

WITH CENSUS BUREAU DIRECTOR,
DR. STEVEN DILLINGHAM

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

SECOND SESSION

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**WITH CENSUS BUREAU DIRECTOR,
DR. STEVEN DILLINGHAM**

Wednesday, February 12, 2020

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

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 10:02 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. The committee will come to order. Good morning, everyone, and 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.

Good morning and thank you all for being here today. The 2020 census is now underway. Two weeks ago, the Census Bureau counted its first person in rural Alaska. Next month, counting will begin in earnest around our country.

The Constitution requires us to count every single person in the United States, without exception. This census will be the largest and most complex in American history, and it is essential that the count is full, fair, and free from any interference.

This year's census will have enormous consequences for our communities. The results will drive the distribution of more than \$1.5 trillion in Federal funds. That is trillion, with a T. These funds support critical services like children's health care, local schools, roads, and bridges.

Unfortunately, the Administration's preparations for the census have been woefully inadequate. Whether through incompetence or intentional action, this Administration's failures risk causing grave harm to this year's census and could jeopardize a complete and accurate count, and these problems are now absolutely urgent.

Today the nonpartisan Government Accountability Office is publicly releasing a troubling new report that highlights serious concerns about preparations for the 2020 census. We will hear from GAO in a moment, but here are some of the most concerning findings.

The Census Bureau, and I quote—this is from GAO—“faces significant risks that could adversely impact the cost, quality, schedule, and security of the county,” end quote.

Quote, “The Bureau is behind in its recruiting of applicants for upcoming operations. If the Bureau does not recruit sufficient individuals it may have difficulty hiring enough staff to complete its upcoming operations within the scheduled timeframes,” end quote.

This is particularly troubling. This is a chart that GAO has. The red line is where we should be in hiring, at 2.6 million. We are now at 2.2, getting there. But all of this time when they should have been up here they were behind in the hiring. That has got to impact, in a negative way, the outcome of the census.

Another quote, “The Bureau also continues to face significant cybersecurity challenges, including those related to addressing cybersecurity weaknesses in a timely manner,” end quote.

And quote, “The Bureau has missed interim goals building toward its overall goal of 300,000 community partners by March 2020,” end quote. Many people tell me, at the Bureau, at GAO, and everywhere that one of the most important things is having these partnerships with the community, because they know the community. They know where the people are. They can help get the count accurate as possible.

Today’s stark warning from GAO reflects similar concerns that this committee has been raising for the past several years, with increasing urgency. Last month, we held a hearing in which witnesses after witnesses raised dire warnings about the Administration’s failures to adequately prepare for the 2020 census. For example, Marc Morial, the President and CEO of the National Urban League, testified that the Census Bureau should be treating this as a quote, “state of an emergency,” end quote. He warned that hiring was far, far behind schedule, and, quote, “it is time to ring the bell” and that, quote, “the risk for the Nation and the risk for our communities is grave,” end quote.

Vanita Gupta, the President and CEO of The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights, testified that an undercount would have, quote, “broad implications for how many teachers to students there are in any school district, health care, hospitals, roads, infrastructure,” end quote. She also warned, and I quote, “Stakeholders urgently need more information and a deployment plan,” end quote.

Arturo Vargas, the CEO of NALGO Education Fund, warned that the Trump administration’s citizenship question debacle, quote, “continues to foster fear and doubt,” end quote. And this is made worse by a hostile environment toward immigrants, propagated by the Administration, end quote.

John Yang, the President and CEO of Asian Americans Advancing Justice, testified that the Census Bureau’s Language Support Program has, quote, “several gaps that need to be overcome and that hiring efforts have been slow and inconsistently inclusive of underserved communities.”

Today we will hear directly from the Census Bureau director and we will have a lot of very tough questions for him. There are grave challenges facing us in this year’s census, and to be honest I don’t

have full confidence that the Administration is equipped to handle them.

Nevertheless, we are committed to doing everything we can to highlight these challenges where we see them, work with our dedicated colleagues at the Census Bureau and GAO, and collaborate with our partners across the country to deliver a fair and accurate count. Our Constitution requires it, our communities rely on it, and our democracy depends on it.

And I want to thank, really, all of the witnesses, and particularly the director for being with us today, and I look forward to all of your testimony.

I now recognize our distinguished ranking member, Mr. Jordan, for an opening statement.

Mr. JORDAN. Thank you, Chairman, Madam Chair. I want to thank you for convening this timely and important hearing. I want to thank our witnesses, and in particular Director Dillingham for taking the time out of his busy schedule, at this busy time, to be here and testify today.

The census is among one of the most important matters within our committee's jurisdiction. It is mandated by the Constitution to occur every 10 years, and has been conducted every decade since 1790. The data collected from the census is used to apportion seats in the House of Representatives and to distribute more than \$600 billion annually in Federal funds to states and localities. These numbers also serve as the foundation for estimates of current population and for projections of future population. For these reasons, it is obviously important that the census is accurate and complete.

Unfortunately, the Democrats on this committee have largely ignored their responsibility to oversee preparation for the 2020 census. Instead, Democrats have needlessly spent our time focusing on the citizenship question in an effort to score political points. And I must admit that after all this time I still do not understand why the Democrats do not want to know how many U.S. citizens are living in the United States of America. This question has been on our census before. It is a question asked by several nations around the world, and it is a question that even the United Nations encourages countries to ask.

The Democrats basically argued that the question was designed to scare immigrant and racial communities in an effort to undercount those populations, but that is simply not correct. Census Bureau conducted a test in the summer of 2019 to study, quote, "the operational effects of self-response of including a citizenship question. The study found that there was no difference, no difference in self-response rates between forms with and forms without the citizenship question." Imagine that. Let me say that again. There was no difference in self-response rates between forms with and 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. Democrats want you to believe the Administration took this action because the citizenship question was fundamentally inappropriate and that the Court vindicated their position. But, in fact, the Supreme Court held that the Trump administration had the authority to add the question about citizenship to the

census, but took issue with the Administration's process for doing so under administrative law.

This is only the third hearing Democrats have called to talk about the census since taking control of the House last year. Prior to that, Republicans had held nine hearings or briefings dating back to 2015, to examine challenges posed by the 2020 census.

We are now in the midst of peak operations for the census. On March 12, just one month from today, people will begin completing and returning their census questionnaires. This is a time when all systems must be fully operational. That responsibility, of course, lies with Director Dillingham, and certainly it is no small task.

The Census Bureau needs to hire approximately 500,000 people nationwide as enumerators to conduct non-response followup operations. To reach that number, that hiring target, the Census Bureau is conducting a nationwide recruiting campaign to generate interest in this temporary work with the goal of recruiting 2.6 million interested candidates by March 2, 2020, just a few weeks from now. I look forward to hearing about how those efforts are going.

Given the enormity of this task and the amount of taxpayer resources expended to complete the census, it is imperative that we work to avoid wasteful spending in this process. Last month, the GAO reported that the Census Bureau had managed criteria for reliable cost estimates, the first time the Census Bureau has ever met the GAO metrics for reliable cost estimates. We are eager to get an update from our GAO witnesses this morning about the cost-effectiveness of the census operations.

I hope today that we can do away with the partisan theatrics and actually work together to ensure the census is complete and accurate. Thank you, Madam Chair, and I look forward to testimony today.

With that I yield back.

Chairwoman MALONEY. Thank you, and I would like to welcome our witnesses. The Honorable Dr. Steven Dillingham is the Director of the United States Census. Mr. Christopher Mihm is the Managing Director of Strategic Issues at the Government Accountability Office. Mr. Nick Marinos is the Director of Information Technology and Cybersecurity at the Government Accountability Office. Mr. Albert E. Fontenot is the Associate Director of the Decennial Census Programs at the United States Census Bureau.

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

[Witnesses sworn.]

Chairwoman MALONEY. OK. Let the record show that all 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 statements will be made part of the record.

With that, Dr. Dillingham, thank you so much for coming. Thank you for your service. You are now recognized for your opening statement.

**STATEMENT OF STEVEN DILLINGHAM, DIRECTOR, U.S.
CENSUS BUREAU**

Mr. DILLINGHAM. Good morning, Madam Chairwoman, Ranking Member, committee members. Thank you for inviting me to testify on the 2020 census progress. This census has been planned for the past decade. We are confident that we are on mission, on budget, and on target.

As the chairwoman just stated, the 2020 census began a few weeks ago in remote Alaska, on the Bering Sea, in the village of Toksook Bay. We start early in remote Alaska where conditions are severe, the nights are long, and before the snow and ice begin to thaw. The village is accessible only by small plane, weather permitting.

On the way, in Anchorage, we met with congressional and state leaders, complete count committee, and partners from public, private, and nonprofit groups. We attended a church service in a diverse community where Father Fred bestowed blessings for a safe journey and successful census.

The next stop was a small, snow-covered village of Bethel, where local officials offered us, and local residents, native winter gear. When the weather broke we left in small planes with skilled, brave pilots. We were the only flights able to reach Toksook Bay that day.

We were greeted by the village elder. I was whisked off on a snowmobile to the home of the first person in the Nation to be counted. As a census worker I cannot discuss the person's data. The person's answers were in Yupik and were translated. Upon completion, the person looked into my face, and with a warm smile and gleaming eyes reflecting generations of wisdom, saying two words, "Thank you."

I was honored to conduct that count. The person was honored to be counted. The census is personal and built on trust. That is how the 2020 census began.

As I departed I stopped at the school gym where villagers gathered. Children were wearing traditional clothes, performing native dance. Excitement was high, the bleachers were filled, native food abundant. The village was celebrating the 2020 census.

To conduct a successful count it takes a village, like Toksook Bay; a town like Bethel or Middlebury, Vermont; a city, like New York City or Detroit; and a county, like Broward County, Florida; Lorraine County, Ohio; York County, South Carolina; and the most populous county of Los Angeles.

The success of Toksook Bay will be repeated across America. Systems have been tested. Recruiting and hiring are on target. Partnerships are unprecedented. Innovations and efficiencies save tens of millions of dollars. New options enable people to complete the census anytime, anywhere.

The Government Accountability Office and inspector general have reviewed our progress. The 2020 census is positioned for success. As in Toksook Bay, it will take trust and engagement. The Bureau has responsibility for data collection and reporting, but the census does not belong to an agency or to the Federal Government. It belongs to everyone and always has. It is a national asset.

Engagement is increasing. We have statewide commissions coordinating efforts. We have an army of partners numbering more than a quarter of a million, actually this morning more than 270,000, and climbing fast. These partners have employees, members, and followers numbering in the tens of millions. This is the largest civilian mobilization since World War II, due to the number of census workers and the enormous public engagement that happens during a decennial census.

We have twice as many partner specialists as before. We thank this Congress for augmenting them with thousands of mobile assistance to better reach low-response areas. Complete count committees exceed 10,000, averaging more than 200 per state and dozens per congressional district. Business partners range from small to the largest, with many thousands of employees.

Public partners include agencies at the Federal, state, and local levels. Faith partners range from single churches to entire denominations, education from single schools to school districts, colleges from small to the largest university systems, with hundreds of thousands of students, faculty, and staff, and millions of alumni. We have more than 6,000 higher education partners, and the list grows. We want every school and every business as a partner.

Universal bipartisan support brings the Nation together for this civic purpose. Governors and local leaders have issued bipartisan proclamations of support as did the U.S. Senate. Nearly all Members of Congress are partners. Your help matters. We need leaders and trusted voices. We must work together to foster public trust. We must roll up our sleeves to maximize engagement. Our census professionals are confident, excited, and ready. All systems are go. The countdown is now. The national launch begins in one month.

Thank you for your oversight, leadership, and strong support, and I think we have a couple of short ads from our national media campaign that emphasize how easy, safe, and important the census is. Our ads will reach 99 percent-plus of all households repeatedly.

[Video shown.]

Mr. DILLINGHAM. We don't have a prepared statement from the associate director.

STATEMENT OF J. CHRISTOPHER MIHM, MANAGING DIRECTOR, STRATEGIC ISSUES, GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY OFFICE

Mr. MIHM. Chairwoman Maloney, Ranking Member Jordan, members of the committee, it is a great pleasure to be here today to discuss our work on the census. I am joined, obviously, by my colleague, Nick Marinos, and we are honored to appear before this committee. We are also delighted that many of our colleagues from GAO, whose thoughtful and dedicated work has supported the committee's oversight over a number of years, are able to join us this morning.

As has been mentioned a number of times, the census has already begun with the enumeration of remote areas of Alaska, and we are a month away from the first mailings going out, alerting individuals that they can start responding via the internet.

As you know, we added the census to our high-risk list in February 2017. Over the past decade, we have made 112 recommenda-

tions on the census, most of which have been addressed by the Bureau but some of which remain open. The information that Nick and I will present today is based on our report being issued today, “2020 Census: Initial Enumeration Underway but Readiness for Upcoming Operations is Mixed,” and I know that each member of the committee has a copy of that report.

I will briefly discuss the status of census operations and then Nick will cover IT systems and cybersecurity. In the interest of time, obviously, I will just hit three quick points that were covered in the report.

First, the Bureau completed early operations on schedule. Last October, the Bureau completed its in-field address canvassing operation, where temporary field staff verified and updated over 50 million addresses across the country. It met its target date for opening its Questionnaire Assistance Contact Centers, basically call centers, where the public can call to ask questions or provide their census responses. It has launched its advertising campaign—you just saw two examples of that—to use print, social media, and television to spread word about the census and encourage participation. And the Bureau has opened all 248 area census offices that will be used to manage the decennial at the local level. This is all good, important news.

However, and second, the Bureau is behind its goal to recruit applicants to work on the census. The Bureau estimates that it will need to hire between 320,000 and 500,000 census takers, referred to as enumerators, depending on the response rate. While the size of those numbers is daunting enough, the Bureau has long found that it needs several times that in applicants in order to meet its hiring needs.

To date, the Bureau has recruited more than 2.1 million applicants, while noteworthy, and nonetheless does fall short of the interim target it set for itself to reach 2.5 million applicants by now, building to, as was mentioned, the overall goal of 2.6 million.

In addition, 202 of the 248 area census offices fell short of their individual recruiting targets as of early February. This is concerning because if the Bureau does not recruit sufficient applicants it may have difficulty hiring enough staff to complete upcoming operations, leading to delays, increased costs, and eroded data quality. Moreover, as the director just noted, the census, while a national effort, is implemented locally in communities and neighborhoods across the country. Thus, recruitment and hiring success in one area may provide little advantage to an area where efforts are lagging.

Third, the Bureau also missed milestones for establishing community partnerships. Partnerships are essential to educate the public, encourage participation, and thereby maximize the response rate, particularly for hard-to-count populations such as persons with disabilities and persons experiencing homelessness. Census partners, as was noted, include media outlets, civil society organizations, health care organizations, and the like.

The Bureau’s goal is to have 300,000 community partners by next month. As of early February, it had established over 238,000 of those. However, this falls short, again, of the Bureau’s interim

goal, which was to have 250,000 partnerships in place by the first of February.

Of course, the quality of the partnerships ultimately matters much more than the quantity. The Bureau will have a sense of how these partnerships are working from management reports that will indicate the number of community partnerships and participating organizations by sector, in audiences served, and the number of events that the partners have sponsored.

In summary, Madam Chairwoman and members of the committee, while early operations have been completed on schedule, the Bureau faces a number of challenges in upcoming major operations, as Nick will further elaborate. Perhaps the key risk now is the response rate. Longstanding census experience has taught me—certainly I began work on the census in the 1990 census—that high levels of public participation improve data quality, limit cost, and reduce schedule pressure.

This completes my prepared statement and I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.

Chairwoman MALONEY. The next speaker.

STATEMENT OF NICK MARINOS, DIRECTOR, INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY AND CYBERSECURITY, GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY OFFICE

Mr. MARINOS. Chairwoman Maloney, Ranking Member Jordan, members of the committee, thank you for inviting GAO to discuss preparations for the 2020 census. As Chris mentioned, our latest report highlights a number of IT-related challenges facing the Bureau. These include IT systems readiness and cybersecurity.

Stepping back for a moment, I wanted to highlight the complexity of administering the 2020 census from an IT perspective. As you know, the Bureau is tasked with collecting information from over 100 million households across our Nation, and to do within constitutionally mandated timeframes. To make it all happen, the Bureau will rely on 52 systems to support census operations. Many of these systems will be deployed multiple times in order to add needed functionality over the course of 16 operational deliveries.

To the Bureau's credit, by the end of last month it had successfully deployed systems for five operational deliveries, including in support of address canvassing and recruiting and hiring activities. However, the Bureau continues to face schedule risks for 5 of the remaining 11 operational deliveries, including for systems supporting internet self-response.

The Bureau, in fact, recently identified a scalability issue that was preventing it from meeting its goal of having up to 600,000 users be able to concurrently access the internet response system without experiencing performance problems. As a result, the Bureau decided late last week that it will instead use its backup system to manage internet responses for the 2020 census. Late design changes such as a shift from one system to another can introduce new risk during a critical moment.

The internet response option is scheduled to be available to the public in exactly one month from today. Therefore, the Bureau needs to quickly ensure that the system is ready and that contin-

agency plans are finalized to reflect this change, and fully test it before going live.

With respect to cybersecurity, the Census Bureau, like all Federal agencies, faces a growing number of cyber threats. Web-based attacks and phishing campaigns have become commonplace in our world, and they pose a serious challenge to economic and national security and to personal privacy. In light of this growing threat, GAO has designated cybersecurity as a governmentwide high-risk area since 1997.

To its credit, the Bureau has made progress in assessing the security of its systems and authorizing them to operate. In addition, the Bureau continues to leverage the expertise of DHS' Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency, known as CISA, to conduct cybersecurity assessments and provide consultative support.

Nonetheless, significant challenges still remain and the Bureau needs to continue taking steps to fully protect 2020 operations. Specifically, the Bureau needs to maintain its focus on security improvements called for by its own assessments and those conducted by CISA. We previously recommended that the Bureau improve its ability to address its security to-do list in a more prioritized and timely way. The Bureau agreed with us and is working to fully implement our recommendations.

The Bureau should also maintain its vigilance in light of the risk of disinformation on social media. The Bureau has been actively coordinating with social media platform providers and plans to roll out education and communication campaigns to respond to this risk. We think such activities are essential.

In summary, the technology innovations that the Bureau plans to rely on for the 2020 census create opportunities for increasing efficiency and effectiveness of the count. However, they also bring with them significant IT and cybersecurity risks. Ultimately, the success of operations in the upcoming months will be directly tied to how the Bureau continues to manage these risks.

Madam Chairwoman, this concludes my statement. Thank you.

Chairwoman MALONEY. Thank you very much. Thank you to all of the participants today. And Dr. Dillingham, this new report from GAO we just heard is very troubling, and just like the witnesses that we heard from, I guess it was last month, this new report seems to be sending flashing red lights, warning that the Census Bureau simply is not ready for what is about to happen, this important challenge before us.

Now in this new report, and in the testimony we just heard, they warn of inadequate recruitment and hiring, missed target dates, insufficient progress working with community partners, and significant cybersecurity challenges, and I could say the list goes on and on and on.

I want to give you a chance to respond. I know GAO gave you and gave us the report a week ago. So, why is the Census Bureau so far behind in so many aspects of the preparations across the board? Mr. Dillingham—Dr. Dillingham?

Mr. DILLINGHAM. Madam Chairwoman, it is a very good question, and let me say that from the point of view of the Census Bureau, we are not behind. And let me show you some charts. We provided members with charts today as to where we are.

The first chart we have is the recruiting chart. Now the recruiting chart, as pointed out by GAO, is based on self-response rates. We have three scenarios here. Now the figures being cited, which we did develop ourselves, very ambitious goals, the worst-case scenario, if our self-response rate drops to 55 percent, which no one expects, but if it did we would want 2.7 million people recruited from which we would hire about a half million people. That is the worst-case scenario.

The next scenario is the 60.5 percent, and that is probably the more reasoned scenario, in which case we would hire 320,000 people.

Now as of this morning we have 2.3 million completed applicants, 2.5 million that have started their applications, and it is increasing about 20,000 a day. We will meet—we will meet the worst scenario goal by the first week of March, and then we are going to surpass it. There is no doubt. We would like—we currently have about four applicants for every position. We want five applicants. We actually would like more. So, we are going to have those applicants, and so the recruiting—that is the first thing I will address.

Chairwoman MALONEY. What about the number of partners compared to the goal?

Mr. DILLINGHAM. Sure. Let me show you, Madam Chairwoman, on that.

Our partners, and again, we supplied you with these figures, here is where we are. Now we had a straight line kind of. We have very ambitious goals. We set them up intentionally as being ambitious, to make sure we get the job done.

Chairwoman MALONEY. I see the chart, Dr. Dillingham, and I just want to point out that if we had been going on the red we would have had more preparation in place. I only have a few minutes because we keep very strict time, so I want to get to GAO to respond, if I could. But I think if we had hired we would have been in a better place right now. You are catching up, good, but during this period the outreach to the communities, as I understand it, if you are a rural community or a hard-to-reach community, the most important thing is getting these partnerships, because they are the ones who know the people, they know how to get the count.

So, I would like GAO to respond, if you could, Mr. Mihm. In your report you warned that the Census Bureau is, and I picked a quote out, quote, “faces significant risk that could adversely impact and cost quality, schedule, and security of the count,” end quote. I want to know, is that right, and would you elaborate a little bit?

Mr. MIHM. Yes, ma'am, that is right, and on two of the points that the director was just mentioning on that, it is noteworthy and positive that the recruiting numbers are going up, and that is exactly where we would want them to be, and they are some ambitious targets.

But what we have seen with census experience, certainly in the three or four of them that I have been responsible for assisting the Congress in oversight, is that you can bleed through your recruitment base very, very quickly, and, not unexpectedly, you have turnover in that.

And so the second part of that is that the national numbers, we focus on those, obviously, and the Bureau does as well, but that is

not, as the director mentioned, where the census is implemented. It is implemented at a local level, and so it is concerning for us that you have those 200 of 248 local offices that haven't met their own targets on that, because that—

Chairwoman MALONEY. On that point—

Mr. MIHM. Yes, ma'am.

Chairwoman MALONEY.—and I want to quote from your report, you said the Bureau is behind, quote, “in its goal to recruit more than 2.6 million applicants nationwide for upcoming operations.” And then your report said that 2.1 million applicants recruited as of February 3, 2020, fall short of the Bureau's larger target to reach more than 2.5. Are those numbers correct, and could you elaborate a little bit?

Mr. MIHM. Yes, ma'am. I mean, they were correct, as the director noted. This is very much a moving target with literally thousands of new applicants every day. But as of even earlier this week they were the correct numbers that we received from the Census Bureau.

Chairwoman MALONEY. OK. You know, and also you missed—this quote, I think, is an important one, because I think that one of the most important parts about the census is having these community partnerships—

Mr. MIHM. Yes, ma'am.

Chairwoman MALONEY.—in place. And your report finds you missed interim milestones for establishing community partners. Is that right, and how damaging is that? And my time has expired after you respond.

Mr. MIHM. Yes, ma'am, it is a concern, because certainly in the environment that we are now, now the larger cultural environment is that we need people to be encouraged to participate in the census, as you saw from the ad that the director showed, to believe in the integrity of their data. This is what partnerships do, is that they are trusted voices in the community that can tell people you need to—we need to participate—they use the “we” language. We need to participate. It is good for us, good for the community, and your data will be protected. That is not something that can come out of Washington or Suitland, Maryland. That has to come from trusted local voices. That is the importance of the partnerships.

Chairwoman MALONEY. Thank you so much. I now want to recognize the gentleman from Wisconsin, Mr. Grothman. He is recognized for really six minutes, because I talked for six minutes.

Mr. GROTHMAN. Oh my goodness.

Chairwoman MALONEY. So, you are recognized, and I thank all of you. We all have the same goal, to get an accurate count.

Mr. GROTHMAN. Sounds like a basketball player calling a foul on themselves. I can't believe it. Thank you. Very honest.

Mr. DILLINGHAM, first of all I want to nail down who we are trying to count here. OK, if I am tourist, do we count a tourist?

Mr. DILLINGHAM. We do not count tourists.

Mr. GROTHMAN. OK. If I am a college student who is here for six months, do we count the college student?

Mr. DILLINGHAM. We count college students if they are living here at the time of the census. And so the six-months is a close call there as to how long they will be living here.

Mr. GROTHMAN. OK. Well, if I live in—if my parents live in—well, pretend I am 18 again—if my parents live in Wisconsin and I go to college in Illinois, am I counted in Illinois or Wisconsin?

Mr. DILLINGHAM. The methodology that was used for decades is we count where people are living. So, we actually count at the college campus.

Mr. GROTHMAN. OK. So, then how do we make sure then the people isn't counted in that case, in Wisconsin? If the parents fill out the form and say, "Sonny is with me," and somebody else is going around to the college dorm at the University of Illinois, how do we make sure that that person is not counted twice?

Mr. DILLINGHAM. Congressman, that is a very good question and we have very elaborate procedures, and that is one place where we really rely on our administrative data, that sort of behind the scene we are matching up. So, if there is a duplicate submission, if the college student answers the census at the university or the college, and then the parent maybe answers on their behalf, back in the hometown, we reconcile that and we eliminate that.

Mr. GROTHMAN. And you are confident you can do that?

Mr. DILLINGHAM. Yes, we can.

Mr. GROTHMAN. How about if somebody just goes somewhere to live with a buddy for a month?

Mr. DILLINGHAM. We do ask the individual where they are living, and we will, you know, probe as to where they are living, and where they report as being living that is where we count them.

Mr. GROTHMAN. How about if I am a tourist but overstay my visa?

Mr. DILLINGHAM. If you are a tourist and you tell us that you are here only temporarily, as a tourist, that is the information we have, and if you are from another country then I would assume that to be correct.

Mr. GROTHMAN. OK. How about if I am here just illegally and I should be leaving? At what point is that somebody who is countable?

Mr. DILLINGHAM. Congressman, we count everyone, wherever they are living.

Mr. GROTHMAN. OK. So, if I am a diplomat am I counted?

Mr. DILLINGHAM. Congressman, there are some very narrow exceptions that if you are a living at a consulate then we don't count people that are actually at the consulate, which is owned by the other country.

Mr. GROTHMAN. OK. How about if I am not living at a consulate? How about if I am living here in town but work at a consulate and I am stationed here for four months?

Mr. DILLINGHAM. Congressman, the four-months would probably—if you are here on April 1, and you answer that you are living here, and do not indicate, when we ask the questions—and I am going to ask the person with the most experience here who actually oversees the census—but that is a question where we probe further as to the length of time you are living here and in what capacity.

Mr. GROTHMAN. This is kind of scary because we are not nailing this down.

Go ahead, Mr. Fontenot.

Mr. FONTENOT. Mr. Congressman, the question is asked, “Where do you live or stay most of the time as of April 1?” and our census relies on self-declaration. So, if the person says, “I live or stay at this address most of the time, as of April 1,” they are counted at that address.

Mr. GROTHMAN. OK. And “most of the time” could mean I am returning to France in a month, but I should still put down that I am a U.S. citizen? Most of the time, what, over the last week? Over the last five years?

Mr. FONTENOT. Generally we use a guideline of around six months.

Mr. GROTHMAN. OK. So, if I am a diplomat who is here for six months and a day I am supposed to be counted.

Mr. FONTENOT. That is correct.

Mr. GROTHMAN. And is that clear on the form?

Mr. FONTENOT. It is clear in the additional instructions to the form. We provide—

Mr. GROTHMAN. OK. Now—

Mr. FONTENOT [continuing]. Our online—

Mr. GROTHMAN [continuing]. Yep—

Mr. FONTENOT [continuing]. Census would provide dropdown information. It gives you details in the dropdown information of exactly how to answer the question.

Mr. GROTHMAN. I am going to ask you this. It seems to me when cheating goes on, and, of course, what people are worried about here is cheating in elections, usually people—there is at least a perception that people vote twice or that sort of thing.

What are you doing to make absolutely certain that if somebody, say, wants to say more people are living in a state than are, that somebody is not filling out that form three times under three different names? How do we know that is not happening?

Mr. FONTENOT. We have very elaborate post-collection de-duplication processes which use administrative records, prior census information, IRS data, to verify that we are only counting people one time. This is not a unique and new process.

Mr. GROTHMAN. Well, I am going to ask you again. I am glad I have the extra minute. Thank you. If I am somebody on a farm in California and somebody fills out the form for me, and one day I am John Smith, and then I fill out the form on Ted Jones, and then I fill out the form on Billy Johnson, how do we know that somebody isn't sitting there cheating and filling out under three different names?

Mr. FONTENOT. We compare the census data we receive to other data we already have on that area—population estimates, other survey data—and if there are abnormalities in the count we are able to detect them at that time. And then we actually will send someone out to verify those people's identify. A person will physically go out and verify.

Mr. GROTHMAN. If I do that, how is that going to be caught? If I am somebody who wants to cheat, if I am somebody who wants to say there are more people in such-and-such a county in California than there are, and I sit down and fill out the form under 10 different names—

Mr. FONTENOT. We send out an enumerator to actually verify that you exist at that address?

Mr. GROTHMAN. So, everybody is going to get somebody to show up and count that person? I mean, if I live in Greenbush, Wisconsin, is somebody eventually going to count me, or no?

Mr. FONTENOT. Yes.

Mr. GROTHMAN. There will be a person who looks at me in Greenbush, Wisconsin, you are telling me.

Mr. FONTENOT. To verify that your data—if your data is inconsistent with what—

Mr. GROTHMAN. No, not inconsistent. Not inconsistent. I am not saying inconsistent. I am saying I just sit there and fill out 10 forms of 10 names that were not in the United States 10 years ago, are you going to catch that?

Mr. FONTENOT. Yes. That would be inconsistent data. That would come up. Our post-collection processes would bring that information to the light. That is when we send people out to verify.

Mr. GROTHMAN. OK. I will give a written question later, but thank you very much for giving me the extra minute.

Chairwoman MALONEY. The gentleman's time has expired. The gentlewoman from the District of Columbia, Ms. Norton, is recognized for five minutes.

Ms. NORTON. I thank you, Madam Chair. This is an important hearing, and I am particularly interested in the notion that the census is going digital, and that for the first time people are going to be asked to respond on the internet. I must tell you, the Iowa primary debacle comes to mind when I think of the census going digital. So, I am interested in the Bureau's plans in the event that the systems, in fact, experience some kind of attack or disaster.

The IG wrote something that really terrifies me. The 2020 census cloud environment did not have disaster recovery options capable of restoring data lost in the event of a large-scale attack or disaster, which suggests lost data that we could never recover. And, of course, the inspector general made several recommendations.

I suppose I should ask you, Mr. Dillingham, have you made upgrades to ensure that the data would not be lost in the event of a disaster? Can you assure us that you could always recover data?

Mr. DILLINGHAM. Congressman, we remedied all of the issues that were pointed out by the inspector general, and we have satisfied with the testing of our system, and we do have redundant storage.

In the event that there was some type of a catastrophe in which people could not reply online, and our associate director can address this, he can tell you how many millions of additional forms that we have prepared on paper, and we are ready to mobilize a different process to people who could respond on paper. But we don't foresee that happening in any way, and in no way is that comparable to what happened—

Ms. NORTON. But I am talking about data that is lost. I am talking about recovering data, not people who are using pen and pencil, but recovering data from people who have used the internet to respond.

Mr. DILLINGHAM. I can assure you—

Ms. NORTON. Who have digitally responded, I should say.

Mr. DILLINGHAM [continuing]. I can assure you that we have worked with the best minds in the private industry and the best in the intelligence communities, and our systems are continuously monitored 24/7.

Ms. NORTON. So, if you lost data—let me ask the inspector general. Are you satisfied that at some point all data could be recovered if there was some attack or some kind of disaster?

Mr. MARINOS. Well, Ms. Norton, the report that you referred to was from the IG. GAO has also been on record as emphasizing the importance of contingency planning, so that disaster recovery planning. We mentioned in our report that we are issuing today that we are still waiting to see the Bureau finalize their plans, and as I mentioned in my opening statement, this is especially important given that we are just one month away from internet self-response going live. So, it is important for the Bureau not only to document what it is going to do in the event that a primary system needs to fail over to a backup system, and so that is why we continue to emphasize that as a key point.

Ms. NORTON. All right. It looks like we don't have the contingency. We don't have any way to recover data that is lost, and that—I have been waiting for that response, that report. Yes, Mr. Fontenot.

Mr. FONTENOT. Yes, Congressman Norton, if I may, we store the data in multiple areas in the cloud to ensure security, and we back that up regularly. We can recover data if we had a breach or a situation like that, that would—

Ms. NORTON. That is really all I want to know.

Mr. FONTENOT. Yes, ma'am.

Ms. NORTON. If you are assuring us that you can always recover data.

Mr. FONTENOT. And in the worst case we would send someone out to recollect that data.

Ms. NORTON. But I want to ask you, though—I want to ask you because I am waiting for this report that you say is coming in—I was concerned with a testimony we have received from the National Latina Elected and Appointed Officials, and this is what they say. "I firmly believe that we need a Plan B and that the Census Bureau needs to make sure it has 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."

So, I am going to ask Mr. Marinos, does the Census Bureau currently have enough paper forms to use in the event of a system failure?

Mr. MARINOS. They do, Ms. Norton. So, I think it is important to note that the internet self-response option is just one of many ways that the public can respond to the survey. And I can defer to the Bureau for the specifics, but what I can convey is that their approach to how they are going to interface with the public is directly tied to the availability of the internet within those areas. So, the approach that they may take may include actually providing a written form, a paper form, for someone to fill out, or may have a postcard first be the thing that gets sent to encourage folks to go online.

In the event that someone does not respond to the survey online, the Bureau has plans to eventually provide them with a paper form, and if they don't fill that out have an enumerator, have a counter actually knock on their door.

Ms. NORTON. That is reassuring. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. LYNCH.

[Presiding.] The gentlelady yields. The chair now recognizes the gentleman from Kentucky, Mr. Massie, for five minutes.

Mr. MASSIE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It looks like a lot of the contingencies depend on the self-response rate. How did you estimate the self-response rate, and how do you think it is going to change this decade because of the internet option? Either Mr. Dillingham or Mr. Fontenot.

Mr. FONTENOT. Congressman, we estimate the self-response rate based on a number of historical census work we have done. The 2010 census was a starting point. We looked at the 2016 test, the 2018 test, and a test we did in 2019, and we also conferred with our colleagues from other censuses throughout the world. One of the things we are seeing on a global basis is people's propensity to respond to surveys and censuses has declined over the last two, three decades, and therefore we are projecting 60.5 percent response rate, which is lower than the total response rate we had in the 2010 census at the same point in time.

To tie to the chart we had over there—I am pointing to air, but to tie to the chart we had over there, the top line assumed a 55 percent self-response rate, which is lower than any of our models projected. Our models tend to project the midrange expected rate just over 60 percent.

Mr. MASSIE. How does the response rate, the self-response rate, differ between the short form and the American Community Survey?

Mr. FONTENOT. The American Community Survey, as you know now, was offered in every county in the country, and has two modes. It used to have three modes. It has two modes. It is sent out in paper form and then we send out an actual field representative to collect the data. The completed response rate for that is in the 90 percent range, but the self-response rate for mail-back is lower than we would expect for a census. A census is basically a 10-question form versus the multipage American Community Survey.

Mr. MASSIE. Right. I have got a copy of both and it looks like if I got this in the mail it would take me—I would put a lot more thought into it before I responded on my own.

Mr. FONTENOT. And it is a lower response rate than we get on censuses. Correct.

Mr. MASSIE. If somebody gets the long one in the mail—

Mr. FONTENOT. They don't get that as part of the census. They get that as part of the American Community Survey.

Mr. MASSIE. OK. So, it is in addition. It is not one or the other.

Mr. FONTENOT. That is correct. Prior to 2005—

Mr. MASSIE. Everybody gets the short one.

Mr. FONTENOT [continuing]. Prior to 2005 that was the census long form.

Mr. MASSIE. OK. Gotcha. That helps a lot. And what is your goal on response rate for the ACS?

Mr. FONTENOT. I can get back to you on that.

Mr. MASSIE. OK.

Mr. FONTENOT. Our total response rate goal is over 90, but that includes the people going around knocking on doors to collect data.

Mr. MASSIE. So, I was able to go to the internet and try out at least the front page of this on my mobile device, and I am glad to report I could see it, even on an antiquated mobile device, although it had that Captcha, you know, the “I am not a robot” thing at the front of it. And the house admin here required I put that on my congressional page, and I don’t want it on my page because I know a lot of people give up when they get to that Captcha thing. And I know it is for internet security, but, Mr. Mihm, do you anticipate that is going to slow down the response rate? Is that “I am not a robot” thing, is that on the short form when you go to respond?

Mr. MIHM. My understanding is that that is not on the census form.

Mr. MASSIE. OK.

Mr. MIHM. The issue you are raising, sir, is exactly right. In prior censuses we used to have two forms. We had the short form, the one that you are holding there, and a version of the American Community Survey, called the long form. The response rates were like 10 percentage points difference on that.

Congress and the Bureau said this is—you know, it is taking too much time and effort in the context of the decennial census to do the long form. Let’s strip that out and have a completely different survey on a different timeframe, and that is the American Community Survey that you are referencing there.

And so the 10 or so questions on the short form are now the only form. That is what, as was mentioned, the Bureau is looking for a 60.5 percent response rate.

Mr. MASSIE. Can people use their telephone to do the short form?

Mr. FONTENOT. Yes, sir.

Mr. MASSIE. OK.

Mr. FONTENOT. For the census we have three ways to respond—online, by phone, or on paper.

Mr. MASSIE. OK. Well, that sounds good to me. Is there a way to ensure integrity of the data as the deadline approaches? Let me just tell you a story, and this may be a apocryphal, okay. But a census worker that I know, back in the community, either 10 or 20 years ago, said when they got toward the end of the census the manager said, “Just drive by and count the number of bicycles in the yard and take a guess on how many kids are there.”

Now, what I am concerned about is as the deadlines approach, the integrity of the data goes down. The example I gave you is anecdotal and maybe it happened, maybe it didn’t. But I am sure there is a lot of pressure toward the end to skip a few steps. And maybe that is designed into the system. You know, maybe a little bit a day is better than none. But what are the steps that you are taking to make sure when you get toward the deadlines that they don’t start cutting too many corners?

Mr. FONTENOT. We are working very closely with the managers of the local census offices and the census field supervisors to ensure that process is followed throughout the census.

Now, to your point, if we have a person that is only willing to give some data toward the end of the census, we will take the data that they provide, because, truly, the purpose of the census is to get a population count for apportionment of the seats in the House. So, we will take partial data, but actual respondent data or proxy data or administrative record data.

One of the things that enhances our ability to get verified data in 2020 is we are using administrative records, the data the government has collected for other purposes, to be able to fill in places where we do not get people's responses.

Mr. MASSIE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. LYNCH. The gentleman yields. The chair now recognizes the gentleman from Maryland, Mr. Raskin, for five minutes.

Mr. RASKIN. Mr. Chairman, thank you very much. This committee has been focused like a laser beam on the census. We have a constitutional duty to make sure that all persons are counted in the United States. This is necessary for fair elections. It is necessary for fair and efficient distribution of governmental resources. So, we have been focused from the beginning on this. Any suggestion that this committee is somehow responsible for the problems experienced by the Census Bureau is, of course, absurd.

It was the Trump administration, not this committee, that tried for nearly a year to add an illegal citizenship question to the census, and, of course, was tied up in courts for months until the Supreme Court did the obvious and struck down the citizenship question as completely outside of the normal administrative process. The Administration should have been focusing on preparing for the census and dealing with all the complexities of the census rather than advancing this flawed and doomed political agenda.

But this committee has been focused on preparing for the census as a top priority for more than two years now. On March 6 of 2019, we held a hearing on GAO's high-risk list and highlighted concerns about census preparations. On May 29, 2019, our Subcommittee on Civil Rights and Civil Liberties, which I chair, held a hearing in New York at the intersection of the districts of Chairwoman Maloney and the vice chair of our subcommittee, Ms. Ocasio-Cortez, on what states and local communities are doing to prepare for the 2020 census and how they can be more actively engaged in the process.

On July 24 of last year, the subcommittee held another hearing and heard testimony from the director of the Census Bureau and the GAO, and on January 9 of this year, the committee held a hearing with experts and advocates on the risk of an undercount, and what we are doing to combat it. And on January 21 we wrote a letter to the Census Bureau seeking documents on critical aspects of census planning, including hiring technology and planning for potential disasters. Our staff has held more than 20 briefings with the Bureau and the GAO during this Congress alone.

So, I am proud of the work that this committee has been doing to ensure that the 2020 census is a success. I am proud that we helped to overcome the Administration's outrageous attempts to

sabotage the census with its illegal citizenship question that was struck down by the U.S. Supreme Court.

Dr. Dillingham, I wanted to ask you a question. I have heard from some of my constituents that the Census Bureau may be placing ads with media outlets that are primarily owned or influenced by the Chinese government in the Asian American community. They appear to be suggesting that Chinese government-influenced companies have somehow gotten the market on our census outreach in the Asian American community. And I am just wondering if you know anything about this, and what the Bureau might be doing to make sure that the media companies that we are using are based in the United States and free from foreign government influence.

Mr. DILLINGHAM. Sure. First, Congressman Raskin, let me thank you and let me thank all the Members of Congress from the state of Maryland, and there have been—both with this committee and the former chairperson of this committee, I have appeared in Baltimore with him and with others. I have been to your district. We met with the entire Maryland delegation and we very much appreciate your commitment to getting a full count.

Now with regard to—and I understand it was either in the press or in the social media, about this Chinese influence. The information I received it was absolutely false. We had no contract with that entity, and there was no media engagement with that foreign-owned entity whatsoever. But we can provide you details on that, but I am told that story was absolutely false.

But to the larger question of our media campaign, this is, in fact, the largest media campaign ever for the decennial census, and it is very important that we get it right. The commercials, we had two this morning, and I think they captured some attention from some of the people in the room, but we have dozens upon dozens of advertisements. We have contracts with all sorts of firms that reach the hard-to-count communities and reach the diverse communities, and we are very proud, and we have very specifically tailored advertising, even in certain languages, that reach those communities.

But I noticed when we went to your community, for example, you have a very diverse community. You have an area, if I could use the term, it is called Korean Corner. And in that area there was local newspapers at the supermarket, et cetera, and we discussed, with a partnership specialist, the possibilities of how we can get some of our advertising into that local media, in the channels that they use, and in the publications and other—and the radio stations and stuff that they may be listening to.

So, we will be glad to work with you. We are working with you. We have heard of tremendous progress being made in your district and the state of Maryland, and we still have work to do.

Mr. RASKIN. Well, and I appreciate that very much. I appreciate your openness and your willingness to work with communities such as ours. And I would just encourage you to make sure that the media outreach is as diverse as possible, as you are suggesting, and that we not be captured by any particular group, certainly if it is influenced by foreign government. Again, I don't know if there is

a reality there but there is certainly word in the community about that, so I appreciate you clearing it up.

I yield back.

Mr. LYNCH. The gentleman yields. The chair now recognizes the ranking member, the gentleman from Ohio, Mr. Jordan, for five minutes.

Mr. JORDAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It sounded like, Mr. Dillingham, or Director Dillingham, when GAO gave their opening comments that it was sort of good news/bad news. The good news is the Census Bureau, I think you said, Mr. Mihm, that early operations are on schedule, and that is great and congratulations on that. But then on the number of applicants you need, to get the employees you need, it sounded like you were behind in both numbers—2.5 million you need in applicants, over half a million you need of actual enumerators, people out doing it. It sounds like you are behind on the partnership issue, and then, of course, Mr. Marinos talked about IT and cybersecurity concerns as well.

So, I just want to give you a chance to say, are you going to get there? Congratulations on being there on the early stuff but now it is the real deal, and frankly I think Members of Congress and the country would like to know that you are going to get there. And you had some charts up earlier but I just want to give you a chance to respond to those. It seems like four issues were raised and three of them we have got some concerns, so talk about that those three.

Mr. DILLINGHAM. Sure.

Mr. JORDAN. And then if we want GAO to jump in and tell me, I want to know if you guys think they are going to get there.

Mr. DILLINGHAM. I thank you very much, and certainly would enjoy them—I certainly invite them to also join in as needed.

You know, I said, to begin with we set very ambitious goals, and one of the goals showed a straight line to reach the worst-case scenario. We operate by three scenarios, but we want to make sure we recruit people the worst-case scenario, the 2.7 million. We will reach that in the first week in March, and we are going to exceed that.

Mr. JORDAN. OK.

Mr. DILLINGHAM. So, we have 2.3 million applicants already, completed applications, 2.5 million have begun. So, we are quite confident. These people are not yet being hired. They are going to be enumerators. So, we are very pleased and we are going to exceed that goal, on the recruiting and hiring.

On the partnerships, the same thing. We are going to exceed our goals, yes, and we appreciate GAO. We provide them with the information of our schedules and our goals, and they look at it, and they will remind us, "Oh, you didn't meet your goal here." And they will say, "Whenever you don't meet your goal, that presents a risk," and to some extent they are right, and we appreciate that.

But, you know, when we started the census, and we had the original plan, we had more than 27,000 tasks to do, and we have schedules for those tasks, and we have testings of our system, 25,000 tasks. So, when we get down to the fine numbers it is very important, and we do work, and whenever they identify a risk we address those risks. And I think they will tell you we have a very good track record.

So, our systems are tested. Recruiting is going to exceed our most ambitious goal. Our partnerships already surpass the last decennial census, by the point they had reached at the end of the census, and we are a month out before we even do the first mailing.

So, we are way ahead of what is needed. Did we deviate from the schedule?

Mr. JORDAN. Applicants, employees, or numerators—you feel good, and you feel good about the partnership as well.

Mr. DILLINGHAM. Absolutely.

Mr. JORDAN. Tell me about the IT concerns. Have you got any—

Mr. DILLINGHAM. The IT—

Mr. JORDAN. And then I want to give GAO a chance to tell me if you are giving it to us straight, which I assume you are, but give them a chance to respond.

Mr. DILLINGHAM. With our IT I can tell you that we have not missed any operational or testing deadlines for the 2020 census. There are the risks, as I pointed out, any time we have anything pending, and so we are on a track. But all 2020 census IT systems have been successfully tested and deployed, or are on track for deployment.

For example, we have a system that will deal with the post-enumeration survey, which is after the completion of the census, to double-check, another way of looking at our numbers. Now we have tested that system in the past and it worked, but we are going to test it again.

Mr. JORDAN. OK.

Mr. DILLINGHAM. So, we feel very comfortable. The professional census has a high degree of confidence.

Mr. JORDAN. Thank you, Director, and I appreciate all the hard work. I know you are working hard. I want to give GAO the last minute to respond.

Mr. MIHM. Thank you, Mr. Jordan, and I know Nick will talk about the IT in just a moment. The good news is we are working off with the Census Bureau is a common set of facts, and so we would agree with him on the data on that point. On the other hand, I am from GAO and I am paid to worry on your behalf.

So, I think the big concern that we have operationally is that these numbers can be looking good at a top level, even though we haven't met some interim goals. But the concern is the response rate. It is—the 60.5 percent, which is what they are hoping to achieve, would still have a 61 million households for followup. You can bleed through a recruitment base very, very quickly in hiring the enumerators for that. And so—and if it gets up to obviously the 55 or it goes as low as the 55 percent, which would be, you know, very bad, as the Bureau mentioned, you are at 66.7 million households that you would have to followup on.

So, in a month from now, or, you know, six weeks from now, when we start seeing the response rate, that is going to really give us all a good feeling or a really similar concern. And I know Nick will talk about the IT.

Mr. MARINOS. I think the title of our report talks about a mixed preparedness, and I think that is fair, because in many ways the positives are there. We have seen the Bureau able to successfully,

you know, deploy dozens of systems in support of five of the operations to date.

The reality, and where the risk is, and where my worry resides is just in the time, right. We are sort of in a pressure cooker of time to get a lot of things done, and the Bureau has, in particular, two key operations coming up in just the next couple of months. You mentioned in your statement as well, Mr. Jordan, about the fact that we are one month away from internet self-response, and we are also just over two months away from the beginning of the enumeration process too. So, the Bureau has a lot of work ahead of it to complete the testing that it is done.

Now, to its credit, and accurate to what Dr. Dillingham has said, they have put a lot of effort into that testing. And, in fact, what I mentioned earlier about the decision to switch from one system to another was the result of the rigorous testing that they Bureau is undertaking.

So, at the end of the day I think the risk still exists because of the amount of work that the Bureau has to do within a short period of time.

Mr. JORDAN. Thank you. I yield back. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. LYNCH. The gentleman yields. The chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Florida, Ms. Wasserman Schultz, for five minutes.

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Dillingham, I think we can agree that the stakes are too high for the Census Bureau to have a one-size-fits-all approach to advertising and community outreach, and I can certainly appreciate that you have a large volume of community partnership relationships.

In my district, Florida's 23d, I am proud to represent a majority minority community that is filled with people from all over the world, including the largest concentration of Venezuelans, for example, of any other district. Effectively communicating and building trust with my constituents is going to be notably different in terms of the way we connect with them and reach out to them than it would be just a few miles up the road on 95.

I am very concerned that the Census Bureau has not taken seriously your responsibility to understand all the communities that you must reach to have a complete and accurate count.

Now we know one way to build relationships in hard-to-count communities is to enlist local businesses, for example, and groups to be Census Bureau Ambassadors. Dr. Dillingham, the House Democratic Caucus, the Tri-Caucus, and the Census Caucus wrote you recently requesting information on the status of the Bureau's Community and National Partnership Engagement Programs, and asked for a response by December 13, 2019. The answer that you finally provided just last night was nearly two months late and woefully incomplete.

The letter requested a list of the name and location of every local partner organization in the United States, organized by congressional district, which I know is entirely possible. We have gotten it before. You responded by saying the work is still ongoing, because that list is growing, and you have committed to only release organizations that, quote, "have given permission to be listed as a public partner." That is baffling, because if you are a public partner

one would think that you would be public. It is a little tough to know how to partner with an organization that is not willing to make themselves known.

So, what exactly is the purpose of having a community partner to help promote the importance of filling out the census if that partner is not public? And Census Day is less than eight week away, so when will you commit to providing the complete list of local partners, broken down by congressional district, because for all of us it is important for us to know who we can work with in our local communities. I have been very engaged in my, you know, my Count Committee locally, and it would be really helpful to know which organizations in my district have had a formal relationship with you. And will you also provide information about how you define what you consider to be a local partner, because that would be helpful too.

Mr. DILLINGHAM. Congresswoman, let me first begin by saying that I was in Broward County. The partners there were absolutely fabulous.

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. I agree.

Mr. DILLINGHAM. When I went to the Broward County complete count committee, we actually ran out of time when they were going over all the contributions that all the members of that committee are meeting. The room was filled with partners.

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Right. I know, Dr. Dillingham. We have a very well-organized complete count committee.

Mr. DILLINGHAM. Yes.

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. I have been very much a part of that, and helped launch it.

Mr. DILLINGHAM. Absolutely, and you—

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. I would like an answer to my question.

Mr. DILLINGHAM. OK. And you defined the responsibility and need absolutely correctly. I agree with you. On the—

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Everyone isn't as supportive of it as I am.

Mr. DILLINGHAM [continuing]. We hope to get—when people completed, over the past year or so, signed up as partner, I am informed that we need to double-check. Some may not have given us permission, at the time, to go public, but my understanding is—

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. You realize that makes no sense, right?

Mr. DILLINGHAM [continuing]. My understanding is we will be releasing those documents. They are under review.

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. When?

Mr. DILLINGHAM. And that is beyond—

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. When?

Mr. DILLINGHAM [continuing]. I hope today—

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. And why did it take—

Mr. DILLINGHAM [continuing]. Or tomorrow—

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ.—why did it take until two days ago for you to respond to a letter that we asked for a response by December 13?

Mr. DILLINGHAM. Well, I think one of the current issues is the release of that information, which is under review.

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. OK. That doesn't make any sense. The length of time since the letter was sent—

Mr. DILLINGHAM. Sure.

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ.—until two days ago is more than enough time. Up until the December 13, you had more than enough time to get the answers to the questions, to get permission from the public organizations that are partners on the census.

Mr. DILLINGHAM. Sure.

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Otherwise they shouldn't be partners if they are not willing to make their names public. And again, the census is less than eight weeks away. If you are really committed to reaching hard-to-count communities, then we need that information right now.

Mr. DILLINGHAM. I agree to do whatever I can to get you that information as soon as possible.

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. OK. So, today is Wednesday. Can we be assured of having it by Friday?

Mr. DILLINGHAM. Congresswoman, it is in a review process that I do not control.

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. OK. Well, who does control it?

Mr. DILLINGHAM. All documents that leave the Department of Commerce go through a review process.

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. I understand. Who controls whether and when that information is released to the public, to Members of Congress, so we can make sure that we can maximize the count of hard-to-count communities?

Mr. DILLINGHAM. Congresswoman, I will certainly—

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. You can't tell me who it is—who is in charge? Who is in charge of giving you permission to release that information? And is it actually finished and they are just not letting you release it?

Mr. DILLINGHAM. Congresswoman, I will have to get back to you.

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Is it finished and you are being told you cannot release it?

Mr. DILLINGHAM. I would be totally honest if it was—if I knew the answer.

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. You don't know who it is?

Mr. DILLINGHAM. It is in review process.

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. I am sorry.

Mr. DILLINGHAM. When it gets through the review process—

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Are you honestly telling me that you don't know who is in charge of letting you know that you can release it? You don't know or you won't tell me?

Mr. DILLINGHAM. I will let you know when I get the determination that it is releasable. I actually expect it very soon.

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. No. I want you to let me know now who is preventing you from releasing it? Who is—who do you answer to that is directly responsible for telling you you can release the information? Who? Position, title, name?

Mr. DILLINGHAM. Congressman, I honestly do now know what was involved in the review process.

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. OK. You are the Director of the Census and you don't know who is responsible for reviewing the items that you have been asked to produce for the Congress?

Mr. DILLINGHAM. Congresswoman, I know that ultimately people review it and look to see that it is in accordance with law and whatever rules and regulations may apply. And I am not fulfilling that legal responsibility—

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. You know you were sworn in at the start of this hearing, right, and that you are supposed to be telling the truth to our committee when we ask you questions?

Mr. DILLINGHAM. Absolutely, Congresswoman.

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. It really is hard to believe that you don't know who is responsible for reviewing the materials that you need permission to release when we ask for them.

Mr. DILLINGHAM. Congresswoman, I could generally refer to people that are normally in the review process, and it is usually people with legal responsibilities.

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. How are you going to get the permission if you don't know who to go to?

Mr. DILLINGHAM. It will be communicated back to us when the review is completed. I do not foresee delay.

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. OK. We are eight weeks out from the census, so I would like an answer today when the information is going to be released, so we can effectively work across the districts in the United States of American, with our public community partners, and the Director of the Census Bureau allows them to be public. Can you commit to that?

Mr. DILLINGHAM. Congresswoman, it is not that I am stopping anyone. You work with them each and every day. You know many of them.

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. I don't know who they are.

Mr. DILLINGHAM. And they can certainly—

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. That is my question.

Mr. DILLINGHAM [continuing]. They can certainly—

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. No, no, no, no.

Mr. DILLINGHAM. Yes.

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. I don't know who they are. That is my question. You know who they are, and you are not providing the information to our Tri-Caucus, to our CBC, to our Census Caucus. And you can't even tell me who it is that is holding it up or who is responsible for reviewing it.

Mr. DILLINGHAM. Congresswoman—

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. That is outrageous.

Mr. DILLINGHAM [continuing]. We will review the process—

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. It is a deliberate obstacle that you are throwing in the path of trying to make sure that we can get hard-to-count communities counted, and that is obvious. I would like an answer—

Mr. DILLINGHAM. Congresswoman, I disagree—

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ.—By the end of the week.

Mr. DILLINGHAM [continuing]. With that characterization. There is no deliberation. I would prefer that you get the list today.

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. OK. Well, then please ask whoever—send it up the food chain and try to figure out who it is that is responsible for it, and let us know as soon as possible.

Mr. DILLINGHAM. I will—

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Thank you, Madam Chair, for your—
Mr. Chairman. I yield back. I appreciate your indulgence.

Mr. LYNCH. The chair will afford equal time to the minority with respect to questioning.

The gentlelady yields and the chair recognizes the gentleman from Louisiana, Mr. Higgins, for five minutes.

Mr. HIGGINS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Gentlemen, thank you for your endeavor to serve our country by delivering an accurate census count. Let me say that I believe sometimes we can get a little too close to a particular mission and we lose the 30,000-foot view. And perhaps this committee has been overly focused on one particular aspect of the census count or another. And I believe, as laws cite, exactly if we are addressing the cultural change in our country since the last census a decade ago, and despite the best efforts of the entire census endeavor, including you gentlemen, and the many, many scores of thousands of men and women that will attempt to serve and gather data, I believe when we reconvene next year, those of us that do, I think we are going to reflect upon this time and wonder how we missed it so much.

The last decade in our Nation has seen an incredible saturation of social media and communications, interactions that we have not seen prior, and one of the aspects of that 24/7 unending communications is the criminal endeavor, which every American has been touched by. Over 10 years you had untold millions of Americans have been victims of scams. Whole government entities at the municipal, state, and Federal level have fallen prey to scam, ransomware, et cetera.

Our American culture has been subjected to a continuous barrage of criminal endeavor, all of which begin with the request for personal information. A decade ago, when someone knocked on your door, you answered your door. A decade ago, if your phone rang, you answered the phone. This has changed.

So, I ask you, Mr. Dillingham, what is the census doing? Is there an awareness of this? How are you going to penetrate this culture of protection and secrecy that we have rightfully, as an American citizenry, that we have responded to the barrage of criminal attack that has been made manifest over the last decade, how are you going to get through that? We have not discussed this in this panel. This highly impacts the elderly in our country. I believe we are going to reflect upon this census effort a year from now and find it to be a failure because we have failed to address this cultural change. I ask you for a response, Mr. Dillingham.

Mr. DILLINGHAM. Thank you very much for your statement of some of the problems with regard to security and fraud, et cetera. Let me begin to frame it at a higher level first, and then our associate director, with many years of experience in this can tell you what we are doing on the front line to combat fraud and scams and that sort of thing.

It is very important, and as one of the commercials earlier showed, that we protect the information that comes to the Census Bureau. And we have an excellent track records. We have stringent Federal laws that subject you to years in prison, anyone who violates it. That has not happened. Congress passed laws in the

1950's, under Title 13, to protect the privacy and confidentiality of our data.

However, I think you are bringing up also what about in conducting the census, are there opportunities for fraud, or attempted fraud, and I think that our associated director can tell you, from the front line—

Mr. HIGGINS. No. I am asking how are you going to conduct a census in a nation where our culture has changed regarding the wiling dissemination of our personal data.

Mr. DILLINGHAM. Sure.

Mr. HIGGINS. If the phone rings now and it is not a known contact, nobody in here answers the phone. If someone knocks on your door, your elderly mom or pop, and they don't know who that is, they don't answer the door, or they call the police. How are you going to penetrate this?

Mr. FONTENOT. Congressman, if I may, I think there are three primary things that we are focused on. No. 1, you need to have voices that people trust in the community, be they pastors, be they community leaders, be they Congresspeople. Your staff are trusted voices. If you have been an elected official, by your people, they trust you.

So, we are saying, how do we, No. 1, get the trust—

Mr. MEADOWS. That may be a bridge too far.

[Laughter.]

Mr. FONTENOT [continuing]. Saying that it is important for them to participate and that their data is safe?

The second thing is the people going around knocking on doors are from the community. The key to census hiring is hiring people who live in the local community who are familiar with the local community, who speak the languages, and can go around and knock on the doors.

Mr. HIGGINS. Is there a plan to reach through those avenues, sir, through pews and pulpits?

Mr. FONTENOT. Yes, absolutely. We have a faith-based program—

Mr. HIGGINS [continuing]. And town halls—

Mr. FONTENOT [continuing]. Of how we talk to pastors, get churches engaged, get churches engaged as partners. We have an initiative, which is called Mobile Questionnaire Assistance, which the Congress actually mandated that we set up for 2020, and funded with \$90 million in the last appropriation. The Mobile Questionnaire Assistance allows the census person to go to grocery stores, to assembly areas, where people are assembled, with a device, and work with the people to actually take their enumeration. Ideally they will work with the partners and the community organizations in that neighborhood to say, "All right. What is good time? Can we assemble? Do you have a church tea? At the VFW hall? At some event, and we will be there. We can talk about how your information is safe. We can take your information right there, at that point in time."

Mr. HIGGINS. Well, I hope it works. We shall see. We all want an accurate count. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for your indulgence. I yield.

Mr. LYNCH. The gentleman yields. The chair now recognizes the gentlewoman from Illinois, Ms. Kelly, for five minutes.

Ms. KELLY. Thank you, Mr. Chair. This year marks the first time the census will be conducted mostly online, yet almost a quarter of American adults do not have access to high-speed internet at home. This digital divide affects people of rural areas who are less likely to have broadband access than other Americans. My district is urban, suburban, and rural, and I have done about six census briefings across my district, and when we had the census briefing in my most rural area the gentleman from the census said 40 percent of the people don't have access to the internet. And, of course, as you know, this is not just a rural issue, because I have had people in the city of Chicago that don't have access.

According to data from Pew Research, 44 percent of adults who earn less than \$30,000 do not have broadband service at home. Around one-third of Hispanic and black adults also lack home broadband access. And only 59 percent of Americans 65 years and older have home broadband.

So, while the internet will make it easier for some people to participate in the census, I am concerned that relying on internet self-response will make counting hard-to-count populations even harder.

So, Mr. Dillingham, what is the Census Bureau doing to make sure that those homes without broadband access are counted in 2020, including those who live in areas where the Bureau is using internet self-response?

Mr. DILLINGHAM. Congresswoman, thank you so much for that question, and we have been in areas of New York and across the country where the connectivity rates are low. Even in Alaska, I can tell you stories there.

We are doing a lot, but keep in mind that one of the important features of this census is people can answer in three different ways. They can get on their phone, even a hard line. It doesn't have to be a smart phone. Or they can answer on the internet with a smart phone or with a computer, or they can do it on paper.

So, in those areas that we have already determined the connectivity is low, and our associate director can give you great details on this, we are identifying those 20 percent of the country where, in our first mailing, we send out the paper. We send it out on paper. Now other areas we send it out on the fourth mailing, and we do a total of five mailings if we haven't heard from people. So, that is one way.

But in areas like New York City, et cetera, we have partners all across the Nation. The American Library Association has asked all of its member libraries across the Nation to open their doors, and I have been to those libraries. It is so important. And that is a way that people can—but it is just not the libraries. It is the businesses, et cetera.

When I was in Baltimore, Maryland, they wanted a storefront operation where people could come in and be assisted. We don't do that. But in meeting with the mayor, former Senator from Maryland, the former chair of this committee, et cetera, we identified, in one day, going through the hard-to-count communities, 80 different locations where people could use the computer. So, if they

want to use the computer there will be more avenues than ever. At the same time, they can make a simple toll-free call, they can do it on the way to work. We don't want them to do it while driving a car. And they can submit their information that way, or they can do it on paper, and if they don't then we send someone to collect it from them.

Ms. KELLY. And also, this year the Census Bureau is using Mobile Questionnaire Assistance Centers to provide on-the-ground help for those who are struggling with their form. However, to my knowledge, the Bureau has yet to release plans for the locations of these Mobile Questionnaire Assistance Centers. So, will these be available in areas with limited broadband access?

Mr. DILLINGHAM. They will, and we can give you a lot of details and would be glad to brief you on that. But what we do, one of the primary benefits of this, we can take the technology into the communities and reach the hard-to-count, at events, et cetera.

Now one of the things that we, and associate director can tell you our schedule, we will start out in those low-response areas. But wherever—we work with our partnership specialists and the community—wherever there is an event, where everyone points to a need, that you can reach these people. For example, in the city of Detroit, it happened to be a donut shop. We can bring the technology there and assist the people.

Ms. KELLY. OK. And then what efforts are you making to educate individuals on how to fill the forms out, like, you know, seniors or those with low English proficiency?

Mr. DILLINGHAM. So, basically in our communications campaign we kind of present an easy picture for them, but if they have specific questions there are toll-free numbers. We have 10 Customer Assistance Centers around the country, with 9,000 employees, taking the calls and giving assistance.

Ms. KELLY. OK. Thank you. I yield back.

Mr. LYNCH. The gentlelady yields back. The chair recognizes the gentleman from Kentucky, Mr. Comer, for five minutes.

Mr. COMER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I know we are all concerned a potential undercount. When the census was completed 10 years ago, immediately groups were claiming there was a massive undercount. If you recall, can you answer this question. The estimated undercount 10 years ago, were those predominantly rural, were they urban, or was it a mix, or do we know?

Mr. DILLINGHAM. Let me start and then the specifics, associate director can answer. You are exactly right. We have to make sure that everyone is counted, and that undercount is we are pulling out all the stops to reach both with the technology the hard-to-count areas but also working with our partners across the Nation that are so dedicated. And we have got—we can tell you all those partners, the pediatrics groups, et cetera, but let me turn it over to Al and he will give you some more specifics.

Mr. FONTENOT. Congressman, the largest areas of undercount were actually demographic minorities, Hispanic, African American, males, ages 18 to—

Mr. COMER. How do you know those were undercounted?

Mr. FONTENOT. By very large numbers those were undercounted, yes. That is where the majority of your undercount lies.

You know, if I look at urban versus rural versus suburban versus even the reservation areas, and I look at that, it is not a consistent picture across those geographic type of areas. For example, some states with large undercounts have primary rural populations. Others are among our best counted in the country. So, there is no consistency like that across.

Mr. COMER. Will there be—

Mr. DILLINGHAM. Can I add one thing?

Mr. COMER. Yes.

Mr. DILLINGHAM. A lot of people do get confused with self-response and undercount. So, when communities, the hard-to-count, are not self-responding, some people call that an undercount. But at the end of the day, when we send the enumerators around, we are going to get as close as possible to a complete count.

Mr. COMER. Will there be a process to where before the final count is official maybe you, I don't want to say leak, but you disclose, all right, this is what it looks like it is going to be in California, or this is what it looks like it is going to be in Kentucky, and then if there are groups that feel undercounted, whether they be groups in rural America or minority groups they can have an opportunity to protest or challenge that count?

Mr. DILLINGHAM. No, Congressman. This is the count. But one of the things that we do, as we analyze the data and determine the response rates, and make sure we have accurate data, et cetera, we do a very extensive post-enumeration survey that is totally independent, that we match up with our results to see how close they match. The last decennial census they came very, very close.

Mr. COMER. All right. Mr. Chairman, I would like to yield the balance of my time to my friend from Kentucky, Mr. Massie.

Mr. LYNCH. The gentleman is recognized.

Mr. MASSIE. Thank you, Mr. Comer. Mr. Higgins touched on a great point when he was here, that the culture has changed in the last 10 years. People don't answer phone numbers that they don't recognize. People don't open doors for people that they don't know. And that is going to present a problem for you.

But something else has changed over the last decade. The scammers have gotten better at getting people to respond to their scams. And I am worried that they are going to take advantage of your advertising campaign and they are going to target people to collect their information, or to get their foot in the door.

And so, in fact, I even saw a congressional piece of mail that came from a congressional office that was made to look like a census, so that they would get a better response rate from constituents and collect their emails. There was no nefarious purpose there, but it is well known that people do respond to the census, more than a random email from somebody.

So, what are you doing to prevent it, but most importantly, how fast are you going to be able to respond to these scams? I have seen people use my name in mailings to try and get \$20 from somebody to track their Social Security form or whatever. And my frustration has been, and this is a tremendous frustration with Facebook, it takes them days to stop a scam, and then the scam starts up again because they were making money.

So, if the chairman would indulge the witnesses and myself to give them time to answer this question, can you tell me what you are doing to prevent the scams, and what does your response team look like, and what is your response rate going to be?

Mr. DILLINGHAM. We are very concerned about that issue as well, and I can tell you that we have a 24/7, what we call a Fusion Center, that is manned with personnel, that is continuously monitoring those activities. We meet every day on those activities. We do have agreements with one of the technology firms you just mentioned, as well as others, in responding to it, as well as with the Federal agencies.

So, there are ways, and particularly with social media, that we can correct the record. We can overcome the negative with more positive and correct information, as well as having some of those service providers, like Facebook and others, take the information down.

So, we work with them. We have been working for them and planning with them for many, many months, and we are monitoring on a real-time basis each and every hour of every day.

Mr. MASSIE. My time has expired, but thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. LYNCH. The gentleman yields. The chair now recognizes the gentleman from California, Mr. Rouda, for five minutes.

Mr. ROUDA. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you to our witnesses for being here today.

Dr. Dillingham, I just wanted to get a better understanding of some of the outreach efforts to reach those that don't have English as their primary language. My understanding is that one in five people in America have a primary language other than English that they speak at home, and that there are approximately 400 languages and dialects here in the United States.

I represent part of Little Saigon in Orange County, which is the largest Vietnamese population outside of Vietnam, and, you know, many of the individuals there are refugees who, not only is Vietnamese their primary language, it is their only language that they speak. Yet I know that from the paper census we are only in English and Spanish, and that there are efforts to reach those through the internet, but often people don't have access to the internet.

So, what resources is the Census Bureau using to reach those individuals who obviously aren't English or Spanish, so the written ballot doesn't help, and also have challenges accessing the internet?

Mr. DILLINGHAM. That is a very good question. We are doing more than ever before in that area. Actually, we provide assistance in English and 12 other languages, and then we have materials in 59 languages. So, we reach more than—far more than 99 percent of the population with our language assistance.

However, as you mentioned, you mentioned 400 dialects, et cetera. I saw figures recently that even the people that we have hired, that we are hiring to work, represent 500 languages and dialects. I didn't know there were that many. I knew there was over 100, but there are many out there. And we will find—if we find an individual that we have, there is a language problem that doesn't fall within our materials, doesn't fall within the assistance we provide, we will find an expert, usually from an educational commu-

nity or someone from that person's community, to assist us to reach that individual, particularly when it comes down to the actual enumeration.

But we are also doing outreach with our communications campaign. We are developing more and more materials, and we have focus groups, more than 120 focus groups, with a lot of those groups that have special language needs.

Mr. ROUDA. Doctor, if I could interrupt, could you maybe bring that home in the sense for my community in Little Saigon? What exactly is being done on the ground to make sure that we are getting everyone there engaged and counted?

Mr. DILLINGHAM. Well, one of the things certainly, and I will turn it over to Mr. Fontenot, but we have our partnership specialists from those communities, and we hire our enumerators from those communities. So, that is actually one of the best ways. But there are some others that perhaps our associate director would like to mention.

Mr. ROUDA. Thank you.

Mr. DILLINGHAM. I think Dr. Dillingham hit on the two key ones, that the partnership specialists that are hired to work in that community are familiar with that community, they are from that community, they are fluent in the languages in that community. But our effort is to make sure we hire enumerators who also speak the language, because they are from the community.

In case of, point of fact, in Los Angeles, the regional director of the Los Angeles region, Julie Lamb, is a Vietnamese refugee, so she has a high sensitivity for your specific community. But it is just not that community. We are looking at every one of our diverse communities in terms of how can we make sure that the people that come work in that community relate to the people who live in that community, that they understand our languages, they understand our customs, and they are able to effectively take the census message in.

Mr. ROUDA. Now let me ask you, going back to those who don't speak English or Spanish as their primary language but have access to the internet. My understanding is that there are tutorial videos, but there are only two tutorial videos, Spanish and English. This seems like a pretty easy lift on behalf of you guys to be able to address this by adding additional videos in other languages. Is there a commitment to do that?

Mr. FONTENOT. There are videos in other languages than Spanish and English, yes.

Mr. ROUDA. There are. In how many, roughly, if you know?

Mr. FONTENOT. I will have to get that number and get back to you.

Mr. ROUDA. OK.

Mr. FONTENOT. All 59.

Mr. ROUDA. I am sorry?

Mr. FONTENOT. All 59.

Mr. ROUDA. All 59 primary languages are now with videos.

Mr. FONTENOT. Have a video, yes.

Mr. ROUDA. That is great to hear. Thank you. I appreciate that. And then, last, I know that we have had some difficulty and some discussions about guides available to Native Hawaiian, Pa-

cific Islander languages and the Navajo, the only Native American represented. Has that changed? Is that being addressed to make sure that those subsets of the U.S. demographics are being addressed?

Mr. FONTENOT. The primary way we are going to reach those subsets of the demographic is through hiring people from those communities and using their language skills to help us actually be effective in those areas.

Mr. DILLINGHAM. And let me just add one thing. In working and visiting in Hawaii, with some of those language challenges, we actually have partners in Hawaii, and one of the great contributions they make is that on their own they will translate the promotional material. So, we do count on our partners to assist. This is one of the most valuable areas of assistance from our more than quarter of a million partners, is the language assistance.

Mr. ROUDA. Well, thank you for your answers, your hard work, and your commitment, and, Chairman, I yield back.

Mr. LYNCH. The gentleman yields back. The chair now recognizes the gentlewoman from West Virginia, Mrs. Miller, for five minutes.

Mrs. MILLER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman and Ranking Member Meadows, and to all of you all for being here today.

Over the past year, we have met in this room to hold hearings on the census. Unfortunately, due to the aggressive partisan hearings that have dominated our attention, I feel like our duty to conduct oversight over the census has been severely lacking. We only have a month to do until our constituents will begin responding to this very, very important government program, and I truly hope that our efforts have been enough.

My district is a representation of how difficult the census can be to complete. Language is not an issue, but four of the 18 counties in my district have 100 percent of the population living in hard-to-count neighborhoods. I have spent the last year visiting every one of my 18 counties and I can tell you first-hand how very rural my community is.

It is critical that we count each and every one of our constituents, no matter how difficult it may be, and I thank you, Mr. Dillingham, and all of you for being here today to answer our questions and our concerns, and I think you are doing a very good job.

Mr. Dillingham, in rural areas what is the Census Bureau's plan to target those constituencies that are like mine?

Mr. DILLINGHAM. Congresswoman, we very much are engaged with trying to reach those rural communities, and we know that West Virginia has some particular challenges, particularly with connectivity is one of the major challenges.

Our partnership program is one that is very important, that we have partners all through every state. You have the Complete Count Committee. We have our partners. But we are trying to reach, in many different ways, and in administering the census we focus on the hard-to-count, with some of the new technologies that we have. When we have these mobile assistance that can go out into those communities and they will collect—help with the collection of the information, and we have the partners in those communities, like the American Library Association, et cetera.

So, I know that your community already has a lot of partners, but we will work with them and make sure that wherever they identify that need that we can respond to that need, and that is why when we have these mobile resource capabilities and we have a capability of monitoring, real-time, during the census, our roam tool, which will show, in each track, what the response rate is. And that will allow us to say, oh, in this particular track, within West Virginia, we need to devote more resources and we need to get there with our mobile assistance and help them with the census.

So, those are some of the ways, in addition to the communications campaign that we have, where we do by radio, by newsprint, and other ways to reach those populations, as well as the groups. There are many groups in the rural areas that we work with that have agricultural connections, or perhaps in West Virginia with mining communities and other activities and professions in West Virginia. We will work through those, and that is why business partners are also very important.

Mrs. MILLER. Ironically, yesterday I was dealing with an individual who can't get electricity to his home because you have to go through several properties, and then you have to go through a mining area. And I'm thinking, how do you count those people when they don't even have electricity? So, that is important.

Many of them have low mail-back response rates in 2010. Have you learned from those challenges a strategy for targeting those with households that have very, very low mail-back?

Mr. DILLINGHAM. Congresswoman, we do, and maybe our associate director will add some more detail. But we start out particularly looking at the last decennial census, and we identify those low-response areas. We also, as was mentioned earlier, we have the American Community Survey. That also details for us each year what the response rates are in those communities and what some of the challenges are. So, we use that data. We have a data-driven response to reach those hard-to-count people.

But let me ask our associate director if he has more to add on that.

Mr. FONTENOT. Congresswoman, one of the things that we do is increase the number of enumerators that are going to be working on the street in your community and non-response followup, because we know that historically you have had some low response rate areas, and therefore it says that means I need to put more people on the street there.

So, our efforts are to make sure we hire enough people from those communities to actually go around and knock on the doors and collect the data and non-response followup, which is the next phase.

The other thing that the director mentioned, and I had mentioned earlier too, was our Mobile Questionnaire Assistance, which is designed to enhance self-response by sending census people out early to go around and spend time with the local communities, helping them take their response on census instruments, or if they are in areas of connectivity, using the phone.

I do know the connectivity problems in your state. I spent time at Beckley when we were doing the test, and I spent a week there, wandering around, and lost connectivity many times. So, yes, we

are aware of those challenges, and we believe that putting people on the ground directly will counter some of those challenges.

Mrs. MILLER. I appreciate that. I have run out of time. Thank you. I yield back.

Mr. LYNCH. The gentlelady yields. The chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Michigan, Ms. Tlaib, for five minutes.

Ms. TLAIB. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We are all rightfully concerned about communities like mine that are at serious risk of being undercounted in the 2020 census. But something I am particularly concerned about is the lack of representation on the form of people who look like me.

Starting in 2015, a research effort spanned years under the previous Administration, led by the Office of Management and Budget, by community organizations like ACCESS and the Arab American Institute, and many others, which pushed to add the new category to the 2020 survey called Middle Eastern/North African, or what we call MENA.

In 2015, Director, the category went into the field for testing, and based on the findings the Census Bureau recommended the inclusion of the MENA category in the 2020 census. Despite these findings, however, the Census Bureau announced, under the current Administration, that MENA category would not be included in the census.

Dr. Dillingham, do I look white to you?

Mr. DILLINGHAM. Congresswoman, I think that if you tell me what you identify with I think I would respect that.

Ms. TLAIB. Sure. So, Director, are you aware that people like me who are Arab, Middle Eastern, North African, have to indicate that they are white on the U.S. census?

Mr. DILLINGHAM. Congresswoman, we actually have on the—and I understand, you know, that there was a process in deciding, certainly before I got to the census, and there is a history to coming up with the questions and the race and the ethnicity categories, and the OMB—

Ms. TLAIB. No, they ignored it.

Mr. DILLINGHAM [continuing]. But—

Ms. TLAIB. Doctor, before you—but they ignored it. The previous Administration decided to put MENA on the form. They ignored it. But do you think if I circled white category, that would be an accurate depiction of my racial and ethnic background?

Mr. DILLINGHAM. Congresswoman, we do not second-guess what you put down.

Ms. TLAIB. OK. Well, then—

Mr. DILLINGHAM. And we have a write-in. We do have a write-in—

Ms. TLAIB. Director, you are not giving me an option, because let me tell you, there is a reason why the recommendation happened, because would circling white on the census changed my lived experience as a person of color in our country? Right? Even saying that, you understand there is a difference when you actually have the check-off box.

Because the MENA community, like others, relies on accurate census representation for health research, Director, language assistance, civil rights laws, and reporting educational outcomes. In

addition, it would help address things like crime reporting, Director, helping minority business owners get loans, and drawing congressional and state legislative boundaries.

So, Director, do you believe it is important to better collect racial and race information from census participants of Middle Eastern and North African descent?

Mr. DILLINGHAM. Congresswoman, I—

Ms. TLAIB. You believe that, though.

Mr. DILLINGHAM [continuing]. I can say that by having the write-in provision, that is the option—

Ms. TLAIB. Sir, it doesn't have the same impact, and you know that. You know that. That is why the community pushed to add the category of MENA, and they did it right. They went through the process, and they got it approved. And this Administration decided to ignore them and to make them invisible again, right? That is what you are doing. You are making us invisible. No, the continued absences of this ethnic category contributes to erasing us, our living, working—we all live and work and raise our families here.

I truly believe this issue needs to be addressed, and we need your leadership to push back against this current Administration's lack of wanting to see people like me being represented on an official government Federal form, that decides around funding, decides how they are going to treat us, how they are going to approach health research, language assistance, all those kinds of things.

I mean, you know, Director, we need to get it right because I am not white. I am not. And I don't, you know, try to say to other that you should be this or that. But when I sit on this form and I look at it, I don't see myself represented on this form. And I think that is a huge issue for people like me. And I need you to do more in pushing back against this current Administration, ignoring what the previous Administration was able to do, and the U.S. Census Bureau decided to add MENA and they ignored it.

Mr. DILLINGHAM. Congresswoman, I can assure you that we continue to study race and ethnicity, and the options for self-reporting that.

Ms. TLAIB. Director—

Mr. DILLINGHAM. And let me just—

Ms. TLAIB [continuing]. I know—

Mr. DILLINGHAM [continuing]. Let me just say that—

Ms. TLAIB [continuing]. But we have been studied—

Mr. DILLINGHAM [continuing]. We want your views. We want your views and we are beginning the process of looking at the 2030 census, and we—

Ms. TLAIB. It is too late. It is too late, because for 10 years we will be invisible, to health research, to a number of things, small business loans. We will be invisible for another decade in our country, and I think it is wrong. And it was wrong to ignore the efforts of not only the Office of Management and Budget but organizations like ACCESS, AAI, and others who followed the process, did what they needed to do, get public input, to making sure that they are seen finally by their own Federal Government.

Thank you. I yield.

Mr. LYNCH. The gentlewoman yields. The chair now recognizes the ranking member, Mr. Meadows, for five minutes.

Mr. MEADOWS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Dillingham, let me—I want to do a little bit of clean-up, if I can. Congresswoman Debbie Wasserman Schultz was asking about documents and timeframes. Here is what I am requesting of you. We need to know who is in charge of finally releasing the information. We need to know a reasonable timeframe on when her request can be given. And I need you to get that to this committee this week. Are you willing to do that?

Mr. DILLINGHAM. Congressman, I certainly will do everything I can.

Mr. MEADOWS. I——

Mr. DILLINGHAM. And certainly I will do everything I can——

Mr. MEADOWS. So, let me interrupt you. That was a softball question.

Mr. DILLINGHAM. I understand, Congressman. We will get back with an answer.

Mr. MEADOWS. That is not—listen, this is not my first rodeo, and I get this from the previous Administration, and I am getting it from—I need it this week.

Mr. DILLINGHAM. Yes.

Mr. MEADOWS. Are you willing to do that? You have got people behind you. Turn around and ask them right now, because we are going to wait until you give me an answer.

Mr. DILLINGHAM. Uh——

Mr. MEADOWS. Turn around and ask them. If not, don't bring them here.

[Pause.]

Mr. DILLINGHAM. Congressman, I think I got a firm yes for you.

[Laughter.]

Mr. MEADOWS. Thank you.

Mr. DILLINGHAM. And for the Congresswoman as well.

Mr. MEADOWS. OK. Thank you. I appreciate it.

Listen, this is—because it comes across as if you are trying to hide information.

Mr. DILLINGHAM. No, absolutely.

Mr. MEADOWS. It shouldn't be this hard. It should not be this hard. Just basic respect for Members of Congress. Each one of them represents 727,514 Americans. Just on that basis, you should give the decency and the respect to the Members of Congress who are sitting here, who have been elected by their constituents. Give them the information that they are owed, that they deserve.

That is all. I yield back.

Mr. DILLINGHAM. Congressman, I agree with both of you on this. I can just—just by way of explanation, that, you know, we try to recruit as many partners as we can, and sometimes when we are putting the list together, especially in the early stages, some did not give us permission to use. And so we need to remedy that, and I think we have the remedy, is what I just heard. We may have the remedy.

Mr. MEADOWS. Yes, even if you have got five or six people that says there are others here, Ms. Wasserman Schultz understands that sometimes, because of privacy. I just think that you can respond and answer her question. You and I have talked. I know that

you are not trying to hide anything, but it was coming across that way. And so—

Mr. DILLINGHAM. I appreciate it.

Mr. MEADOWS. So, the other thing that I would ask each of you is—I probably have been to more census hearings than any other Member of Congress. It was not on my bucket list, I promise you. And there are going to be some problems. There are going to be some major problems. And here is what I am asking you, Dr. Dillingham, and Dr. Fontenot, if you would, is if there is a major problem I don't want to read about it in the Washington Post or the New York Times. If you would get with the chairman and let us know, even if it has to be discreet. If you are seeing a problem, we want to know about the problem right away. Are you both willing to do that?

Mr. DILLINGHAM. Congressman, we are, and in fact I think we have every opportunity. We brief your staffs on a regular basis. We brief all the caucuses that were mentioned earlier, and we are a very transparent organization, and that is the way we do our business.

Mr. MEADOWS. And I guess what I am saying is, when the problem comes up I don't want to hear about it from GAO that we have got the—but go ahead. I saw you raising your hand.

Mr. MIHM. Mr. Meadows, as you know the strategy that we have in place, the controller general has directed us to make sure that—some of them are sitting behind us—we have a strike team that is going to, if we see localized problems, because that is where it is going to be, localized, we are going to be able to get in there right away and then obviously report back to the Congress.

Mr. MEADOWS. Thank you, and thank your entire teams. Both of you have got teams. Listen, with your predecessor, Mr. Thompson, I actually had a number of meetings and was really concerned, in terms of progress. We were working with GAO and others. And we are in a much better place today than we were even a year ago, and certainly than we were three years ago. At the same time, because it is new technology and new methods of collecting this data, we want to make sure that we have an accurate—not only an accurate count but one that is credible, that will withstand scrutiny.

So, if you see areas, that you have got areas of concern, if you would please let us know, that would be very helpful.

The other thing that I want to come back to is in terms of the multiple ping-pong of non-responses. When we send out letters, a lot of times those letters are going to places that, honestly, are not deliverable, and we don't get those back from the post offices until long after the response.

So, if you can look at areas on the non-responses with our community partners—Native American lands, minority communities, rural communities—if you can look at those and how we can make sure—and I know you are. But what I guess is over the next 60 days double down on that as we start this process in earnest, I would greatly appreciate it.

I see you are nodding, so for the record I guess we are all in agreement. Is that correct?

All right. I yield back. I thank you.

Mr. LYNCH. The gentleman yields. The chair now recognizes the gentlewoman from California, Ms. Porter, for five minutes.

Ms. PORTER. Hello. I want to ask you about an example of census disinformation that is already spreading, not on social media but through the postal mail. Individuals across the country, including in Michigan, California, Alabama, and other places, have reported receiving a questionnaire in the mail titled "2020 congressional District Census." But this questionnaire is not from the Census Bureau. It is not the census. It is a fundraising mailer from the Republican National Committee.

I have a copy of this mailer here, Madam Chairwoman, and I would like to enter the copy into the record.

Mr. LYNCH. Without objection.

[The information referred to follows:]

Ms. PORTER. Thank you. This questionnaire is labeled as, quote, "a census document that was requested by President Trump." The document asks individuals to return it within seven days to ensure accurate tabulation and dependable results, and it says, quote, "Enclosed is your official congressional district census," and people are given a registration code that is specific to them, a several-digit number, not unlike—an alphanumeric number—not unlike what they are going to be getting to then go online to complete the census.

This is not the first time that we have seen the RNC, the Republican National Committee, try to confuse voters by sending them a mailer that imitates the census. They did the same thing in 2010, prompting Congress to pass a law, sponsored by Chairwoman Maloney, trying to stamp out this conduct. But here we are, 10 years later, and the RNC is at it again.

Dr. Dillingham, are you familiar with this RNC mailer?

Mr. DILLINGHAM. I have heard generally about the problem.

Ms. PORTER. Have you seen it?

Mr. DILLINGHAM. No, I have not seen it.

Ms. PORTER. We have sent it to the Census, to the Postal Bureau for investigation. Will you please commit to reviewing this?

Mr. DILLINGHAM. We will be glad to review it.

Ms. PORTER. I am asking you personally. Will you commit to reviewing this?

Mr. DILLINGHAM. I certainly will.

Ms. PORTER. Thank you. Have you asked the RNC to cease and desist from using the term "2020 census" or "official census" in its mailings?

Mr. DILLINGHAM. Congresswoman, I would have to look and see. I am not sure who sent that out, and—

Ms. PORTER. I am.

Mr. DILLINGHAM. OK.

Ms. PORTER. Because I have reading glasses. I am sure you are going to be able to see this. Way down here, on page two, in this little-bitty box, in about, I would say, four to six point font, it says, "Paid for by the Republican National Committee."

Will you ask the RNC to stop using the terms "2020 census," "official census" and a registration census code?

Mr. DILLINGHAM. We will study this problem, and let me tell you what we do for avoiding any type of scam or misrepresentation.

Ms. PORTER. No. I would love to ask you more generally about this, but I am concerned about this, and this mailing has already gone out. So, the time to stop it was actually before it happened. And when the first reports came into your office—we know Californians have called the RNC. Someone's parent got this, an elderly parent. The adult child called the RNC, asked them to stop sending these things to their parent, and the RNC, which I realize you are not responsible for, but the RNC told them, quote, "This was an order by Donald Trump to send out to people and they must comply with us."

The census is already facing so many problems with disinformation. This fake census from the RNC will only serve to increase confusion and distrust, and I call on you to do everything you can to actually combat this document. These were beginning to be mailed back in early 2019, so this has been an issue for over a year now. And we should all, regardless of party, avoid politicizing the census. Do you agree?

Mr. DILLINGHAM. I agree we should not confuse any mailings like that with the census, absolutely.

Ms. PORTER. OK. What actions is your team taking to prevent fraudsters from capitalizing on the census?

Mr. DILLINGHAM. Sure. We do have, on our website, we have ways for people to report this, for avoiding scams and fraud. We remind that the don't ever give your Social Security number, don't give donations, don't do anything on behalf of a political party with anything to do with the census, don't use your credit cards, et cetera.

So, we put out advice and then we also try to make sure that we dominate any communication with more accurate advice, as well as reporting it.

Ms. PORTER. Mr. Dillingham, I have a question about this, because I am glad that you have this correct information on your page. Do you track census scams over time, and will you share that information with this committee as well as with other partners and stakeholders so that they know what is being circulated that is false, so that when people bring in—what system do you have to accurately encourage people to self-report, and will you share with us what is being self-reported? Because I am requesting. I want to know how many Americans contacted the Census Bureau to complain about this form. Will you provide me with that number, please?

Mr. DILLINGHAM. We have that information. We will get those totals to you.

Ms. PORTER. Thank you so much. I yield back.

Mr. LYNCH. The gentlelady yields. I now recognize myself for five minutes.

Mr. Marinos, you are the Director of Information Technology and Cybersecurity. Is that correct?

Mr. MARINOS. Yes, sir.

Mr. LYNCH. I noticed, from the GAO report, a couple of things. One is they are saying that this will be the first census where the internet shall be the preferred mode of communication and participation, and yet further down on the report it says that we still

have significant problems with cybersecurity within the census system. Is that correct?

Mr. MARINOS. Yes. More generally, I think, what we are concerned about is that we have a census that is going to be relying on technology, including internet response, at a time when cyber threats are very high.

Mr. LYNCH. Right. So, let me ask you, so the other hat I wear, on another committee, is actually on Fintech, and we look a lot at blockchain applications. Is this the type of system—and I know that blockchain is used extensively on data bases and registries in other countries—is this a type—are we looking at anything like that, where we can use a more secure system, a distributed system, one that is less vulnerable in terms of where the census is going?

Mr. MARINOS. With respect to the 2020 census, I am not aware that blockchain was explored as a possibility. It is entirely possible that in the lead-up to the next decennial that may be an option for the Bureau to consider.

Mr. LYNCH. Well, I mean, this is an every-10-year process, so you would think that the time to start, right, would be now.

Mr. MARINOS. Yes. In fact, you know, in reality, the internet response capability was earlier tested, I mean, and considered in the early part of this decade as well. So, in reality, the Bureau is already pursuing and making plans for 2030, and GAO itself will turn its eyes in that direction as well, to see what sort of planning is taking place within the next year.

Mr. LYNCH. Yes. I know there are, at least today, some privacy issues, because the blockchain is, you know, it is transparent, it is public, but I also know that there are permissioned blockchains where trusted parties have access and that encryption allows us to, you know, use pseudonymous or anonymous representations. But given the uses that we are applying the census data to, you know, for Federal funding, number of congressional seats, that is all data that gives people in the country an actual identity.

And there is a lot at stake here and I just hope that, you know, in your position you might be the person to drive that process, to actually begin—I mean, obviously we can order a study. We can order the census to undertake a review of blockchain viability within the census. I am sure my colleagues and I could put something together, on both sides of the aisle. But it would be prudent, I think, to take the initiative on your part to explore some of these possibilities.

Mr. MARINOS. Yes, sir. There are essentially two things that GAO is doing right now. One, we are monitoring, as you see from our report issued today, on what is taking place right now in the preparation for the 2020 census. Having said that, at your initiative we are looking at issues like privacy. We are looking at the extent to which the Bureau is anticipating, once it collects the information, how it is going to protect it. And it is entirely up to the Congress to certainly ask us to look at issues like exploring what are possible technologies that could be explored for the future, for 2030 as well, and we would be happy to entertain that.

Mr. LYNCH. Thank you. I mean, it is tamper-proof. It has been proven to be tamper-proof, and there is an immutability aspect to it that is very strong. I do realize that there are some weaknesses

on privacy right now, although there are a lot of really smart people working on that issue. We have got some scalability issues. But the fact that this is, you know, this is a decennial census, it would appear to be something that would lend itself to that type of process. I know some other countries are looking at that as well.

My time has almost expired. The chair now—I will yield and the chair right now recognizes the gentleman from Missouri, Mr. Clay, for five minutes.

Mr. CLAY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank all of the witnesses for being here.

Director Dillingham, good to see you again.

Mr. DILLINGHAM. Nice to see you, sir.

Mr. CLAY. The black community is historically undercounted. In the 2020 census, black communities were undercounted by 2.1 percent, or roughly 778,000 people. It is crucial that the Bureau now work to address the historic issue of fully and accurately counting the black community. During our hearing last month, Marc Morial, CEO of the National Urban League, testified, and I quote, “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, and notwithstanding the paper form.”

That number is much higher than the national average of approximately 45 percent. So, Dr. Dillingham, how has the Bureau adapted to outreach and enumeration plans to address the black community specifically?

Mr. DILLINGHAM. Congressman Clay, it is very important that we reach the black community, as with all communities, but certainly there are more challenges sometimes with a minority community, and particularly the black community. We appreciate the work that the Urban League and others are doing to assist us. They are our partners in this effort.

And so as I began with my opening statement, we never underestimate the potential assistance that we can get from our partners across the Nation, and particularly from those groups that are working most closely with the black community, and we also need the leadership in the black community as the trusted voices to encourage everyone to make sure they are replying to the census.

Now we have a lot of new reach-out activities. We discussed earlier some of the new technologies that we can take into the hard-to-count communities. Those were where the low-response rates are lower, and to help reach those individuals as never before.

Nevertheless, it is important that they have the trust, and that they are motivated and engaged, so we do have, as the associate director mentioned in a previous answer to another, we courage the faith-based community. We encourage all the communities to help us with that, to make sure they are motivated, make sure they get the messaging. With our communications campaign we have special commercials to reach those communities. And so we are really using a variety of ways.

But let me ask our associate director if he has—

Mr. CLAY. Yes, but let me say this before you respond. It is going to fall on the Bureau. It is going to fall on enumerators, actually, getting out there and knocking on those doors, because you all

know what the response rate is going to be, and that is when you all are key to the followup.

And Mr. Mihm, I see you want to say—go ahead.

Mr. FONTENOT. Congressman, one of the things we do is model those communities where we expect lower response rates, to determine whether we need a larger number of enumerators. And in that case we are planning larger numbers of enumerators in those tracks that have low response rate, and especially in some of the black communities where we are planning larger numbers of enumerators, who are hired from within that community, who know that community, to go out and then take the count. But we are depending very heavily on our partners in the community to help us raise the trust level.

Mr. CLAY. But Mr. Marinos also said that your outreach should be culturally appropriate, and so how do we address that?

Mr. FONTENOT. Our outreach becomes culturally appropriate because designed with our partners, with the Urban League, with the NAACP, working with them, with our partnership staff who is from that community, who understands the community, and with churches.

Mr. CLAY. Including media outreach?

Mr. FONTENOT. Including media outreach.

Mr. CLAY. Black weeklies? Radio?

Mr. FONTENOT. We have an advertising agency that is a black advertising agency, that is a partner with Y&R, who worked to design a lot of the media campaign to reach out to the black community.

Mr. CLAY. OK. I am seeing my time is up, but thank you, Mr. Chair.

Mr. LYNCH. The gentleman yields. The chair now recognizes the gentleman from Pennsylvania, Mr. Keller, for five minutes.

Mr. KELLER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you to the panel for being here today. The census is very important to everyone, and I just want to make note that now that the impeachment sideshow has ended and Speaker Pelosi finally thinks the census should be an issue of focus, I am glad to see we are starting to address some of the potential problems with the census.

Ensuring an accurate count is essential, particularly for rural districts like PA 12, the one I represent, who receive a lower return on Federal tax dollars invested to the tune of \$2,000 per person not counted.

As of the beginning of February, over 2 million people had completed an assessment to become an enumerator in the 2020 census, which is approaching the target or 2.6 million interested candidates by next month. In order to reach the end goal of hiring 500,000 people as enumerators, I understand the Census Bureau is conducting a recruitment campaign to ensure an adequate work force.

Mr. Dillingham, can you speak to some of the challenges you have been seeing throughout this recruitment process and if there are any strategies the Census Bureau could implement quickly to address those before mailings go out and the process officially gets underway?

Mr. DILLINGHAM. Absolutely, Congressman, and we appreciate the circumstance in Pennsylvania, and Philadelphia is actually our regional headquarters, and so there is a lot of attention with Pennsylvania.

But it is very important that we have the people on board. We had some previous discussions here today that we are going to meet our goal. We are going to surpass our goal. We will meet our goal, and that was the hardest-case scenario of the 2.67 that we needed, and we are going to meet that in the first week of March.

And the numbers, by and large, you asked what the challenges are, and I will—I think everyone understands that unemployment is low. So, that was a challenge. And so we have recruited—we have alumni that come back every 10 years that love to do this, but we have recruited in the university setting. There are 20 million university students out there with student loans and needing money. So, we have made a very concerted effort. We have more than 6,000 partners in the higher education field, and we spread the word in so many different ways. And our recruiters, right now we have 4,500 recruiters that are recruiting people.

So, that is why we are making our goals. We are on the course, and if we—we are over our goal if you look at the response rate of what we predict. But if the worst-case scenario, we certainly need more, and we are not going to stop recruiting all through the decennial census. Until we get the count, we are going to continue to recruit, so we will far surpass our goal.

Mr. KELLER. OK. Are you seeing challenges specific to recruiting enumerators in rural parts of the country, and if so, what ways can we, as Congress, be helping to improve recruitment and give you the tools you need?

Mr. DILLINGHAM. Congressman, exactly. Rural areas and other areas, particularly, I could say generalize in much of the Northeast, in some of the smaller states, we have encountered that. And one of the ways we do it is we have continuously reevaluated the pay rates. So, we have raised, even very recently, I think this week, we increased the pay rates for these people in certain jurisdictions based on what we are seeing, and the needs.

But let me ask Associate Director Fontenot if he wants to add.

Mr. FONTENOT. Congressman, our labor economists work to look at the dynamics by county in areas that we are having difficulty recruiting. Some of those dynamics include the unemployment rate, the type of work in that county, the prevailing wage rate in that county, and we have been adjusting wages up where we have needed to, to reach more people.

In terms of what you as a trusted voice in your community as a Congressman and your local staff can do to assist us is emphasize people responding to our recruitment advertising. That is primarily. If it is in a blog that you are putting out, if it is something that your staff can do to emphasize, step up and respond to census at 2020census.gov/jobs, and get people engaged in applying, that would help us significantly.

But our people will work—our recruiting staff will be working with your district staff on any particular tracks or areas in your district that we are having difficulty recruiting.

Mr. KELLER. OK. I appreciate that. Thank you very much. I yield back.

Mr. SARBANES.

[Presiding.] The chair recognizes Ms. Ocasio-Cortez of New York.

Ms. OCASIO-CORTEZ. Thank you, Mr. Chair. I would be remiss if we didn't remind the committee overall that this is not our first census hearing, but we have been at this work for quite some time. Yet if it is a given member's first time showing up to a census hearing, I welcome them.

The Trump administration spent more than two years trying to add a citizenship question to the 2020 census, which, one, a Republican operative and gerrymandering expert said would be, quote, "advantageous to Republicans and non-Hispanic whites."

Last year, in July, however, the Supreme Court ruled that the attempt to add the question was unlawful, and that the reason given to Congress and the American people was, quote, "contrived," and, quote, "incongruent with what the record reveals."

I fear that the damage has already been done. A study of Latino attitudes toward the census by NALEO found that 83 percent of undocumented persons and 74 percent of citizens worried that the Trump administration will use census information against immigrants.

So, Mr. Dillingham, I want to get a few straight answers right now. I hope that they are relatively straightforward and would appreciate it if you could answer this with a simple yes or no.

The first, the 2020 census will not ask about citizenship or immigration status. Correct?

Mr. DILLINGHAM. That is absolutely—yes.

Ms. OCASIO-CORTEZ. Thank you. The census data will not be used in immigration enforcement. Correct?

Mr. DILLINGHAM. Yes.

Ms. OCASIO-CORTEZ. Thank you. The census data will not be released to the Department of Homeland Security. Correct?

Mr. DILLINGHAM. Yes.

Ms. OCASIO-CORTEZ. And as we know, releasing census data to DHS would be a crime punishable by up to five years in prison or \$250,000. Correct?

Mr. DILLINGHAM. Yes.

Ms. OCASIO-CORTEZ. And can you pledge today that immigrants can trust the Census Bureau to keep their data confidential so that they can participate in the census without fear?

Mr. DILLINGHAM. If I understood your question, it was whether or not I could convince or share with—

Ms. OCASIO-CORTEZ. That you can pledge today—

Mr. DILLINGHAM. Pledge today. Absolutely, Congresswoman, and I would like every member of this committee and every Member of Congress and every elected leader, every appointed leader, and every leader in every community to communicate that same message. It is apolitical, the census. It is bipartisan, and we need everyone's support.

Ms. OCASIO-CORTEZ. Thank you, and I appreciate you saying that. However, we do know that that message is not quite getting out to the country. Arturo Vargas, the CEO of NALEO, testified before the committee on January 9. He said, quote, "Many Latinos

are resistant to participate in the census because they believe, after years of coverage, that there will be a question on the form, despite its absence.”

And Vargas also continued to say that “we have observed that the Bureau has been instructed not to discuss that question,” the citizenship question. Is that correct?

Mr. DILLINGHAM. That is not correct, to the best of my knowledge.

Ms. OCASIO-CORTEZ. OK. OK, great.

Mr. DILLINGHAM. As a matter of fact, I discuss it. Other people discuss it. Whenever it comes up, we have total freedom to discuss it.

Ms. OCASIO-CORTEZ. OK, great. So, it is your testimony that the Bureau and employees of the Bureau have not been instructed—so your testimony is that that is not true, that—

Mr. DILLINGHAM. I am not aware of anyone being instructed. Now if—

Ms. OCASIO-CORTEZ. Not to discuss the citizenship question.

Mr. DILLINGHAM. Not to discuss. Now let me just say this.

Ms. OCASIO-CORTEZ. OK.

Mr. DILLINGHAM. This is a possibility, and I don’t know of any factual basis for that. We do—our research indicates that we promote the benefits of the census, and so we don’t go back and repeat something that may be perceived as being negative. We talk about the positives.

Ms. OCASIO-CORTEZ. I see. So, is the—but I think the question here, to dig a little deeper, will the Bureau advise the public clearly and decisively, specifically, that there is no citizenship question on the census?

Mr. DILLINGHAM. Well, it has certainly been the case whenever I have been asked, or anyone with the Census Bureau has been asked, that is an absolutely accurate answer that we give, that it is not on there. In our advertising—now I cannot speak to the methodology of the NALEO research, and I am generally aware of some of the publicity with it, and they are our partner, and we support them in what they are doing with the Latino community and others.

But we do our research with a very broad scientific survey of 50,000, focus groups of more than 120, we found that people were more interested in knowing the benefits. And so that is what we emphasize.

Ms. OCASIO-CORTEZ. Thank you. And just with my last question, to clarify, if someone knocks on my door in the Bronx, how can a person confirm that this person is, in fact, from the census?

Mr. DILLINGHAM. Congressman, we have been to your district in the Bronx. We didn’t meet with you on that particular occasion but we drove through, and by Queens College, et cetera, in that area, and we saw some of the apartment housing, et cetera, and some of the public housing or authority-controlled housing. And we understand how important it is that they recognize when this is an official census person coming.

So, we will have indicia. We will publicize it. We will have badges. The case we cover will have the U.S. Census Bureau on it. And so we have those ways, and we will also communicate with

whoever is in charge of that complex, et cetera, that this is why we are here and this is what we are doing. And we have found that when we do that, when enter—for example, I was told by our partnership specialist, when we enter a hall word goes down through that hall immediately in that complex, that, oh, these people are here and this is what they are doing.

So, we will work with those communities in every way we can to make sure they know that we have a legitimate purpose, and it is a purpose that we hope that they will support and has benefit to them.

And I want to thank you also for working with some of the outstanding leadership in the state of New York that everyone knows, in promoting the value of the census.

Ms. OCASIO-CORTEZ. Thank you very much.

Mr. LYNCH.

[Presiding.] Does the gentlelady yield?

Ms. OCASIO-CORTEZ. Yes.

Mr. LYNCH. The gentlewoman yields. The chair now recognizes the gentlewoman from Michigan, Mrs. Lawrence, for five minutes.

Mrs. LAWRENCE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Dr. Dillingham, you have been to Detroit. Thank you for physically coming. Detroit, however, is a city notoriously undercounted in past census years. My district includes a significant minority population who speaks dozens of languages. So, it is critical that the Census Bureau take aggressive action to ensure the hard-to-reach populations are prioritized in your preparation.

As you know, the Mobile Questionnaire Assistance operation is meant to improve participation in the 2020 census by establishing a visible Census Bureau presence in areas with low-response areas, and providing the public with a way to immediately answer the census in these locations. With this being said, that was a commitment that I received from you, but I am concerned that this operation will be understaffed and simply inadequate to serve the millions of Americans who may need it.

In 2010, the Census Bureau spent \$35 million on questionnaire assistance and deployed more than 31,000 staff members to nearly 39,000 locations. However, in Fiscal Year 2020, Congress gave the census \$1.4 billion more than the President requested and Congress has directed the census to spend a minimum of \$90 million on this operation.

Last Friday, however, the census informed this committee that you have only obligated \$7 million to date and that it plays to deploy only 4,000 staff.

Director, I am concerned that your proposed staffing level and infrastructure for the Mobile Questionnaire is insufficient to ensure cost-effective use of funds. Can you give me a commitment today to revisit the following: (1) the planned number of census response representatives, and (2) your decision not to include Questionnaire Assistance Centers at accessible fixed locations and hours for the period of time?

Mr. DILLINGHAM. I certainly will, Congresswoman, and I appreciate the visits to Detroit and those hard-to-count areas, the eight wards of Detroit. And we went to those areas and we saw the locations where we could use the Mobile Assistance, where they can go

into the community centers. As I recall, each ward had plans for a community center. We visited one, but they have centers there. And we also went to donut shops, for example, in Detroit, and we saw where the homeless would congregate, and we said that is where we can take the technology directly to those location and help to count those people.

Mrs. LAWRENCE. So, are we going to do that? Are we going to do it?

Mr. DILLINGHAM. We are going to do that, and I want to commend the city of Detroit and the partners, the occasion, when we visited the law school, et cetera, those people were very committed. And when they took us around early on a Sunday morning, we saw those locations, and that is what we intend to do.

Now you bring a question, and we will be glad to get back with you on the facts and figures. But it was unanimous among the professionals at the Census Bureau that the fixed locations, in this day and age, were not nearly as efficient or effective. As a matter of fact, we don't have the hard data, but some data we have indicates in some locations we had an average of 1 1/2 people visit a day. And to have a storefront location where only 1 1/2 persons come in a day is not being efficient and effective.

That is why there was agreement, and the Congress asked us, the appropriating committee in the House and the Senate said, "What can you do and what can you do better?" And we developed this plan which they decided to fund, from \$90 million, and we actually may spent \$117 million on it.

But is an additional more than 4,000 people who are our recruiters—

Mrs. LAWRENCE. So, if you are not going to invest into the brick-and-mortar—

Mr. DILLINGHAM. That is correct.

Mrs. LAWRENCE [continuing]. As was the plan, how do you reach? I mean, how do you give access to those people who say, "I can't figure out what you are talking about. Somebody needs to tell me," and you are not knocking on the door. How do you fix it?

Mr. DILLINGHAM. Well, what we do is through our partners, like the American Library Association—if they want to do it online they can to community centers, they can go to the library, they can go to the businesses that allow that, with the internet option. A lot of those people will not choose the internet option. That is correct.

Mrs. LAWRENCE. That is correct.

Mr. DILLINGHAM. So, then if they have a phone they can call.

Mrs. LAWRENCE. But Dr. Dillingham, we have a crisis—

Mr. DILLINGHAM. Yes.

Mrs. LAWRENCE [continuing]. In Detroit, where a lot of our local libraries are not open or functioning, or if they are it is only two or three days a week. So, how do you satisfy that need when you don't have a place on a regular, consistent schedule, for them to have access?

Mr. DILLINGHAM. Yes. Let me give you one example in Detroit, and working with the former chairman of this committee. They were interested, and the mayor was interested in a fixed location in Baltimore. But when we went around the people on the Complete Count Committee, and the people assisting, we identified 80

locations in the city of Baltimore, and that was a subset. There is going to be more than 80 locations where people can go, for example, if they want to use the internet.

But the phones, if they have a phone of any type—hard line, smart phone, or whatever—they can use the phones. In addition, we will have the paper, and then, as was pointed out by Congressman Clay, pointed out that perhaps in some communities you really rely ultimately, if we don't get the responses after five mailings, we rely on the enumerators and the people hired from those communities, and the partnership specialists from those community will help us to get a complete count in those communities.

Mrs. LAWRENCE. Mr. Dillingham, my time is up.

Mr. DILLINGHAM. Detroit is a very tough case, and we are going to work with you in every way we can.

Mrs. LAWRENCE. And I want you flexible to be able to revisit that.

Mr. DILLINGHAM. Yes.

Mrs. LAWRENCE. Thank you. I yield back.

Chairwoman MALONEY. [Presiding.] The gentleman from Maryland, Mr. Sarbanes, is recognized for five minutes.

Mr. SARBANES. Thank you, Madam Chair. The 2020 census is the largest and the most digitally advanced census that we have ever conducted. It is the first that will be done mostly online, as I understand, so obviously cybersecurity is going to have to be a top priority for you all.

There is a report today from the Government Accountability Office which raises serious concerns about whether the Census Bureau is up to that challenge. It says, quote, "The Bureau continues to face challenges related to addressing cybersecurity weaknesses, tracking, and resolving cybersecurity recommendations from the Department of Homeland Security and addressing numerous other cybersecurity concerns such as protecting the privacy of respondent data."

So, notwithstanding the commercial we saw at the front end, which showed that security obviously is going to be a key concern, we have some worries here. Mr. Marinos, can you elaborate on the cybersecurity challenges you identify in your report? And I guess I would just make the point that if ever there was a juicy target for those who want to hack in and cause mischief and sow discord and all the rest of it, it would be our 10-year census when we are putting it online in a way we have never done before. So, that has got to be, obviously, a high, high priority. So, could you speak to that please?

Mr. MARINOS. Certainly, Mr. Sarbanes. So, indeed, I think that is what is probably the most important thing to emphasize here. We are dealing with cyber threats on a constant basis against Federal agencies and the Census Bureau is no exception, with respect to that. The reality is in why GAO identified the census has a high-risk area in 2017 resides quite heavily on the innovations. So, the fact that we are looking to rely on the internet response option as one of the key ways for the public to be able to respond to the survey is what creates the risk, and specifically the cybersecurity risk.

Having said that, we have some encouraging news here. The Bureau is working with CISA, as we mentioned, the Department of

Homeland Security's cybersecurity experts, and has been doing that for actually over two years. CISA has been conducting assessments. CISA has been providing consultative advice to the Bureau, and has an agreement with the Bureau to provide operational support in the event that the Bureau starts to see some nefarious activity. So, that is a positive.

Mr. SARBANES. Yes. Let me jump in, because I guess the Census Bureau's own data was talking about these concerns, and last Friday the Bureau informed us that it had 924 unresolved security vulnerabilities, known as, quote, "plans of action and milestones," end quote, at the end of January. And those vulnerabilities included 151 that were, quote, "high risk," and 60 that the Census Bureau deemed, quote, "critical." And according to the Bureau itself, less than half of these will be fixed before Census Day, on April 1, 2020.

So, Dr. Dillingham, shouldn't all the critical and high-risk problems be fixed before April 1?

Mr. DILLINGHAM. Congressman, we certainly would hope that would happen. But let me explain, that the Census Bureau engages in a very sophisticated risk management process that began in the 1990's with guidance from GAO on how we do risk management. So, what we do is we identify all of our risk. They document some of these risks and they tell us when we are slipping on our schedule or where risk continues to exist. We have developed the plans for remedying the risk, and we get things off of that list every day, and more come on.

We have, as I mentioned earlier, more than 25,000 tests that we have to do with our IT system, and we have more than 27,000 tasks that we perform. And whenever we see that something is slipping schedule or whatever, we put it on our risk list, and then we work the risk list, and the majority of those are coming off the list. I think GAO commends us often about the progress we make. But the whole concept of risk management is to always be looking for a risk, and that risk can simply mean you are slipping schedule a little, and then you work the risk, and that is what we do.

So, we will never, in my opinion, not have a risk list. We will always have risk, and risk, by definition, means there is a possibility that something will happen, not that it has happened.

Mr. SARBANES. Well, I certainly appreciate that, you know, you can't guarantee that every risk is eliminated completely. That wouldn't make any sense. But I hope you are just throwing everything at this on the front end. And Mr. Marinos, do you have some confidence that the Bureau still has time to address the key challenges, the most obvious risks that you have identified in the GAO's recommendations, and get that done before Census Day?

Mr. MARINOS. Well, we are definitely encouraged, in particular, with respect to how the Bureau is approaching trying to take action on feedback it is getting from DHS.

I just want to clarify too, with respect to the issues that the Bureau itself identifies as a course of testing, the results of testing are the corrective actions, and so that is a positive. Having said that, we have been on record recommending to the Bureau that they do a better job to rack and stack, prioritize what are the most critical risks to them. They actually make those decisions because they are

the experts of their environment, and that is where we are continuing to uphold the fact that our recommendation is important to implement.

Mr. SARBANES. Thanks, and I yield back.

Chairwoman MALONEY. The gentleman yields back, and the gentlewoman from Massachusetts, Ms. Pressley, is recognized for five minutes.

Ms. PRESSLEY. Thank you, Madam Chair. First I just want to say I am grateful to your convening this important hearing and for your tireless work to defend the integrity of our census, in keeping with the leadership of our former chair, and I thank you, Mr. Dillingham, for bringing him into the space, Elijah Cummings.

I cannot overstate the importance of a successful and accurate census enough. We have been talking throughout today about hard-to-count districts. More than 60 percent of my constituents living in Suffolk County live in hard-to-count neighborhoods, more than 60 percent. So, critical to ensuring undercounts don't take place in the first place is making sure that we have the staff power recruited, hired up, trained, and ready to do the work.

Now I have heard, directly from constituents of mine, who are eager and enthusiastic to take on this task, but instead, being frank, have been given the runaround or have been left waiting to hear, for weeks on end, from the Census Bureau on the status of their applications.

So, today I would like to discuss the Census Bureau's recruiting and hiring efforts. I understand the Census Bureau is expected to hire up to half a million temporary workers to conduct the 2020 census, including enumerators who knock on doors to ensure everyone is counted. To do that, the Bureau set a goal of recruiting 2.6 million applicants, but again, according to the GAO report, the Census Bureau is far behind. The GAO says, quote, "The Bureau is behind in its recruiting of applicants for upcoming operations. If the Bureau does not recruit sufficient individuals it may have difficulty hiring enough staff to complete its upcoming operations within scheduled timeframes," unquote.

I know there is a reoccurring theme here. There is a reoccurring, repeat themes here because we have shared concerns, and we do want to be good-faith partners to each other in this endeavor. And as elected officials I don't get to just—we don't get to just speak to the what. We have to explain the how. And I don't believe we have gotten to that.

And so, Dr. Dillingham, you have known about this problem for weeks, outlined in the GAO report. Why is the Bureau so behind on this, with just weeks before the counts begin nationwide?

Mr. DILLINGHAM. Congressman, we appreciate your concern with this. We appreciate GAO pointing out that we did have a very ambitious goal, under the worst-case scenario, that we were trying to meet. We will meet the worst-case scenario in just a couple of weeks, by the first week in March, and most of those people will not be hired for many weeks later. So, we are on course. We have absolute confidence. There is no one at the Census Bureau worried about us not having recruits, overall, in the country.

Now what we do worry about, some areas—and I can certainly check Boston and areas of Massachusetts—there are areas that we

want to focus on. We have at least three applicants for every job that we are going to be hiring for, in every part of the country, but some we have four and five applicants. We want four, five, and I want six applicants for every job that we have available, because we have greater selectivity, we can choose the people from the communities, directly from those communities, and often with a set of language skills needed.

So, let me put our chart up here and show you where we are.

Ms. PRESSLEY. Oh no, I have seen that from earlier in your presentation.

Mr. DILLINGHAM. OK. And we have it in your materials.

Ms. PRESSLEY. And again, just to underscore not only the GAO report, which contradicts what you are offering.

Mr. DILLINGHAM. And their data is somewhat dated. I think they will admit that.

Ms. PRESSLEY. Again, it contradicts what you are offering, and it contradicts on-the-ground experience by the people that I represent.

In order to maintain the integrity of the census process then we have to have the recruiting process be one that is of integrity. And I have participated in job fairs in previous census, and have been a good-faith partner. I have already done census awareness events in my district. And, you know, those that are unemployed or underemployed and who want to be a part of this process, they have just been, you know, left out to dry, without any response, for a very long time.

So, I am glad that the Bureau has had a recent uptick in recruiting—

Mr. DILLINGHAM. Can I respond?

Ms. PRESSLEY [continuing]. But I want to show you a chart again, from today's GAO report. OK.

So, the red line shows the Census Bureau's goals for recruiting. The blue dotted line is your actual recruiting, which has been lagging behind since last September. As you can see, you still have not reached even your own internal goals.

So, Mr. Dillingham, what is causing the hiring delays at the Census Bureau? What can I tell my constituents—

Mr. DILLINGHAM. Congresswoman, we have reached our internal goals with respect to the anticipated response rate. The worst-case scenario response rate, we are on the verge of hitting within two weeks. Most of these people will not be hired, some for months, some for weeks. And you started out with people are concerned about not getting word about being hired yet. We are making the selections. In March we are going to be making final—

Ms. PRESSLEY. Well, just even acknowledging even receipt of application. But at the committee's last census hearing, Marc Morial, President and CEO of the National Urban League, said, "It is time to ring the alarm bell on the enumerator program. They are behind, and there is no strategy to catch up."

Mr. Dillingham, is Mr. Morial's concern a fair one? Yes or no?

Mr. DILLINGHAM. I will say this. He is our partner. We work with him. We respect him.

Ms. PRESSLEY. Yes or no?

Mr. DILLINGHAM. And let me say, some people look at a glass and say it is half empty. We say it is filling fast and will overflow. And so with Mr. Morial I would characterize it differently. Yes, I would.

Ms. PRESSLEY. Well, it is not just about meeting a single national recruiting target. Census workers are needed more in hard-to-count communities where many people will not fill out census forms until someone arrives at their door. Yet again, according to the GAO, 202 of the 248 area census offices fell short of their individual recruiting targets. I mean, all of this is about numbers.

Mr. DILLINGHAM. It is.

Ms. PRESSLEY. OK. And the numbers are telling the story. And it is—

Mr. DILLINGHAM. We think so. We also base our assessments on the numbers.

Ms. PRESSLEY. And it is a sobering one that stands to really devastatingly impact communities that are already under-resourced and underserved.

Mr. Dillingham, do you agree that staff shortages could have a bigger impact in hard-to-count communities? Or Mr. Fontenot, anyone who would like to weigh in here.

Mr. FONTENOT. Yes. We agree that staff shortages could have a big impact on hard-to-count communities, but I will emphasize that by the time we start making selections for hiring, we will have exceeded 2.7 million, 2.67 million applicants in our applicant pool.

The challenge that your constituents are having is they have signed for the census a month ago, two months ago, and we haven't hired anyone yet. Our plans ways to always begin selection for the non-response followup operation, which is our big operation, in March. It was on our website and it was on the application, of this is the order of when things happen. People missed that along the way.

Ms. PRESSLEY. OK. Well let me just—

Mr. FONTENOT. And I have had them come up to me, who know me, and say—

Ms. PRESSLEY. Well, Mr. Fontenot, I am so sorry.

Chairwoman MALONEY. This is the last question. The time has expired, but ask the question and he can answer. Ask it.

Ms. PRESSLEY. OK. All right. Well, I just want to say for three counties in the Massachusetts 7th which I represent, the Census Bureau still needs to recruit 11,000 applicants. So, just for the purposes of the record, and Rep. Ocasio-Cortez was doing the same thing, can you just clarify that none of this delay has anything to do with security concerns? There are people affiliated with the census who have told people that have applied that this is an exhaustive process because there needs to be extra screening and be mindful of people who would be coming to your door. And this has especially been told to those who have queries.

So, I just—could you, just for the record, just say that there are no discriminatory barriers to people applying, and then speak to what is a reasonable time to expect someone to get back, when someone has applied?

Mr. FONTENOT. Right now we are sending a letter to any applicant who has applied within two weeks of their application. They are getting some notification.

Ms. PRESSLEY. Right now?

Mr. FONTENOT. We have received your application, okay. But they will not be selected until our March timeframe for our primary operation, period, because the operation actually does not start until May. So, we are hiring people in advance of an operation and a training process. And so that is the one thing that I want to maintain clarity on, that there will be a gap of approximately 60 days between the time we start selection and the time people start actually working and being paid.

Chairwoman MALONEY. The gentlelady's time has expired. The gentleman from California, Vice Chair Gomez, is recognized for five minutes.

Mr. GOMEZ. Madam Chair, thank you so much for holding this important hearing. I want to thank all of you for being here.

I have been working on this issue for—since I got elected, and one of the things I have been concerned about is just outreach to minority communities, hard-to-count communities, especially like mine in California and downtown L.A. Some of the partner—the nonprofits that are doing some of that outreach through some of the state and Federal grants, they are reaching out to communities, and I have asked them questions about their programs. So, they are doing a lot of phone calls right now, doing some advertising.

And then they mentioned to me that the Census Bureau advised them not to have like door knockers when enumerators are out. Is that correct?

Mr. DILLINGHAM. Congressman, first of all let me say this, with your partners. You have the greatest number of partners than any Member of Congress. You are at almost 2,000 partners. And so I commend you greatly on that. Those partners make a very important difference. Also, you have probably the most difficult, hard-to-count community with the homeless. And when I was in L.A. and visiting your district, and visiting your office, and, in fact, both HUD as well as the City were trying to get some counts as to that population. And I went out and looked. We looked carefully at the populations and some of the challenges for counting them, that we are planning for.

But the—reaching the hard-to-count in your district, we are totally committed to doing it in any way. With regard to the specific, this is my understanding, is that there has been some discussion because California has more resources and is doing a count of its own, of a type, I guess with a corporation, a think tank that has been hired to help with the count. And I think that we have given advice that we don't want to mix the two together so that people are confused as to who is knocking on their door. Is the think tank-administered survey or is it the census? And as far as I know that is what the issue was and has been.

Mr. GOMEZ. Yes, and that makes sense, right?

Mr. DILLINGHAM. Yes.

Mr. GOMEZ. You don't want two people that folks—so you have one group say it is the official, nonprofit or community liaison

knocking on doors, saying, “Hey, have you filled out the census,” and then that person automatically thinks that they have filled, like they were counted, right, and then they don’t respond. That is real fear, correct?

Mr. DILLINGHAM. It is.

Mr. GOMEZ. Confusion by having too many people at the wrong time. And I agree with that.

But that leads me to some other things that are disturbing that is going on in California, right. There is a situation where we have some mailers, and somebody raised them before. Madam Chair, I ask unanimous consent to enter into the record a Republican GOP census doc, said “2020 Census, District Census Doc.”

Chairwoman MALONEY. Without objection.

Mr. GOMEZ. And they are mailing this out into California, right. Do you believe that this will cause confusion?

Mr. DILLINGHAM. Congressman, I got a copy of it before you came in to the hearing today and another Congresswoman from California shared this with me. And we don’t want any confusion whatsoever. So, we pledged that we would look at this, and I explained that we have sources on our website that if people feel they are being deceived in a way they can report it to us, and we will look into it. But also that we never request personal information. We never request funding. We never request Social Security numbers, credit cards, et cetera.

So, we need to get that positive message out.

Mr. GOMEZ. Yes. That is not my question. Here is the thing. If you are so concerned and you advised—you advised these non-profits, the state of California, these different groups, not to have door knockers—

Mr. DILLINGHAM. We didn’t advise them not to. We just advised our folks not to be confused with them.

Mr. GOMEZ. And why? Because you might end up actually suppressing the count itself. So, that is the point, right? You have a document that is going out that looks official, official, right. It could cause that same kind of confusion before the actual census forms get mailed out. And what I am saying is that we need more communication with whatever entity is out there. You know, if it is the Republican Party, they need to be pointed out that this will—can inadvertently suppress the count. So, I am not saying that it will, but it is possible. If you are concerned about having folks, other folks knocking on doors, this should be deeply concerning to the Census Bureau.

Is the Census Bureau going to do any outreach to these campaigns, to the political parties, to not have forms that look like the census? I know freedom of speech, freedom of political communication becomes very difficult, but is there any discussions of having those conversations with these entities?

Mr. DILLINGHAM. Congressman, to my knowledge we have not had those discussions with any political party or campaign. And as I indicated earlier, our primary response is to make sure people get accurate information that this is not part of the Census Bureau’s questionnaire or anything.

I do understand, and I am also the recipient of mail that is often disguised with headings, just to get you to open it and to begin

reading it. When I read this I would hope that anyone would realize this is not the census. But I understand that there are these operations that want to attract attention and get you to open the mail.

Mr. GOMEZ. Thank you. I am not surprised by these mailings. I have seen it before, different types. Often they do, you know, political campaigns do an envelope that says "Important tax information," or a bunch of silliness in order to win. But this is a bigger deal than I think that you realize. There should be a deeper concern.

I understand that they are going to make constitutional arguments, it's going to be limited, but sometimes a good public shaming helps to correct behavior. Well, let's hope.

Another question. In order to—I think I am over time now, but one of the things that I am interested in is how are we going to—there are some technical issues, or people are concerned about the online, filling out the form, the phone number. Is there any concern about overwhelming the system, or will the system be able to handle a massive flux of people trying to fill out the census questionnaire at the same time? I doubt it, because it is like—let's face it, people are not revving up to fill out the census. But what are your thoughts?

Mr. DILLINGHAM. Congressman, we do think about that, and the system has been designed to accommodate—to far exceed what our predictions are. So, that if we think we are going to be receiving the information from up to 200,000 at one time, we designed the system for 600,000-plus. And so far they have tested very well.

We recently made a decision with regard to our systems to make sure that we had the one that would present a better customer experience and could handle the volume a little better as our primary system for the internet self-response. And so we are mindful of that. And, you know, in the event it was to happen it could slow down the system, but we also remind people, we want them to get it in soon, but they have about four months. So, it is not that everyone is going to get on the system in one day, or even one week.

And so we do study that, we plan for it, and we—all indications are we are ready for it. But could it happen? I mean, I used to present hypotheticals. If it was football season and you got all the college teams playing football, and asked at halftime for everybody in the stadium, you probably could overwhelm the system. But I am not sure that is a realistic scenario.

Mr. GOMEZ. So, in political campaigns we see like there are trends, right. You can tell people turn in their ballot early or they turn in their ballot late. Traditionally it has been kind of this U shape. Now it is moving toward everybody toward the back, like toward the end. Like the closer to Election Day, people are holding on to their ballots, waiting longer.

Have you guys seen that, like how it works through the census? Is it a traditional, a lot of people answer right away and then it slows down and the picks up?

Mr. FONTENOT. From our 1918 test, when we began to look at what type of self-response we had, we had a big thrust early in the process, and then we had a renewed thrust after we knocked on the door the first time and left a notice of visit that said, "Hi. I am

going to be your census person. I am going to come back and visit. You weren't here." People then went and got online, and so we had another bump.

But our bump is at the beginning and then a little bump then, and then it tapers off from that point on.

Mr. GOMEZ. OK. Thank you, Madam Chair, for indulging me. I yield back.

Chairwoman MALONEY. I want to thank Jimmy Gomez for bringing up this deceptive mailer. I think it is outrageous. It looks like an official document. It says, "2020 congressional District Census," then it says, "Fill out your census document." And it is a campaign piece for the Republican National Committee, right? That is outrageous.

I think that—I want to know what your response is going to be to that, Dr. Dillingham. This is abuse. We have been writing all of the—Facebook and Twitter and every other social media, urging them to be careful about deceptive documents that could be put on the internet, that could be confusing to people on this constitutionally required effort to count everybody. And then you find out a congressional party is sending out deceptive information.

So, I found it outrageous. I am going to be reintroducing a bill that I put in in 2010, which I thought would stop this, but would make it a crime to be handing out and mailing deceptive information on the census. Here we are, supporting you, with all the funding you request for all the support you need to get an accurate count, and then you have other people, you know, in certain parties, undermining it. I think it is outrageous.

And I want to thank you, Mr. Gomez, and actually, I think we should have a hearing where you testify on how you got 3,000 community partners, because I think that is quite an impressive accomplishment. I would like to have that many, and I think every Member of Congress would. Congratulations to you.

And I believe our last speaker today is the gentlelady from New Mexico, Ms. Haaland, and she is recognized for five minutes.

Ms. HAALAND. Thank you, Madam Chair, and thank you all so much. Last but not least, I am so happy to be here representing the 1st District of New Mexico. But if you know New Mexico, I represent the entire state, because all of us do.

But thank you, Dr. Dillingham. My first question will go to you. I am so grateful that you are here and spending the time with us that we need in answering all the questions that we have had.

I know you know about New Mexico, because you have been there, but just reiterating that it is a vibrant, wonderful place, but we have challenges. We are 49th in the country in child well-being, and we have a greater uninsured rate than the national average. A proper census count will mean we can address these challenges head on.

And this is kind of a rhetorical question. I don't know expect you to know the answer to every district in the country, but I will say it so we can, you know, get it on the record. Do you know how much Federal money New Mexico will lose for every one percent undercounted?

Mr. DILLINGHAM. No, Congresswoman, but I am aware of different estimates in different states.

Ms. HAALAND. Sure. Sure. Of course. So, we figured it to be \$600 million over the decade. A two-percent undercount, like in 2000, these vital programs will again be shortchanged \$1.2 billion. That translates into less money for schools, programs that serve Hispanic, native, and communities of colors, less funding for roads, and so many other services. And, of course, we can't afford an undercount. So, I just wanted to get that out there.

Following on the line of questions from Congresswoman Pressley, I have been an organizer for a long time. It was mostly getting Native Americans out to vote. So, I know what it means for people to open the door and see someone who looks like them. And I would do that, clipboard in hand, ready to help the community, ready to get them to be active.

The Census Bureau has spoken repeatedly about wanting to hire local enumerators, and throughout New Mexico the Census Bureau is behind in its applicant goal, which appears to be even more drastic in Hispanic communities and Indian country. And those, I would say, largely are rural communities where the unemployment rate is higher. So, I almost feel like that would be a great place to find people. And I will just add that I have had a number of folks contact my district office and say they applied but never heard from anybody.

So, the Census Bureau has known that it is behind in hiring these folks, and I just want to hear again—I mean, tell us today how you intend to make sure that there are enough people out there to count, to make the counts that we absolutely need. And there again, districts—you know, communities in my state, we are tired of falling behind. We are tired of not getting the funding that we need and deserve for our kids.

So, just like help us to understand why we should believe that this is going to happen, that you are going to have the people to make these counts.

Mr. DILLINGHAM. Congresswoman, it is an excellent question, and we have had a very healthy debate here today, that the national figures are looking extremely good and we are on course and on track with the national figures.

But it is very important that we meet the needs of particular states and particular communities within those states. I did see tremendous progress when I was in New Mexico, and when I visited the Navajo Nation, I noticed we were hiring people from the Navajo Nation that would help with this as partnership specialists. I haven't looked at your numbers, but we will look at your numbers, and our region there will be looking at your numbers to make sure we have the staffing available.

If there are more recruitment efforts needed, we will make those efforts. We will advertise more. In other jurisdictions, and perhaps there, we can raise the pay rates in some instances, whatever it takes. And we need people from those communities, both for purposes of the enumeration—first of all, let me just say the enumeration, because of the Navajo language, quite frankly. And when I was visiting the Navajo Nation we went out and found someone on a road, unmarked road, who did not have connectivity, and that person did not speak English, only spoke Navajo, and we had a translator. So, we need those translation services.

And I saw where the cables were being run to some of the health centers, et cetera. Those need to be done, and we actually were there with the Interior Department saying that we hope that this gets done.

So, we are going to do everything we can, but the partnerships are so important. The hiring for our enumerators from those communities that know the languages is so important, for both Hispanic community and the American Indian community.

And I think my associate director would like to give some more particulars on New Mexico.

Mr. FONTENOT. Yes. Congresswoman, just last week we authorized spending \$2 million in local recruiting advertising for local areas that may be low or behind, that were low count. We are very sensitive to those specific needs, and that was part of our effort to encourage local advertising to encourage recruiting in low-count areas. So, that is a tangible example of what we are doing right now to get recruiting up in your area and in your state.

Ms. HAALAND. OK. Thank you.

Mr. DILLINGHAM. And Congresswoman, we will be mapping that in real time on the internet, that you and anyone else can check to see what the response rates are in those tracks in New Mexico, so we can focus the resources to those areas.

Ms. HAALAND. Right. And, I mean, while we are talking about languages, yes, there is a large Navajo population in New Mexico, but there are also other languages spoke as well—Keres, Tiwa, Tewa, and Towa. So, those are all—and although those languages aren't necessarily written, there is a need for translators in various areas to make sure that there is no language barrier with respect to getting the right answers that we need. So, I would just like to mention that.

My last question, I think—well, maybe not—but I wanted to followup on my colleague, Ms. Ocasio-Cortez, with the questions that she asked. And my office has been in touch with the Census Bureau. We have been told there is no part of your media plan directly addressing the citizenship question and undoing months of intimidation, because people are still afraid of that. Will you commit to directly confront and eliminate any confusion regarding the citizenship question, and that means spending money on ensuring that you are putting that out there so that people are not—don't continue to be intimidated by that?

Mr. DILLINGHAM. Congresswoman, we are, in fact, ensuring that everyone knows that, and certainly in our engagements with the communities. I will say that we have partners that are specifically promoting that avenue.

I will also say, though, that our research indicated, in working with the groups, that they really are looking for positive reasons to respond to the census, and that rather than enforce the negative, if there was some negative there about past concerns, that we enforce the positive. So, the direction of our communications campaign has been a very positive one.

Ms. HAALAND. Thank you. Chairwoman, thank you for allowing me to go over time. I yield.

Chairwoman MALONEY. Well, thank you, Ms. Haaland. You had a very important line of questioning and I would like to followup

on it. I think her line of questioning of how much would a state lose if you were undercounted one percent is really riveting, and when the number came back, \$600 million, estimated. I would like to ask for that for each state so that citizens that live there know what is at stake if they don't fill out their form. I can't think of a better way to do that. I would like to request that, if I could, Doctor.

Mr. DILLINGHAM. Congresswoman, we will share whatever information we have. We usually use the figure nationally of \$675 billion annually, that we are pretty confident in. There are, as you said, I think, in your opening statement, the \$1.5 trillion, some academics and researchers have developed.

Chairwoman MALONEY. But her question was if you were undercounted one percent, what specifically would it mean to that state.

Mr. DILLINGHAM. We can do it based on certain assumptions.

Chairwoman MALONEY. Yes, on assumptions. That would be great. I would love that.

And I want to respond to Katie Porter's line of questioning, and really Mr. Gomez's, on these false documents that were sent out by the Republican National Committee. I literally passed a bill in 2010, that said that it should be illegal to put out information disguised as the Census Bureau, and it literally passed. So, it is against the law to do that. I need to revisit it and add penalties and enforcement, because clearly people are violating that principle.

The census is one of the sacred things in our Constitution. It is one of the few responsibilities mentioned in the Constitution, and if our data is not correct, our policies aren't correct. So, it is critical to the private sector, to the public sector, to our states. And I would say, very importantly, that if you are not counted, you are not represented. So, we all need to work harder to make that happen.

I do want to revisit an exchange that was rather rare, a bipartisan exchange. This has been called one of the most partisan Congresses in history, but we had a strong bipartisan exchange between Ms. Wasserman Schultz and Mr. Meadows, in which they expressed the desire to get, from the Bureau, the community partners broken down by congressional districts. I think that is very important. I want to underline that the committee staff, the staff of this committee has been asking for that information also.

So, I want to ask again, Dr. Dillingham, when can we get that information? We all want to be like Jimmy Gomez, and the way to start is to know who the community partners are in our districts, so we can connect with them for a count, and try to find more.

Mr. DILLINGHAM. Congresswoman, late last night I was hoping that I could bring what would look like a large phone book with that list, but it had not gone through the clearance process. But I am informed today, at least during this hearing, that we can make that available.

Chairwoman MALONEY. That is great.

Mr. DILLINGHAM. As soon as it is made available we will deliver it to you.

Chairwoman MALONEY. Thank you, and we would like to get it out to every single Congressman.

And finally, I would like to close, first and foremost, by thanking each and every one of you for your public service, for your dedication to working for our country, and I would like to close where we began, with the GAO finding that the Census Bureau, quote, “faces significant risks that could adversely impact the cost, quality, schedule, and security of the count,” end quote.

I can see that, Dr. Dillingham, you and your team and the rest of the Census Bureau are really working very hard. They are working hard in New York. I have met with them. They are dedicated. But the GAO report shows that there are simply too many gaps—too many gaps, red flags that are out there in hiring, in the partnerships, in technology testing, and in cybersecurity. And we have to respond to these red flags that have been thrown up by GAO. And if these gaps are not filled, it is our most vulnerable, our most vulnerable citizens who will suffer, including children, low-income communities, rural communities, and minority communities. They will result in an undercount. They won’t get the services they need or the representation. They will lose representation and they will lose funding for critical services like schools and health care.

So, I urge you to do absolutely everything you can in your power to ensure that every person, every community is counted, as required by our great Constitution.

And I would like to close with really information that I have to put out about how much time people can make changes. Everybody has five days to add to their testimony and make any changes that they would like to make, and to add additional information to their testimony.

I want to say that this is an ongoing series, that we will be having numerous oversight hearings on this critical, important function of our government, which is under the jurisdiction of this committee. I used to chair the Census Subcommittee. Then they abolished it.

Well, I would first like to thank all of the witnesses for testifying today, and without objections all members will have five legislative days within which to submit additional questions for the witnesses to the chair, which will be forward to the witnesses for their response. I ask all our witnesses to please respond as promptly as you are able.

Thank you so much for your time, your service. This hearing is adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 1:11 p.m., the committee was adjourned.]

