the differences in the challenges versus urban counties?

Mr. MORIAL. So, there is a substantial segment of the African-American population in the United States that is rural. It is not completely urban. There is a substantial part that is suburban.

In fact, there are probably more African Americans living in suburban America today than in urban America today. There has been a dramatic shift.

We have convened some 60 organizations under the banner of the Black Census Roundtable and through those efforts and they include people that reach urban communities, a number of civil rights organizations have extensive networks in rural communities.

So, we are using this community-based activation strategy to publicly educate about the importance of the census, what the purpose of the census is for, why the census is a right for people to participate and—

Mr. CLOUD. Do you have—I am sorry, moving along on time.

Mr. MORIAL. Yes, well—

Mr. CLOUD. Do you have any little practical nuggets like Mr. Moore had on—you know, he was talking about coloring pages in education schools and—

Mr. MORIAL. I endorse all—I mean, all of the above. I think what Mr. Moore has been able to do is to identify when a local government puts its money and its resources behind the census what is essential to making the census work is the work of local governments, states, cities, counties, economic development agencies, and school districts and the like.

You know, in our instance we are encouraging our local affiliates to participate in these local efforts, in these local Complete Count Committees—

Mr. CLOUD. Thanks.

Mr. MORIAL [continuing]. In an effort to do that. So,—

Mr. CLOUD. If I can move on. I appreciate your thoughts.

Mr. YANG, you mentioned the constitutional responsibility of what the Constitution asks and you mentioned that anything beyond that that would deter from that mandate that we shouldn't ask. Is that fair? What does the Constitution require us to ask?

Mr. YANG. Well, the Constitution requires us to assess a fair and accurate count of all persons in the United States and—

Mr. CLOUD. That is to count each individual, right?

Mr. YANG. All—

Mr. CLOUD. Mr. Vargas, you agreed with that as well, right?

Mr. VARGAS. Yes, I do. In fact, the Constitution only requires an enumeration of the population.

Mr. CLOUD. Right. So, it doesn't—

Mr. VARGAS. It doesn't require that we ask name, gender, race, or ethnicity. All it asks is for a head count.

Mr. CLOUD. Exactly. Yes. It doesn't require to ask race, housing status, sex, relationship status, any of those things, right?

So, would you endorse—not for this one, obviously, it is a little too late in the game—but going forward, consideration of a census that just counted what the Constitution required?

Mr. VARGAS. There would have to be a conversation about what then is the role that the American community is serving, because the data collected by the Census Bureau, that it goes beyond just a head count is used by all of U.S. policymakers to determine how to administer policies in the United States. You need to know how many people are children.

You need to know how many people are men and women. You need to know how many people have different levels of education. How you collect those data will depend on what surveys the Census Bureau uses.

Mr. CLOUD. Right.

Mr. VARGAS. So, it will be a determination for what purpose is the decennial census and what is the purpose of the American Community Survey and other surveys.

Mr. CLOUD. There has been a lot of talk about disinformation and, Mr. Vargas, you said something that troubled me.

You characterized the administration as being anti-immigrant, having a campaign against immigrants. And I think part of this information—disinformation has—you know, we cannot be conflating the vital need to secure the border and to mitigate what the cartels are doing in our Nation and communities like mine against an immigration policy.

Because the truth is—and I ask to submit this for the record: the Hill article “Deportations Lower Under Trump Administration Than Obama,” and the truth is they were lower under Bush than Clinton. And so if we could stop the rhetoric I think it would go really far to dissuading the fear that we see often.

There is one underserved group that—I think, Mr. Morial, if you could speak to. We are two years out of Harvey and we still have a number of displaced individuals. We have housing that is still being built and people can't come back to communities.

Do you have a way to deal with that? Do you have any suggestions for that? Or Mr. Moore?

Mr. MOORE. We have had similar issues in southwest Georgia. Hurricane Michael hit the Panhandle and hit south Georgia and we still have several of our communities that don't have residents back in their homes.

So, we are working with all those communities to come up with a plan to identify where they are staying. It could be with a friend, a relative, or somewhere else. But we are definitely trying to make sure that we count those displaced families.

Mr. CLOUD. How do you do that? Do you have any—we can talk offline, I guess, and get some ideas.

Mr. MOORE. We can, but a lot of it is local. Like I said, every community is different. Everything is local.

Mr. CLOUD. Right.

Mr. MOORE. But working through churches, working through schools, working through different organizations that may know of someone that has been displaced and making sure that they don't fall through the cracks.

Mr. CLOUD. Appreciate it. Thank you.

Mr. MORIAL. I will add this. I think, just reflecting on after Hurricane Katrina, the Census Bureau made special efforts like in instances where they make special efforts to count homeless people. They send enumerators to where people are.

And so it is important that the Census Bureau work with in those areas where people have been displaced, whether it is in Texas or it is in Puerto Rico or anywhere where we have had hurricanes or fires that they work with local officials.

Those local officials know where the displaced citizens are—the displaced people are and send enumerators to those areas. The only way they are going to be counted is through the use of enumerators if they are not at the customary physical address where they are.

So, it requires a special effort by the census and we are a sophisticated knowledgeable society. We know where these events have taken place. We have a sense of where displaced people may be to some extent and so it requires a special effort.

Again, I encourage you all to talk to the Census Bureau—the census director—about that when he comes here in a few weeks.

Chairwoman MALONEY. The gentleman's time has expired.

I now yield, at his request, to Mr. Meadows, briefly, out of order to further clarify his point of clarification.

Mr. MEADOWS. So, I want to come back to all of you because my question was not a "gotcha" question and I think you all answered it, trying to answer it earnestly.

When I was talking about Federal funding I was talking about actually Federal—because some of you receive Federal funding. We know that.

So, my question would have been accurately do any of you receive Federal funding directly or indirectly that supports your census work and that way you can answer in the negative as you did or at least that is—answer truthfully. So,—

Ms. GUPTA. The Leadership Conference does not.

Mr. YANG. Advancing Justice, AAJC, receives no Federal funding.

Mr. VARGAS. NALIO Educational Fund does not receive one cent of the Federal Government.

Mr. ALLIS. National Congress of American Indians doesn't receive Federal funding for census work.

Mr. MORIAL. We do not receive Federal funding for census work.

Mr. MOORE. No, sir.

Mr. MEADOWS. I thank the chairwoman for allowing us to clarify that. Thank you.

Chairwoman MALONEY. OK. I now yield to Mr. Rouda of California five minutes for questioning.

Mr. ROUDA. Thank you, Chairwoman, and thanks to all of you for attending today on this very important topic.

Clearly, a proper census count is a rural issue, a suburban issue, and an urban issue. It is a U.S. issue. We want to make sure that we count everyone.

I am Representative Rouda. I am from California, Orange County, California, the 48th District, and in the 48th District we have an area affectionately known as Little Saigon, which includes parts of Westminster, Santa Ana, and Garden Grove, and it is a community that is—I think is an example of hard-to-count places.

And so what I really want to talk about with all of you is the goal of having partnership specialists helping out with the Census Bureau's efforts to make sure that we do get an accurate count in all communities.

These partnership specialists tend to be trusted local voices who serve as critical liaisons between the Census Bureau and the local communities.

Yet, the Census Bureau has reportedly failed to meet its own deadlines for hiring partnership specialists, raising questions about the effectiveness of this program.

Ms. Gupta, can you explain why partnership specialists are so important in increasing census participation in hard-to-count communities?

Ms. GUPTA. Well, the partnership specialists really are reflective of the local communities. They are often made up of people from local communities who are going to be much more trusted messengers as well as door knockers than anyone from the Federal Government or the Bureau if they have to self-identify that way.

And so the partnership program the Bureau has historically relied on its ability to hire and to have a robust partnership program for that reason and I would say particularly now, because of, I think, escalated fears and, like, not only of the citizenship question but the climate for immigrants in this country right now and that feelings vis-a-vis the Federal Government that it is more important than ever that there are full hiring—that full hiring is done and that we have got those partners in every community, in places like Little Saigon—

Mr. ROUDA. Right.

Ms. GUPTA [continuing]. Where there will be language barriers as well.

Mr. ROUDA. Could you elaborate, too? Because some people would suggest that the advertising campaigns that we do and websites that provide significant information suffice.

Yet, I think you would recognize and agree that we need more because these partnership specialists provide a role that those don't.

Can you elaborate on that a little bit?

Ms. GUPTA. Yes. The partnership specialists are doing much more than just providing public education. They are actually in community, often should be also trained in language, and my colleague, John Yang, I think could speak very directly to some of the challenges that folks in Little Saigon will face without a robust partnership program.

But they are much more engaged at the local level kind of interfacing with members of the community in a way that no amount of media or communications. It is all vital but it is not going to have the same reach.

Mr. ROUDA. So, we know that these partnership specialists play an incredibly important role in making sure that we get an accurate census count and the Census Bureau was supposed to have 1,500 partnership specialists hired by June 30, 2019. They missed it.

They set a revised target to hire these specialists by September 1, 2019, and our understanding from the GAO is that they missed that again in December.

Mr. Vargas, what concerns do you have about the delay in the hiring of these partnership specialists?

Mr. VARGAS. My major concern is that there will not be sufficient time to make sure that these specialists are adequately trained to do the job that needs to be done now.

The Census Bureau's media campaign is beginning in January, just in days. We need specialists on the ground not just hired but to know what is going on, and one of the challenges we have had is that we have encountered partnership specialists that are not well informed themselves about the census operations.

And if I could use this opportunity to make a recommendation to the Congressman from Texas who is from a rural community, sir.

My advice would be that you should look at where in your district will people not receive mailings, because many rural communities will not get any mail. They will be hand delivered the census form through an operation called Update Enumerate—Update Leave, excuse me.

So, what my recommendation is that everybody needs to understand what the operations the Census Bureau will conduct in your districts because not everybody will get mail, and specialists need to be informed about that.

So, my concern is that not only are we behind in the hiring but there is not enough time to make sure they are fully trained so that they are accurately informing the community about census processes.

Mr. ROUDA. So, to say that in another way, we want to make sure not only do we hire those that we have committed to hire in a timely manner, to make sure they have the appropriate skill set but equally important that they have the proper training so they can do their job. Is that correct?

Mr. VARGAS. Correct. That is absolutely correct.

Mr. ROUDA. Great. Thank you very much and I yield back, Madam Chair.

Chairwoman MALONEY. I now yield to Mr. Cloud for a unanimous consent request.

Mr. CLOUD. Thank you, Chairwoman, and thank you, Mr. Vargas, for your—for your thoughts.

I ask unanimous consent to put into the record an article from the Hill, "Deportations Lower Under Trump Administration Than Obama."

Chairwoman MALONEY. Without objection, so ordered.

Mr. CLOUD. Thank you.

Chairwoman MALONEY. I now recognize Mrs. Miller of West Virginia.

Mrs. MILLER. Thank you, Chairwoman Maloney and Ranking Member Jordan, and thank you all for being here today.

I have heard a lot about what constitute hard-to-count population and so I would like to offer to you a different perspective from my state, West Virginia.

It is extremely rural and it is filled with beautiful hills and hollows that contain many small communities, individual homesteads, and places where families have proudly lived for generations.

Navigating the state, reaching out to these communities, often multiple times and ensuring that every individual is counted in the right place is no easy feat.

Behind me displayed is a map of my district. Four of the 18 counties in my district have 100 percent of the population living in hard-to-count neighborhoods.

I spent last year visiting each one of these counties and I can tell you from firsthand experience how rural the communities are.

Furthermore, an additional five counties have over 60 percent of the population living in hard-to-count neighborhoods. That is half.

Many of these counties also had lower percentages of those who mailed back their census forms in 2010 and required a costly in-person followup.

It is important that this committee considers how to address hard-to-count populations as we do take rural communities into account.

Mr. Moore, I have enjoyed listening to your testimony today because you have so many good ideas about how to engage the rural communities.

One thought I had is we have a lot of food pantries as well as mobile food pantries all over our states and I think that might be a good way as well to spread the news about the census.

We also have mobile mammograms that go around. Are there any unique ways that you have found to success in reaching these folks?

Mr. MOORE. I think both of those would be good. And, again, I am not familiar with your district or your state so I don't know why they would be classified as hard to count. But—

Mrs. MILLER. The mountains.

[Laughter.]

Mr. MOORE. I understand that geography.

Colquitt County—I mentioned a little bit about the success we had and I never thought we had a homeless population but we do.

So, in 2010, we had a soup kitchen that feeds people every Wednesday night and we made it available for people to participate in the census there. I mentioned churches before.

Mrs. MILLER. Yes, it is wonderful.

Mr. MOORE. Schools, and several of our panelists have said that when we were doing our focus groups we asked people where they got their news, where they got their information, who they trusted and who were their trusted sources, and many of them came back to their pastors if they went to church, and their teachers or other guidance counselors. So, I would use both of those as options to do—try to get outreach.

But, again, every community is different. What works in one community will not work in the other. That is why it is critical that you have a diverse Complete Count Committee.

Somebody had mentioned earlier that a lot of times government takes the lead, and that is true. But we have got very successful counties where it may be Family Connections, which is a nonprofit kind of a community organization—

Mrs. MILLER. Family resource centers.

Mr. MOORE [continuing]. Because they work with a lot of your hard-to-count populations. They deal with them on a daily basis.

So, I think that is my perspective. It may be a little bit different than others by working with the Chamber and with the Development Authority for so many years and working with committees is what works in one community doesn't work in the other.

So, you got to come up with ideas, suggestions, best practices, and plans to help them put together a plan that would work well for them.

Mrs. MILLER. Well, much of my district, because of the hills, the mountains, the geography, we are without the internet and, you know, since this is the first time people can respond online, how have you addressed the lack of being in—

Mr. MOORE. We have got a lot of rural south Georgia counties that don't have adequate internet. There is two things.

One is if you are in an area that doesn't have the internet that first letter should have a written form that they can fill out, and the fifth letter will also have a written form that they can fill out.

And then trying to promote, you know, Spring Flings, May Day parades, football games, anything where you have got a lot of people.

Set up tents, promote it, have educational opportunities for them to tell them what it is, what it isn't, and encourage them to fill out the census while they are there.

We had mentioned libraries and others have, too. The state of Georgia allocated a million dollars to our public libraries to put in computers, put in TVs, promotional materials to promote the census because many of our south Georgia citizens that don't have internet available at home go to the library.

Mrs. MILLER. So, do the homeless as well.

Mr. MOORE. They do, and that is another great point. But your food banks, soup kitchens, churches, just anything. And I have had people say that is only 50 people.

If you have got somebody that has influence over 50 people they need to be engaged in your committee because you want to count

everybody that you can. I would hate to know that I missed people in any county.

Mrs. MILLER. And I like your trusted sources. That sounds— Thank you. I yield back.

Chairwoman MALONEY. Thank you. I just want to comment.

Mr. Moore, you brought a lot of information about rural America and how to address it and the theme of libraries. I represent an urban area but we are using our libraries as a center for the homeless, for other people who don't have internet, to have people there to help them.

That is a real resource that we need to build on in our rural communities. I want to thank you for your bringing that information to us.

I now recognize Ms. Kelly of Illinois for questions for five minutes.

Ms. KELLY. Thank you all for being here and thank you for your patience. I know important the census is. Illinois has lost a congressperson I think every decade for five decades and it looks like we are going to lose another one, and if people don't fill out the census we might lose two.

So, I and my office we have taken it upon ourselves—we do census briefings all over. My district is urban, suburban, and rural.

In the rural part of my district 40 percent of my constituents don't have access to the internet. So, we will be using the library.

Also in my district there is a lot of concern about the citizenship question from my—in particular, my LatinX population because they have talked to us about it a lot.

But what I wanted to talk about is actually the Census Bureau itself because people are concerned about their privacy.

And in October 2019, GAO issued a report about 2020 census operations and the report found that as of August 2019 many of the census's technology systems were at risk of missing critical deadlines ahead of Census Day.

The report stated that, and I quote, "At-risk systems add uncertainty to a highly compressed timeframe for completing system development and testing work over the next seven months."

Ms. Gupta, is the Bureau ensuring that there is enough time to adequately test all of the new systems and what concerns do you have about it?

Ms. GUPTA. Thank you, Congresswoman.

So, as some of my colleagues have already said, this census cycle we are reaching this with fewer end-to-end tests than ever—than in the 2010.

There has only really been one end-to-end test and that then gives us a lot less data and gives the Bureau a lot less data about how to shore up IT.

Obviously, technology is hugely important to reaching more people. But it brings cybersecurity threats whether they are real or perceived and that can chill participation as well and the Bureau has to do everything with private Federal and state partners to ensure security.

We have been pushing the Bureau to take necessary steps to address how new IT and automated systems are going to affect the communities that they are most likely to miss. We know as we—

as we said through the community map that we have worked on in partnership where all the hard-to-count—hardest-to-count communities are.

The Bureau has—I think should update Congress when it appears before it on February 12 on the status of all of these activities and show that it is spending resources in the manner that Congress has directed and, further, I think, should press the Bureau to ensure that its IT systems are secure.

And, I mean, I can add just, again, a couple of details. People need to understand also through the partnership program and public education work that the Bureau does about the internet self-response portal and, you know, kind of understand the process more. It is all of a piece for making sure that cybersecurity is strong.

Ms. KELLY. Does anyone else want to add anything about concerns?

[No response.]

Ms. KELLY. Mr. Yang, can you briefly explain the legal protections that protect census data?

Mr. YANG. Sure. So, under Title 13 of the Census Act, nobody is allowed to provide any individualized data coming from the census form and that is subject to a penalty, if I remember right, of \$500 and six months in jail.

Mr. VARGAS. Two hundred and fifty.

Mr. YANG. Two hundred and fifty. Five months in jail.

Mr. VARGAS. Five years.

Mr. YANG. Five years in jail. Sorry about that.

So, and we will say this. I think all of us, our experiences with the Census Bureau staff, the line level people, they take that protection seriously and that is part of what Mr. Vargas has talked about in terms of the Census Bureau being a trusted messenger of sorts that we rely on.

So, those protections are absolutely in place and that is something we do need to emphasize to our community and protect from any misinformation with respect to that.

Ms. KELLY. If there is one thing that you would tell the Census Bureau or us what could be done better, what would it be, starting—just go down the line.

Ms. GUPTA. Broadly?

Ms. KELLY. Yes.

Ms. GUPTA. OK. Well, we have pushed very hard and appreciated Congress's bipartisan leadership in getting the funding levels that they needed.

We are gravely concerned about how they are actually using and allocating in real time because the census is about to start days away in Alaska on all of the various programs that we know and kind of strategies to address the risks that the census is facing that is—it is a census that is about whether they are hiring at a fast enough pace for partnership programs, what their plan is with their communications and ads program, IT security, cybersecurity, and the like.

You have heard many of us address these issues and we are—I think you have to put this and ask about all of these questions because they have—they have funding now to do everything that

they need to do, we believe, in order to ensure that everyone is counted.

Ms. KELLY. Just because everyone else has gone over, but anybody else have two cents? Quickly.

Mr. YANG. I would say, broadly, transparency. We know that there are gaps. If they let us know what the gaps are, realistically, all of us can help to fill those gaps. But we need to know what that is.

Ms. KELLY. And end it with you, Mr. Moore.

Mr. MOORE. Congresswoman Kelly, thank you.

Talking about the security as secure for 72 years, but one thing that has been effective when I have talked to small groups and communities, if you look at the questions there is really nothing on there that is not extremely personal information. You have got your name. You have got your address.

But there is no bank account information. There are no Social Security numbers. There is nothing like that. So, security is a big issue and that is something that you have got to address with people.

But I think once you actually run through the questions that are actually on the form they might feel a little bit better about it because I think there is a misconception that they are going to hack the census data base and they are going to have all of your personal information and drain your bank account and ruin your credit and all of this other stuff and that is just not the case with the data that is collected.

Ms. KELLY. Thank you. I yield back.

Chairwoman MALONEY. Thank you very much.

And Mr. Higgins of Louisiana is recognized for five minutes for questions.

Mr. HIGGINS. Thank you, Madam Chair, and I thank the panelists for appearing today.

I serve a district in south Louisiana, Third District, where 24 percent of my constituents were considered hard to count in the last census.

Mayor Morial, thank you for being here.

Mr. MORIAL. Thank you.

Mr. HIGGINS. My fellow Louisiana citizen. My dad was friends with Dutch and he always—

Mr. MORIAL. Go LSU.

Mr. HIGGINS [continuing]. Always spoke well of your family.

Mr. MORIAL. Thank you.

Mr. HIGGINS. We are going to be moving a little fast here and I assure the panelists that I am moving in a positive direction, I believe, for the purpose of our hearing.

I am going to ask you to answer a couple of questions by yes or no. Let me clarify that I support a totally accurate count regarding our census. It is crucial for our representative republic. I support door-to-door, direct mail, and online census data collection and I believe it is the responsibility of all of us to determine what is the best way to have a 100 percent accurate count.

However, I think we have some realities to face. So, that I will know who to ask a pending question to, by a show of hands have

any of you ever worked or the Census Bureau on the street, collecting census data door to door?

Let the record reflect that no panelist member raised their hand, Madam Chair.

My next question, by yes or no, please—

Ms. PLASKETT. I have.

[Laughter.]

Ms. PLASKETT. I was sleeping when you were talking but I have.

Mr. HIGGINS. Thank you for your service, to my colleague.

[Laughter.]

Mr. HIGGINS. My second question, yes or no, and this is not a “gotcha” question. I just ask for a genuine answer. Do you recognize that some communities and some demographic groups are more closed culturally and just—and just by tradition hesitant to interact with those outside of their community? Yes or no.

Ms. Gupta?

Ms. GUPTA. Yes.

Mr. HIGGINS. Mr. Yang?

Mr. YANG. Yes.

Mr. HIGGINS. Mr. Vargas?

Mr. VARGAS. Yes.

Mr. HIGGINS. Mr. Allis?

Mr. ALLIS. Yes.

Mr. HIGGINS. Mr. Morial?

Mr. MORIAL. Yes.

Mr. HIGGINS. Mr. Moore?

Mr. MOORE. Yes.

Mr. HIGGINS. Madam Chair, let the record reflect that all the panelists responded yes.

So, here is an interesting question regarding how we move forward to seek 100 percent—it should always be our goal, right? 100 percent accurate count.

Do these American communities that have a cultural or traditional hesitancy to communicate in census collection data efforts—do they have the right to determine their own level of interaction with government or those outside of their community? Do they have that right?

Ms. Gupta?

Ms. GUPTA. Yes.

Mr. HIGGINS. Mr. Yang?

Mr. YANG. Yes.

Mr. HIGGINS. Mr. Vargas?

Mr. VARGAS. Yes.

Mr. HIGGINS. Mr. Allis?

Mr. ALLIS. Yes.

Mr. HIGGINS. Mr. Mayor?

Mr. MORIAL. I may not quite understand the question.

Mr. HIGGINS. Does an American citizen that is a member of a community that has—that has a tradition of hesitancy to provide data to census researchers—do they have that right to resist staff?

Mr. MORIAL. I would answer by saying they have a right. But I think people have a responsibility to participate—

Mr. HIGGINS. Oh, we have a responsibility to do the outreach. Do they have to—

Mr. MORIAL [continuing]. To participate in the census. They have a responsibility.

Mr. HIGGINS. Mr. Moore?

Mr. MOORE. I think they have the right, but it is required by law that they participate.

Mr. HIGGINS. But they have the right to resist, do they not? And it would be—it would be incumbent upon us to, through outreach and communication into these communities to encourage their participation and then to seek ultimately their census data—

Mr. MOORE. Yes, sir.

Mr. HIGGINS [continuing]. But they have the right to resist.

OK. Just so we are clear on that, because I was a patrolman on the street in 2010 and it was a common—one moment, ma'am—it was a common call during the census collection of a 107 POP—a suspicious person. There was a great hesitancy—this is in 2010. Sometimes we would get multiple calls a day on the same census worker.

Now, since 2010, there has been an overwhelming number of scams and efforts to steal identity and money online via email, a telephone. It increased exponentially and has largely targeted the elderly.

I believe this decade past will certainly influence a greater number of American communities and individual families and households to resist the efforts to collect their data and I think that there is a great deal of emphasis being placed on a citizenship question at the expense of overlooking the fact that we have—we have allowed it to manifest in our Nation, an environment that we encourage our citizens on a daily basis if you don't know the person calling you on your phone don't answer the phone.

If you are not familiar with the emails coming to you, don't open an attachment. This has been made manifest over the last 10 years, and I think that as a nation we have to get our—we have to get our heads wrapped around this because I believe one of the largest demographics that will not be counted in this coming census is our elderly and those that feel—that feel under threat from scam or ID theft.

So, if Madam Chair would allow any panelists—perhaps they could choose amongst themselves to respond to that observation.

Chairwoman MALONEY. The gentleman's time is up. Someone may respond if they would like to. I think he raises a relevant point, reaching out to the elderly. Is there anyone who would like to respond?

Mr. Moore?

Mr. MOORE. I will, just briefly. In our focus groups and the information that we have received back, the elderly is generally a population that is more inclined to voluntarily respond to the census because they have done them before and they see it as their civic duty.

I can't address your concerns about privacy and going online more but traditionally that has been one group that has had a higher response rate than other segments of the population.

Chairwoman MALONEY. Yes, Mr. Allis?

Mr. ALLIS. If I may, Madam Chair.

So, you speak to resistance, all right, and thank you for your service. I did almost 10 years on the streets of Baltimore City doing what you did.

As Mr. Moore said earlier, one size doesn't fit all when you look at different areas and different districts, and why a people or a group of people may resist in one area may not be transferrable to the other.

So, your suggestion, respectfully, that people have a right to resist and then follow it up with a security concern based on fraud on the internet and other locations and things in their—they run across in their daily lives is then transferrable to all these resisting communities as being a primary cause or suggesting that is dubious, at best.

Indian Country resists, if it is a resistance, for a totally different reason which has nothing to do with anything that you spoke to.

It has to do to a historical mistreatment of American Indians through a couple hundred years—periods when they weren't even allowed to vote or were citizens that covered two periods where they tried to—this country tried to terminate American Indian ancestry.

OK. So, when you look at why we may be a little hesitant, it has nothing to do with that. It has more to do with properly communicating, educating, and connecting with the culture and tradition that exist on individual Indian reservations and understanding what that is.

So, I have to say that in response to your suggestion to try to pigeonhole the panel, if you will, into recognizing certain things with a yes or no answer and then extrapolating some kind of—

Mr. HIGGINS. I thank the gentleman.

Chairwoman MALONEY. The gentleman's time has expired.

Mr. HIGGINS. I thank Madam Chair for her indulgence.

Chairwoman MALONEY. But very important issues were raised.

Mr. HIGGINS. And I find it—I find it not shocking that a panelist would identify a Member of Congress as dubious. Most of America considers us all dubious.

[Laughter.]

Chairwoman MALONEY. Thank you.

Congresswoman Lawrence from Michigan is recognized for five minutes for questions.

Mrs. LAWRENCE. I think the questions my colleague posed just gives us more of a drive and a responsibility to ensure that we educate, that we address the concerns, and that we are assuring that our outreach is one that is inclusive.

As Members of Congress, I must ensure that all hard-to-reach hard-to-count communities are included in this upcoming census.

Unfortunately, the president's continued mention of the citizens question—citizenship question—has incorrectly sparked fear in a lot of the communities.

Today, we have an opportunity to help correct that injustice. My home district is Detroit, a city notoriously undercounted in the census with a large minority population who speaks dozens of languages. It is critical that the Census Bureau take every step it can to ensure that the hard-to-reach populations in our communities are reached.

After the 2010 census, the Census Bureau reported that it undercounted African Americans by two percent, Hispanics by 1.5, and American Indians and Alaskans by five percent.

According to the 2010 census, my district home is home to over 400,000 African Americans, 34,000 Hispanics, and 1,500 American Indians, which equates to a district that is seriously at risk of being undercounted.

If those undercount trends continue, my district will see hundreds if not thousands of individuals not counted in the 2020 census.

In addition to that, 10 percent of my district is born in another country. Our largest groups are residents from Eastern Europe, Iraq, Bangladesh, and then Mexico, India, and Yemen, and the list goes on.

My home state of Michigan stands to lose \$30 billion for infrastructure and we are already rated one of the worst in the country, and access to clean drinking water—you all know the story of Flint—health care, education, and more if the 2020 census is not properly done.

I am concerned that because the Census Bureau had fallen behind in the hiring for the 2020 census, it may not have the manpower it needs to conduct followup operations to ensure everyone in America fills out the census form.

In November 2019, the independent Inspector General at the Department of Commerce raised concerns about hiring delays. The IG found that the Census Bureau information technology systems used failed several tests, and I quote, “present a risk to successful completion of our census.”

Ms. Gupta, do you have concerns about the pace of the census hiring today?

Ms. GUPTA. Yes, I do, and I think several of our panelists do for the very reason that you said, which is this program is actually vitally important to being able to secure an accurate count in some of the hardest-to-count communities.

Mrs. LAWRENCE. In fact, the Census Bureau has acknowledged that it is way behind in hiring. Just this week, the Bureau issued a press release stating that the Census Bureau needs more applicants in all 50 states.

Mr. Morial, do you believe that the Census Bureau is doing all it can to recruit and to hire enumerators and what else—you know, the question that we should be asking here today as Members of Congress is what can we do, because we must act.

Do you have recommendations? And give me your assessment of our hiring.

Mr. MORIAL. Let me—let me thank you for your question and thank you for your focus, and let me just kind of—it is time to ring the alarm bell on the enumerator program.

They are behind. There is no strategy to catch up. They have got to hire 500,000 people. Every hard-to-count community, whether it is in black, LatinX, American Indian, or Asian American, is overly reliant on the success of the enumerator program and what they need to do is hold emergency hiring fairs.

Mrs. LAWRENCE. OK.

Mr. MORIAL. They need to decouple their total reliance on an on-line hiring system. They need to do what anyone would do in an emergency and that is to say our processes have not—by utilizing our processes we have fallen behind and therefore we need to change.

Wise people change, fools never. And if they continue along the course that they are going, they will not hire enough people and an undercount is preordained.

Mrs. LAWRENCE. It is preordained.

Mr. MORIAL. On No. 2—

Mrs. LAWRENCE. I agree.

Mr. MORIAL [continuing]. This Congress appropriated \$90 million for mobile questionnaire assistance centers. We have no information that they have stood up the implementation of that program.

And to add to this, decisions made years ago to reduce the number of local partnership offices means that those partnership specialists, for which, once again, they are far behind in hiring, have a broader geographic area to cover.

So, what they should do is they should go into some of these areas and set up emergency partnership offices.

My point is as we sit here in early January with the questions—the first letters to go out in less than 60 days—we need to ring the alarm bell and demand that there be adjustments in their approach or the result is not going to be what we want.

Mrs. LAWRENCE. Thank you.

Chairwoman MALONEY. Your time has expired.

And Mr. Keller of Pennsylvania is recognized for five minutes.

Mr. KELLER. Thank you, Madam Chair.

I just want to get into the census information. You know, we all know it is used for the boundaries of congressional districts as it has been since the beginning of our republic.

I mean, that was—it was designed for that purpose, and now it is also used to distribute more than \$600 billion per year in our communities. So, it is very important and I want to thank the panel for being here today to discuss this issue.

Pennsylvania's 12th congressional District has many rural areas where the census would define hard-to-count populations. In fact, the town or the village I live in has a population of less than a thousand and, again, these areas would be defined as hard to reach by the census.

Looking at this, I think it is important—you know, we look back on what we have been able to accomplish in 1969, putting a man on the moon and returning him safely to Earth, okay, and we can do that in 1969.

We are in 2020, and I think that we need to look at it as essential that we put forward proven strategies and the use of that technology that we have been able to get over the years to ensure that the rural communities are properly counted in the 2020 census. And, again, we know the mailings are set to begin in a few short months.

So, I looked at what happened and some examples of what happened, Mr. Moore, with your work in Colquitt County, Georgia, prior to 2010 as an example of reaching hard-to-count communities.

Are there things—what could you say more about your efforts and how those efforts might help other parts of the country count some of these areas that are hard to count using—and, again, I am going to say with the use of technology? Do you see that being a part of what we can do?

Mr. MOORE. Sorry. The use of technology—do you mean sharing information with other regions or—

Mr. KELLER. No, I—

Mr. MOORE [continuing]. What other communities can do?

Mr. KELLER. I mean the fact that with certain things we can pinpoint—and I will use an example. I mean, we all use GPS. So, we have incredible mapping to know where homes are, to know where people live.

Mr. MOORE. Sure.

Mr. KELLER. And I think that we should—you know, when we talk about hard-to-count populations, and most of it is people under five, you know, is what I have seen. But how can we use the technology to make sure we are reaching all the households?

Mr. MOORE. There is a lot of great data that is available. Historic information from the 2010 census, your internet connectivity, your coverage for current numbers.

You also have a lot of different options. We had a program called LUCA, and forgive me. Everybody at the table probably knows what it is, but I can't remember what the acronym stands for.

But we recorded every address in every county in Georgia, and Georgia had one of the highest participation rates, and that is critical because that determines where the mail is going to go and the ones that don't respond that gives you an address where the enumerators can go door to door.

I would go back—you got a thousand-person community, I guess, that you were worried about, and I would—

Mr. KELLER. Well, not just that one. But that is just an example of what Rural PA-12 looks like.

Mr. MOORE. I would suggest that that community have their own Complete Count Committee or have a group because, again, they are going to be more familiar with where people congregate, where people go, who people trust, who the trusted voices are for different segments of the community and come up with a plan to make sure that everybody, again, is educated and aware of the census, why it is important, and they are motivated to respond when they get that first mailing in the mail instead of having to get somebody to drag them in to do it.

You want to make it where they realize, again, how important it is and they voluntarily fill it out that first time they get a mailing.

Your enumerators—the response rate when they go door to door is extremely low. So, our goal for everybody that we are dealing with is to try to have the highest percentage of people voluntarily fill out the census as possible.

I know I probably didn't answer it directly because I am not familiar with the community. But I will be glad to share with you some suggestions or ideas that we have shared with the other communities and be glad to followup with you by phone or somebody from your community to try to help them out, too.

Mr. KELLER. I appreciate that, because what we are looking at doing is making sure we accurately count everybody, and I know—you know, we all—we all run for election and we seem to be able to find out where people are that vote and be able to mail them things and find all that.

And I find it very shocking that we don't have a uniform system or we are not actually able to find it out when it comes to counting people that live in the United States.

So, I think there are some things we could do. I just wondered, you know, more of that sharing—how do we get more of that shared best practice—

Mr. MOORE. Sure.

Mr. KELLER [continuing]. And that is exactly what I am going to call it, a best practice in parts of the country.

Mr. MOORE. That is exactly what it is. We have got a plan for our 41 counties. We have got a plan for our state and would be glad to share it. We have actually got—I mentioned our 41 counties several times.

We have got probably six to ten counties outside of our service area that we are supporting and we would be glad to assist or help with you doing it.

Chairwoman MALONEY. OK. The gentleman's time has expired. But he raises an important point. To get a list of best practices that we could use around the country would be something that we could try to get the Census Bureau to pull together for all of us, from the testimony of our panelists together and others. That is a very important point.

Mr. KELLER. I guess I would just ask, you know, the people at the table if you have shared best practices because you have all been very active. I would encourage you, if you haven't already done it, to look at what other people are doing to solve this and put together a best practice for doing it.

Chairwoman MALONEY. I think that is an excellent idea.

The Chair recognizes from the great state of New York, Ms. Ocasio-Cortez.

Ms. OCASIO-CORTEZ. Thank you, Madam Chairwoman, and thank you to all our witnesses for coming to offer testimony today.

I know we have had several hearings on the census and some of you all have come and offered your expertise and we thank you for that.

I think after the past year of so many developments going on, particularly when it comes to the question on documented status on the census, there is a lot of havoc and confusion that has been unleashed in the electorate, which we know has really created a lot of fear in communities around one of the most important constitutional operations that we have to—that we have to conduct.

So, let us clarify some things. Ms. Gupta, will the 2020 census ask people about their documented status or citizenship status?

Ms. GUPTA. It will not.

Ms. OCASIO-CORTEZ. It will not. Is filling out the census safe?

Ms. GUPTA. It is safe and confidential.

Ms. OCASIO-CORTEZ. Will—and on that confidentiality, will an individual's personal information be shared from the 2020 census?

Ms. GUPTA. Federal law prohibits the sharing of census information with any other government agency.

Ms. OCASIO-CORTEZ. So, it is illegal for any of your individual information to be shared by the census, correct?

Ms. GUPTA. That is right.

Ms. OCASIO-CORTEZ. And what is—do we know how—how serious of a crime is it? Is it just kind of a misdemeanor or is it very serious?

Ms. GUPTA. It is very serious. The Federal law on this subject is very robust, in part because the consequences would be incredibly grave. But it would be very, very serious—a serious crime.

Ms. OCASIO-CORTEZ. OK.

So, let us talk a little bit about the potential outcome of not counting a community, right. So, let us say I wanted to manipulate people's ability to return the census or, rather, their willingness to return the census—kind of spook people out of it.

Why would I, potentially, want to do something like that?

Ms. GUPTA. You may want to do it to encourage swaths of communities that are perceived to vote for one party or another to stay out of the census for political gain.

You may want that to happen because you don't believe that certain segments of the community are deserving of the same social services as everyone else. But it is against the law and written to the Constitution that the duty of the Federal Government is to count every single person regardless of status.

Ms. OCASIO-CORTEZ. So, there is a potential political motive as to why somebody would want to undercount certain communities in the census?

Ms. GUPTA. Yes. I would say that the citizenship litigation and the Supreme Court found that even just the kind of impetus and motive for adding that question was motivated by partisan gain and Dr. Thomas Hofeller's memos that were discovered in the course of that litigation unfortunately reveal that there was an effort to weaponize the census for partisan gain when, in fact, it should be a core government institution and function that is free from politics.

Ms. OCASIO-CORTEZ. So, we have seen that there is a documented paper trail here that the desire to scare our immigrant communities out of answering the census is to help and add a political gain to the Trump administration and, potentially, partisan—along partisan lines, correct?

Ms. GUPTA. I will say that, unfortunately, we have some pretty concrete evidence of that being the case. Again, look no further than Thomas Hofeller's memo advocating for the addition of the citizenship question to be—to advantage non-Hispanic whites.

Ms. OCASIO-CORTEZ. OK. And so let us see. Let me move on.

Mr. Vargas, I understand your organization issued a report last may from the National Latino Commission on the Census.

Mr. Vargas, what did this report find about trust in the government and this administration among likely census respondents in the Latino community?

Mr. VARGAS. That commission, which was bipartisan and chaired by a member of the Miami-Dade County Board of Education and the secretary of state of California, held five regional hearings

throughout the country and heard testimony from community leaders that emphasize how just overall—not just among Latinos or immigrants, but overall in the American public there is a growing mistrust of institutions, of contact with government, of submitting information online.

These are all challenges that the Census Bureau understands that they are facing and are working to overcome, which is why the resources that they have needed for their communications campaign is so essential.

Ms. OCASIO-CORTEZ. Thank you.

And Ms. Gupta, very quickly, let us talk about the stakes here. If we don't answer the census, would that impact our school funding—funding for schools?

Ms. GUPTA. Absolutely.

Ms. OCASIO-CORTEZ. Does it impact funding for our roads?

Ms. GUPTA. Yes.

Ms. OCASIO-CORTEZ. Does it impact resources for our communities?

Ms. GUPTA. Yes.

Ms. OCASIO-CORTEZ. So, our kids—if we don't answer the census our kids will not be able to have textbooks, teachers in the ratios that they need, schools that are being built.

We also have one of the—I represent one of the most undercounted districts in the country but also represent one of the most overcrowded districts when it comes to schooling. That, I am sure, is connected as well, correct?

Ms. GUPTA. Yes. I mean, there are broad implications for how kids—how many teachers to students there are in any school district, health care, hospitals, roads, infrastructure.

It has a very real impact on real actual living communities when they are—when people are rendered invisible or not counted in the census.

Ms. OCASIO-CORTEZ. Thank you very much.

Chairwoman MALONEY. Thank you.

Our next questioner will be Congressman Armstrong from the great state of North Dakota.

Mr. ARMSTRONG. Thank you.

So, rural communities aren't, I mean, monolithic. They are—I mean, they are very different. They are very diverse, and so I can't talk about Georgia with any particular degree of accuracy. But what I can do is talk about North Dakota both on and off the Native American reservations.

Because outside of all the historical stuff, which I do agree with you, Mr. Allis, there are also some unique challenges because of the rural location of how we deal with this.

I mean, the Census Bureau defines hard-to-count as hard-to-locate, hard-to-interview, hard-to-contact, hard-to-persuade, and these are the biggest challenges in rural households.

And when we talk rural community, Mr. Moore, I mean, there is a big distinction even from a rural town of 200 people versus all of the people who live around that town of 200 people.

So, what are—I mean, like, what is one of the biggest challenges when trying to count rural communities?

Mr. MOORE. Again, it is just the diversity of the community and trying to find sources where people congregate, they get their information, and have those trusted voices. Everybody on the panel has mentioned that. I mentioned it a little bit earlier.

You may have people that you trust and would act on what they told you and they may not listen and they may not listen to Mr. Morial.

So, having a diverse group that can address everybody in the community is going to have the greatest impact. And through our research and trying to find out what was effective and what was not effective, almost everybody responded to the ads that addressed how the census data impacted their family.

They all respected how the census data impacted their children, and most of them said that they trusted teachers or guidance counselors. That was a trusted voice. They trusted their pastors.

So, again, trying to find those trusted voices and then how to come up with a plan to get that information out well in advance of the census.

Mr. ARMSTRONG. And I think that is what I want to go to, too, because—and then I want to ask Mr. Allis how do we—how do we recruit more people from the enrolled tribe to work on this?

Because I have done a lot of work on reservations in North Dakota and just the efficiency of having somebody from there doing it.

We have a problem in North Dakota. We have 30,000 open jobs. We, effectively, have negative unemployment.

So, when you bring somebody from outside of those rural areas to work, to do the census work, their efficiency will go down exponentially, let alone when you are dealing with frustration, skepticism, and dealing with those issues.

Mr. ALLIS. So, Congressman, thank you for raising that.

You know, there are a lot of challenges, and you are correct, the rural nature of where these Native communities are—makes it difficult.

Mr. ARMSTRONG. As simple as not having 911 addresses.

Mr. ALLIS. And—well, and as simple as what we take for granted, having access to the internet. And when you look at—

Mr. ARMSTRONG. Or a landline or cell service.

Mr. ALLIS. Nothing. Zero. And so when you look at your normal methods of communication, okay, let us just look at in a couple silos here.

One, and you asked how do we get people—you know, enumerators get people there to, you know, interact and get counted and how do they come from Indian Country.

Well, census's movement toward filling these positions through online networks has complicated the issue for us, has had a major impact on the number of people that have the ability to do that.

So, we, you know, strongly suggest that you let us go back to the old paper way. As Mr. Morial mentioned, it is crunch time. All right.

When the Congressman earlier was speaking about hirings and the specialists, they start in Alaska in two weeks and there are no Native Alaskans as partnership specialists. Zero.

Zero, at this point. OK. Which is very shocking and alarming, and in part because of the enormous hurdles it is now to end the wait time and how long it takes to become badged, an employee with the U.S. Census Bureau.

So, we really need to consider that. That is a—that is an additional pile-on in addition to all the stuff you and I already know about this community.

Mr. ARMSTRONG. Then that would be my question for Mr. Moore and then maybe you can weigh in, too. Have we ever looked at, like, the number of census workers per citizen in rural areas versus in urban areas?

I mean, the efficiency is just significantly decreased when you have to drive 60 miles between residents.

Mr. MOORE. I know just from speaking from my perspective in the communities that I am familiar with, we talked about the partnership specialists and they are all great people but they are stretched thin, and that is not the only solution for me.

I think they are there to give guidance, best practices, try to help the committees get together and be there on a more frequent basis. But if you are going to follow that model you definitely need more people serving a smaller geographic area.

Mr. ARMSTRONG. And I will close with this. I think we take for granted 911 addresses, GPS locations, cell service, internet, landlines.

And I can tell you, in rural areas in North Dakota none of those things exist in certain places and they are more exacerbated than even in our traditional rural areas on Native American reservations in North Dakota.

So, thank you all very much.

Chairwoman MALONEY. Thank you for raising some interesting points.

Ms. Tlaib from Michigan?

Ms. TLAIB. Thank you, Madam Chair. Thank you all so much for being here.

One of the things that I think we have been kind of distracted in understanding, I think, what it really means for us to just primarily do this initial round online and the really, I think, crisis that we have right now when it comes to the census is the fact that it has to rely on access to broadband internet.

And it is not just my communities like in Wayne County. It is community rural America. There is so much, again, emphasis on investing only on having this all be online and in return they are saying if we are going to go online then we don't need that many folks on the ground. We don't need this many offices.

Secretary Ross came before this committee and specifically said he was reducing these offices by 50 percent primarily because they were going online.

Now, last census I believe it was one out of three did not return the responses in the initial round. Do you know one out of nine Americans don't have access to internet?

And not only that, combine that with the fact that they are going to hire 125,000 less people—fewer people—to actually try to get people counted.

All that combined, I think—for me when we think about the communities that we are talking about here and the undercounted communities, I think we are underestimating what this really means. The fact that this is the first time ever in the history of our country that we are going to go completely online, rely on that to be initial touch.

Now, I know this, and I would ask my colleagues don't use the broadband internet in this chamber or at home, if you have it. Try to go fill out the census on your own when you don't have access to that.

People need to understand it is, one, because some don't—can't even afford the internet access. It is an affordability issue, not only even an access issue of it being available.

So, I want to ask each and every single one of you all the critical importance of understanding what this is really going to mean, because resources are down 50 percent. They are going to hire less than, you know, hundreds of thousands of people on the ground.

I am very fearful. I mean, the city of Detroit has its coalition of folks that meet all the time. They are trying to raise money with the private foundations and private folks.

The Wayne County community that I represent all throughout the community, you know, our Wayne County executive, Warren Evans, is really taking the lead and saying we got to count everybody and I appreciate his leadership on that.

But what is worrisome to me is unless I have folks with iPads at the bus stops or at—you know, outside of schools, trying to explain to folks, guess what, no one is coming knocking on your door. You are not going to get something in your mailbox. You have to—you have to go online and do it right there online.

Now, the majority of my residents they use their phone. That is not going to work. Not only that, it is not safe and secure, period.

So, I want to hear from every single one of you in regards to that because I don't want us to deter from this major change in how we are counting folks this year.

Mr. YANG. If I could start. You made a very important distinction. It is not the first online census. It is the first census in which online responses are available.

And so that is one thing we need to educate our community on is that that is not your only option. You can still get a written form. Or, by the fourth mailing, if you have not responded you will get a written form in the mail.

Obviously, there is difficulties with rural addresses, et cetera. But that option is still available. Likewise, there is a 1-800 number that you can call to provide your responses.

So, that is part of the education. Part of the education, certainly, for the Asian-American community is there is a reluctance to use the online even if it is available.

That survey data that we did showed that paper form is still preferred in many of our communities. So, that is part of the education and, again, it is coordinating with the Census Bureau to make sure they understand that and they are starting to understand it more.

Initially, they were touting how online internet responses would be wonderful and make everything more efficient.

They have backtracked, to their credit, on some of that messaging. But we need to continue to emphasize how closely to tie all of that together.

Mr. VARGAS. I would invite Congress to actually pay close scrutiny to making sure that the Census Bureau actually has the load capacity to be able to intake, you know, millions of Americans going online all at once to try to provide their census information.

I firmly believe that we need a Plan B and that the Census Bureau needs to make sure it has an adequate supply of paper forms at the ready should something happen and the computer load capacity not work, as we saw previously in health.gov.

Ms. GUPTA. I would just add to that. I really appreciate you bringing up the cost issues as well. It is accessibility.

It is costly for individuals. Connection speeds vary. It is higher—higher speeds cost more money and we know which communities are—have access to higher connectivity and the like.

You know, it is in part because of the shortages from the Bureau why it has been really important for us as advocates to make sure that cities and states are also kind of engaged in putting money toward this fight, that you have got Complete Count networks that are locally based and rooted, and we kind of, shockingly, have several states that still have not set up any Complete Count Committees.

We have several states that have refused to put any dollars toward the census when we know of all of the kind of very unique challenges that the 2020 census is going to be facing.

But there are—there has been significant, you know, places—to put a positive piece on this is that there has been a lot of cities and states and NGO's that have been really stepping up to deploy and make wifi centers available and devices available in public spaces for households to respond to the census.

But we know that is not a kind of structural answer to some of the grave issues that you are talking about. And then we have talked a little bit about the cybersecurity concerns as well that we are all very mindful of and—

Mr. GOMEZ.

[Presiding.] Time has expired.

Ms. GUPTA. Yes.

Ms. TLAIB. Chairman, if you don't mind, I would like to submit for the record an article titled "The Census Could Undercount People Who Don't Have Internet Access" by one of our FCC commissioners, please.

Mr. GOMEZ. Without objection, so ordered.

Ms. TLAIB. Thank you.

Mr. GOMEZ. I recognize Ms. Porter of California for questions.

Ms. PORTER. Thank you.

This committee has had a lot of discussion about how government programs are affected by an incomplete count. But I wanted to talk about how important a fair and accurate census is for a thriving private sector that creates opportunities for all.

I am a proud capitalist but I want that capitalism to create opportunities for everybody and to do that we need an accurate count. An accurate count is a critical tool that helps businesses grow. It helps create jobs. It helps them serve all their communities.

Mr. Chair, I would like to enter into the record a brief of businesses and business organizations that they filed in opposition to President Trump's census changes.

Mr. GOMEZ. Without objection, so ordered.

Ms. PORTER. The companies and organizations that submitted this brief come from a wide variety of industries and regions with different sizes and approaches, for example, the Los Angeles Chamber of Commerce, Univision, Lyft, Ben and Jerry's, and Massimo Corporation, which is located in Orange County.

And in this brief they say, quote, "Without accurate census data on which to base location decisions, businesses would lose a tool that has become crucial to their survival and growth," unquote.

They also said, quote, "Mistakes about where to place a store, a warehouse, or other facility can harm not only a business's overall outlook but also the communities that need or don't need such a facility," end quote.

It is not just about what is on our shelves, the risk of an inaccurate count. The National Association of Homebuilders uses census data to help provide housing market information, including the number of renters and home values.

A fair and accurate census will help demonstrate the need for more housing in places like Orange County.

Ms. Gupta, as a leader in this area, what partnership have you or could you develop with businesses to reach hard-to-count communities?

Ms. GUPTA. Several—the Leadership Conference and several organizations at this table have been working very closely with trying to get more corporate partners to be partners in helping to get out the count and we have seen a number of companies really step up for the very reasons that many of them articulated in their amicus brief to the U.S. Supreme Court about their concern about the citizenship question.

They—companies understand the business case for an accurate census. They are very concerned about having any kind of undercount. They rely on it for marketing decisions, location decisions, and the like, as you mentioned.

And so we have had some success at getting companies, big companies with huge footprints to get more engaged in this effort and to helping partners in getting out the count. You know, different companies are doing a range of different things, are using their platforms for marketing and advertising.

They are using their platforms to get employees where they have thousands, tens of thousands, in some cases hundreds of thousands of employees. But we also will say that we need more companies to be engaged.

I will just say, and I think you are hearing this from all of us, that this is an all-hands-on-deck moment, that as somebody said, you know, we have got to call, like, kind of shake the alarm right now because this is happening.

We are not kind of approaching the census. We are days away from the count.

Ms. PORTER. And Mr. Vargas, have you tried to partner with the business community for outreach on the census and, if so, what feedback have you received?

Mr. VARGAS. We have actually engaged a number of businesses so that they could do several things. One is encourage their own employees to participate in the census and convince them to make sure that everybody in their spheres of influence and their networks also participate in the census but also to incorporate census messages as they reach out to their customers and their clients.

It is an all-hands-on-deck, as Ms. Gupta mentioned, and businesses themselves can also be trusted messengers. So, if somebody has trust in that grocery store that they go to and that grocery store is providing census information, well, that is a good thing in terms of making sure that the information is getting out there.

Ms. PORTER. In my district I met with the Irvine Chamber of Commerce, who made clear to me how important an accurate count is for them, and they are putting their own resources toward what they call Project Census 2020 to help educate and inform the companies that are part of the Irvine Chamber of Commerce to do exactly this work and I would hope that we could make—ask of the leaders of organizations like the Business Roundtable, which has recently said that they want to engage stakeholders at every level, to put some of their muscle behind this initiative.

Ms. Gupta?

Ms. GUPTA. We are engaged with the Business Roundtable on this very question.

Ms. PORTER. Great.

With my remaining time, I wanted to highlight something that has come to my attention in my district, which is the problem of—as a consumer protection advocate the problem of people taking advantage of this trusted brand that we try to build in the census to use it them to create scams.

And so in my district people in other districts—people have been receiving things saying that they have been selected to participate in a census and then they have given a voter number and a deadline and questions that look very similar to the census but these are actually political tools.

And so we have written to the Postmaster General. I have written to the attorney general of California. I have tried to shine a light on that and have not received yet, like, sort of helpful responses.

I am going to followup on this with the census director when he comes. But I just want to flag for you the importance of also scam education as you are doing your outreach.

My time has expired.

Mr. GOMEZ. I would like to recognize Ms. Haaland from New Mexico for questions.

Ms. HAALAND. Thank you, Chairman.

Thank you all so much for taking the time to be here and for your hard work on behalf of the underrepresented people in our country.

Thank you for your persistence and integrity in the face of opposition for the higher purposes of equality and justice, which is what all of you are doing when you are doing this work.

I need to mention something for the record because it was—it was brought up—raised earlier by one of my colleagues, and what I would like to say is that this entire country was once Indian

Country—this entire country—and Federal recognition is a process that has been established because of colonialism and for no other reason.

So, regardless of whether an indigenous person is enrolled in a federally recognized tribe, there are tribes that have been denied that status by this government. It doesn't mean that they are not indigenous.

They, in fact, are indigenous and they should answer the census in that way if that is how they identify. There are state-recognized tribes. There are tribes that don't—aren't state or federally recognized.

However, they have a family history that says that they are indigenous to this continent and they should respond the way that their family history requires them and obligates them to.

And so now on to some questions. The Census Bureau has had 10 years to prepare for the 2020 census and to address the severe undercount of Native Americans in the last census.

They know the vast majority of responses will have to be done by in-person enumerators on tribal lands. Keeping in mind that our state of New Mexico has, largely, Navajos, Pueblos, and Apaches and several large diverse urban Indian populations.

Not only is the Census Bureau behind on hiring staff but it took congressional intervention in my home state of New Mexico to get the regional census office to order printed translation guides in the Navajo language. The Navajo population is the largest Indian population in my state.

And not only that, but they have a language that is taught on Rosetta Stone, for example. I am directing this question to Mr. Allis but I encourage all of you to submit your answers in writing as it pertains to the communities you are working with.

Mr. Allis, from your experience, do you believe that the Bureau officials understand the unique challenges for remote tribal nations and language needs, and if not, at this point what actions do you think the Bureau should prioritize to ensure a full count?

And second, Mr. Allis, please give us an idea of just how important it is to count urban Indian populations.

Mr. ALLIS. Thank you, Congresswoman, and two great questions. I do recognize that 78 percent of the Native American community in New Mexico, your state, is in a hard-to-count area. Significant population.

So, does the U.S. Census Bureau really understand our needs? That is a tough question to answer. I don't know if it is a yes or no answer or if it is fair.

We work with them. It is important that we need to work with them and get along with them. They have taken strides to try to address some of our issues and some of our concerns that we have articulated through the years.

However, and as Mr. Morial mentioned earlier, this is not a complaint about funding. Congress has done its job and properly funded. This is about the operational decisions that they have made.

And when you look at some of the things that they have made, we do have to question whether they do fully understand the needs and the problems that exist and the hurdles by way of, for instance, how they are staffing their team and putting that together

and also not necessarily communicating with any of us, you know, on the mobile questionnaire program—how is that going to work, who is going to do that, what is their vision for that.

So, although they, you know, have identified the barriers, okay, taken the time to identify, self-identify what those barriers are—privacy concerns, trusted voices, language barriers, and a general lack of knowledge and proper messaging—it is questionable whether the operational decisions have gone to address those.

How important is this to us? You know we are very unique. OK. We are a political group. We are a political body, and also what a lot of this country doesn't understand we are one of three sovereigns that is articulated in the U.S. Constitution: Federal Government, states, and tribal governments.

And what is the lifeblood of any sovereign entity? It is tax base. OK. It is being able to get resources from its tax base. Well, we don't have that option. That doesn't exist.

We don't have that lifeblood. Our lifeblood is the Federal funding for all—for education, economic development, infrastructure—that has been promised to us in treaties and trust responsibility and that funding is directly impacted by the census.

And if that doesn't come off right and if we are not properly counted, our lifeblood is cut right off. And whether you are a tribal sovereign government, whether you are a state or Federal Government or whether you are a human being, you stop your lifeblood you die.

And so that is how important it is and that is the really unique distinction that separates Indian Country from our other partners that I think people really need to understand.

Mr. GOMEZ. Thank you so much. Time has expired.

Now I would like to recognize Ms. Pressley of Massachusetts for questions.

Ms. PRESSLEY. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I represent the Massachusetts 7th and Boston makes up the bulk of my district, and out of the 100 largest cities in the country it is ninth in being hardest to count.

It is a vibrant diverse dynamic district but one of the most unequal in the country and that is certainly true when it comes to health outcomes.

And so census data is used to allocate hundreds of billions of dollars in Federal funding for health care programs. Most people aren't aware that that includes Medicaid and CHIP, the Children's Health Insurance Program.

These programs provide coverage to millions of families working to make ends meet in the United States.

Ms. Gupta, can you explain how census data determine Federal spending for Medicaid and CHIP?

Ms. GUPTA. Well, census data is the basis by which these really large Federal programs are going to be able to allocate dollars per person in districts.

And so, literally, an undercount of people in your community will result in smaller block grants being given through these programs for kids to get the healthcare that they need.

And, of course, we know also about health care disparities already so the consequences of an undercount in communities—the health care consequences are going to be that much more dire.

Ms. PRESSLEY. And could you just elaborate a little bit more on that, Ms. Gupta, how would failing to count hard-to-reach communities in the 2020 census further entrench already existing systemic barriers?

Ms. GUPTA. Well, there has been—there have been—there is a wealth of information showing the degree to which health care disparities hit low income communities, communities of color at a highly disproportionate rate.

When you think about—if you are thinking about structural issues like the allocation of Federal dollars to support programs that are specifically targeted to address those gaps and close the chasm, if there is an undercount of those very communities it becomes a vicious cycle.

An undercount of those very communities, the dollars that are allocated for the programs intended to reach them are then also diminished and reduced, and so it becomes a structural vicious cycle.

Ms. PRESSLEY. Thank you.

And Mr. Vargas, what does this mean for LatinX communities which are already uninsured at disproportionately higher rates?

Mr. VARGAS. The irony is that when a community suffers an undercount, the services that are based on census data then are even delivered less so to those same communities.

So, take the example of very young Latino children. They are the most frequently undercounted population in the country.

Four hundred thousand very young Latino children ages zero to four were not counted in the 2010 census. So, all of the data—all of the programs that are designed to benefit very young children are off because the numbers are wrong, and if your numbers are wrong your decisions and your funding allocations are wrong.

Ms. PRESSLEY. Thank you, Mr. Vargas.

And Mr. Morial, is it your opinion that this could disproportionately worsen health outcomes in the black community on issues like maternal mortality or other health disparities?

Mr. MORIAL. All across the board. Every single health disparity would be exacerbated by an undercount because the list and the range of programs that rely on census data for the allocation of funds is long and deep.

I think it is approximately \$800 billion in the Federal budget is allocated based on the data collected in the census. So, it stands to reason whether it is Medicaid, Medicare, Children's Health Insurance Program, CBDG, Head Start—you could go down the line—it is so essential we have got to communicate that to our communities.

But that is why we got a whole census accountable to do the right thing and make sure everyone is counted because the impact is political when it comes to reapportionment of every single office in the country for whom the people are elected by districts.

The impact is economic because it affects \$800 billion. The impact also goes beyond that because as the questioner—one of the members asked earlier, the entire framework for market-based

data used by the private sector, by the media companies, is based on census data.

Our own state of Black America report is based entirely on census—in large part on census data.

Ms. PRESSLEY. Thank you, Mr. Morial. And with my remaining time, I don't know if any of you have thoughts, in 20 seconds, as to whether or not incarcerated men and women should be counted and included in the census according to the home communities they are from and not where they are being mostly warehoused.

Mr. MORIAL. Yes, yes, and yes, and let me just say this. We had the Census Bureau on the brink of reversing this just before the 2016 election. The 2016 election impacted this.

So, the Census Bureau was on the verge, because we had advocated for many, many years that they changed where those who are incarcerated are counted to their home districts, and it changed.

So, the election impacted this. It is not fair—it is not appropriate to allow those counties where—that happened to house correctional facilities to get a disproportionate share of resources as well as political power because they just happened to be the place where incarcerated people are.

This is an—and I urge—Congressman Clay has got a bill that would reverse this. Well, he is not here but his seat is there, and I think we need to make a priority to push that bill through the Congress so that this is not the case in the 2030 census.

Ms. PRESSLEY. Thank you.

Ms. GUPTA. I was just going to say amen.

Ms. PRESSLEY. Thank you.

Mr. GOMEZ. Thank you. I think time has expired or frozen in time. It was, like, 14 seconds for a minute.

[Laughter.]

Mr. GOMEZ. I would like to recognize Ms. Wasserman Shultz from Florida for questions.

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Recently—and welcome to our panelists. Thank you so much for being here and for your work every single day.

Recently, the Census Bureau announced a paid media campaign that includes targeted hard-to-reach hard-to-count communities so that we can increase messaging around the census because that will, obviously, increase participation and make sure that more robust funding is available when we know how many people we have not been able to reach.

This culturally sensitive advertising is particularly vital in a diverse district like mine, which includes Latin American migrants whose trust in government has been seriously eroded due to the Trump administration's attempt to propose a citizenship question.

Specifically, I represent Broward and Miami-Dade Counties in south Florida, which are considered among the hardest-to-count counties in my state, according to the City University of New York.

So, there are, obviously, major concerns about gaps in media coverage in my own community and many places just like it around the country.

If hard-to-count groups are not properly engaged on the importance and timeline for the census it could lead to a significant

undercount and, for example, there is a question mark in Florida over whether or not we will have—we will add one seat or two seats to our congressional delegation, and this media campaign could make a very significant difference in whether it is one or two and then, you know, if you have more elected officials representing your state, more advocacy, more resources, to say nothing of the allocation with Federal and state formulas based on the census.

So, Mr. Morial, it is good to see you. Really glad you are here. One of the things that I am concerned about is that there is likely a gap in the outreach budget that the administration has announced to count African Americans.

What effects could a gap in media and communication advertising have in the black community?

Mr. MORIAL. An undercount means that political representation is going to be affected and an undercount means that the allocation of Federal funds are going to be affected and it goes all the way down the line.

It affects city council seats, county commission seats, justice of the peace seats in rural areas, not to mention members of the state legislature and Members of Congress and in the 40 states that elect judges.

Some elect judges from districts. All of this could be affected by an undercount and it is a particular concern for African Americans, and I know other communities because our populations have grown and we want the census to capture the growth in our populations and that to be translated into the reapportionment process, that to be translated into the process in terms of how Federal funds are allocated.

So, it is a grave issue. It is important that the count be complete and accurate.

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. To be clear, specifically, like you said, the African-American population is growing. So, if there is an undercount, because of the way redistricting works, you have decisions made about where in a state or in a community a new district would be added.

If you undercount the population that has grown, then that community is less likely to get representation they would have otherwise gotten had the community count been maximized.

Mr. MORIAL. At the least the vote dilution and when you add that—add to that the fact that we don't have Section 5 for the southern states at this point in time, the risk is grave and that is why we are so—all of us, I think, here are united in saying to you, as the House Oversight Committee, the power is in your hands to hold census accountable and for them—Mr. Vargas talked about a Plan B. I talked about a state of emergency.

Whatever is required between now and March, April, the Census Bureau has got to step up its game. It has got to fill in these gaps.

It has got to respond to the concerns we have raised today. Or the risk for the Nation and the risk for our communities is grave.

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. And as I heard you say earlier, specifically, having a media outreach campaign in between when the—

Mr. MORIAL. Enumerators.

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ.—the enumerators begin going door to door so that there is awareness that they are coming, so that you have—I know when I go door to door in my district, if I send a mailing into that precinct announcing I am coming, the open rate of the door is more significant because they are less fearful and more—

Mr. MORIAL. And we also can't let Census Bureau trick us because they have got these terms, nonresponse followup and primary. So, you know, advertising campaign has got to run all the way to the end.

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Right.

Mr. MORIAL. Until the final day when people can fill out a form or respond to the census.

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Thank you so much.

And in my last few seconds, Mr. Allis, I represent the Seminole tribe of Florida, and, clearly, Native Americans would be a population that is usually undercounted. A lack of trust, a lack of confidence in the official government of the United States.

So, what kind of outreach are you aware of that has been included by the administration to make sure that there is not an undercount among Native Americans?

Mr. ALLIS. Thank you, Congresswoman, for that question.

As Congresswoman Haaland asked me to mention, you know, was the Census Bureau what it needed to do to connect with Indian Country, and over the course of the last 10 years they have self-identified barriers and hurdles and things that do need to be addressed, which includes language, which includes, you know, knowledge about why—what is the purpose of the census, how do you even fill the thing out—you know, all those kinds of things.

Our concern is even though they have been properly funded, a lot of that stuff just hasn't happened correctly, okay, and their shift in the way they want to hire people and maneuver people around and set up, you know, their infrastructure doesn't align with addressing those particular—

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. It is not about just throwing money at it.

Mr. ALLIS. No, you talked about media outreach. We have a lot of issues there. You know, Alaska starts in two weeks they intended—the goal was that this media campaign would have started five months ago.

It started in middle of December, and when it started in middle of December, there were mispronunciations of the villages and of the tribes and it was just not clean.

And that is not connecting the dots, that is them not doing their homework and working with Indian Country and preparing an awareness and a visibility that understands who the community is that it is trying to target.

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. When you have a president of the United States who, even today, continues to malign the Native American community by disparaging a candidate—a Democratic candidate for president with a derisive—intentionally derisive and offensive moniker.

You can see what kind of respect they lack for the Native American community and the goal of counting them.

Mr. Chairman, thank you so much. I yield back.

Mr. GOMEZ. The votes have been called and there is about nine minutes on the clock. So, after I am done with my questioning we will adjourn this hearing.

So, I recognize myself for questions.

First, let me thank all the panelists for coming. This is an issue that—I studied the census when I was in grad school back in 2001 and 2002. So, yes, I was that dork who studied the census.

But I also understood what it means, right, in the history of this country, what it means when it comes to either the marginalization or the empowerment of particular communities, and what it means for drafting policies that reflect that changing demographic where people live, how they live, what they look like, what are the issues that they are getting impacted by.

And that is what the census is all about. I want to encourage my colleagues on the other side of the aisle that the census is not—shouldn't be used to marginalize communities, to silence voices, because the changing demographics that are occurring in this country I believe, and I have been seeing it for the last 20, 30 years, is inevitable.

As sure as the sun rises in the east and sets in the west, it will occur, and there are brown Latinos that live in rural Georgia, Asians that live in the Midwest as well as African Americans that live in the northeast, right.

This country is just changing. So, we want to make sure that everybody is counted because that is how you have a truly representative democracy.

So, with that, I want to kind of ask a few questions.

Mr. Vargas, you are familiar with my district.

Mr. VARGAS. Yes, sir. I am a constituent.

[Laughter.]

Mr. GOMEZ. I want to just have a question. A lot of people talked about partnership specialists.

What have you been hearing on the ground about the effectiveness of the newly hired partnership specialists within the Latino community and are they generally fluent in Spanish and are they culturally sensitive?

Mr. VARGAS. Some are, and in fact they have hired some very excellent partnership specialists across the country that we have had the opportunity to work with.

But there also have been other partnerships with specialists that in our opinion have been not well deployed in the sense that they don't have the skill sets, the language to work in the community where they are being deployed by the Census Bureau, and in other cases because of the timing and the rush to hire enough people they are not adequately trained. And so they are misinformed about the full range of the census operation.

So, those are the concerns that we have at this point.

Mr. GOMEZ. Thank you.

Another issue that is becoming extremely urgent in California is just the growing homelessness population. It is something that I know that there is a 130,000-plus homeless individuals in California, 58,000 in L.A. County alone.

Ms. Gupta, what do you see as the barriers to counting the homeless population and do you think that the Census Bureau has the strategy to actually ensure that they are counted?

Ms. GUPTA. Well, they are among the most vulnerable population. The Bureau in part because of their transients in communities and the like and I think—and the Bureau is really going to need to work with direct service providers, mobile food units, shelter, soup kitchens and the like as well as enumerating at outdoor locations and some 24-hour businesses to get an accurate count.

The Bureau does have some strategies that they have put in place but we have been urging them to do more with direct service providers in the way that I just—that I just mentioned and also to coordinate really intensively with hard-to-count community leaders to prepare a lot of community leaders that are running these direct service soup kitchens and the like. They know where the homeless populations are seasonally in their districts.

And so having a very close net coordination is going to be really vital to ensuring that homeless people are counted.

Mr. GOMEZ. And one of the things that I would just like to point out is that homelessness is not just occurring in California but throughout the country.

Ms. GUPTA. Yes.

Mr. GOMEZ. And that is going to be a challenge for blue states as well as red states, urban areas as well as rural areas.

So, thank you so much for all the witnesses for being here and testifying on this important issue. Now it is time to make sure that we get the count that we need.

Before I end with some announcements, I would like to give the ranking member a few seconds to thank the witnesses.

Mr. JORDAN. I thank the chairman. Yes, we had a debate there at the front end and I didn't get a chance to thank you all for being here. Appreciate what you do and appreciate your testimony today. Thank you.

Mr. GOMEZ. Thank you to the ranking member.

First, this is the first in a series we will be having on census oversight this year and we will be sure to raise these points that you have made with the Director of the Census Bureau Dillingham when he comes before the committee on February 12 as mentioned earlier.

So, I want to just thank everybody for their hard, hard work.

Without objection, all members will have five legislative days within which to submit additional written questions for the witnesses to the Chair, which will be forwarded to the witnesses for their response.

I ask our witnesses to please respond as promptly as you are able. Thank you for participating and this hearing is now adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 1:58 p.m., the committee was adjourned.]

