

Connecting the Census to Californians: The Roles of Nonprofits and Local Governments

Joint Informational Hearing

Senate Select Committee on 2020 United States Census

Assembly Select Committee on the Census

Assembly Select Committee on the Nonprofit Sector

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I'm Jan Masaoka, CEO of the California Association of Nonprofits -- CalNonprofits for short. We have more than 10,000 nonprofit members, with members in 57 of California's 58 counties.

Not well known is that one in every 16 California workers works for a nonprofit, from clinics to preschools, from the Inner City Arts to the Nhan Hoa Health Clinic, from the PTA to the Samoan Community Center. Every year, California nonprofits bring in \$40 BILLION dollars from out of state into California, through federal awards, foundation grants, and individual donations to our internationally admired California nonprofits.

Every day we nonprofits see the people who are traditionally under-counted. They come to see doctors and dentists in our clinics, to pray in houses of worship, to receive groceries in our food banks, to answer the door to a Meals-on-Wheels volunteer.

But nonprofits also know that we are uniquely positioned to support a complete count:

1. We are already the trusted partners of millions of Californians. Hundreds of thousands of people come to nonprofit facilities every day, for example, to nonprofit clinics to whom they have already entrusted their health records, their identification numbers, and their cell phone numbers. They pick up their children at our childcare centers and after-school programs.

2. We know how to rent Ferris wheels.

3. Nonprofits are already embedded in and working in the communities where an undercount looms. We are always going door-to-door in undercounted neighborhoods. We know all the homeless youth by name. We are in the smallest towns in rural California, and we're already visiting the homeless camps, the board-and-care homes, farmworker housing, and the families of children with disabilities. We can incorporate Census work into our ongoing activities, such as delivering meals to the elderly, handing out warm socks to homeless people, through the backpacks of the children in our after-school programs, and having young people do Census videos in our arts and theatre classes.

4. Nonprofits have the experience and expertise to bridge cultural and language barriers that could contribute to an undercount. We know the local ethnic media and the neighborhood newsletters. We can put up posters, text and speak to people in their own languages. Our board members extend the reach of nonprofits.

5. Nonprofits can recruit thousands of enumerators from the under-employed people in our communities who are easily trained to do the job well.

6. Nonprofits want to serve on county and city Complete Count Committees, and we know the leaders in under-counted communities who can be recruited to serve on them. We know how to participate in civic affairs, and we *will* help the Committees reach our communities.

So what do we nonprofits need to be able to do this work we are plainly qualified to do?

- Even when folding Census outreach into our programs, we will need funding. We need dollars to go to the nonprofits who have direct reach into communities.
- Nonprofits need technical assistance in applying for Census funds, and the process must be reasonable and straightforward.
- Grants to nonprofits must include adequate reimbursement for indirect costs, since costs such as insurance and accounting will increase.
- Our economic impact study Causes Count showed that disparities in California are reflected in the nonprofit community. As just one example, there are twice as many nonprofits per capita in the Bay Area as in the San Joaquin/Inland Empire Area, and Bay Area nonprofits have 21 times more dollars per capita.
- Funding needs to go to community-based nonprofits -- often not large institutions -- and those that have arisen from rural areas, poor communities, immigrant communities, and communities of color.
- We need job applications and areas identified as needing enumerators.
- We need collateral that -- candidly -- doesn't look or sound like a government pamphlet translated hurriedly into Spanish or Chinese.
- We need training programs where nonprofits eager to participate can learn do-able ways to reach people through their existing systems and volunteers.
- We need to be connected to local Complete Count Committees so that we can recruit community leaders to serve on them.

In short: we nonprofits stand ready, eager, and uniquely able to help with the Census.

We have a knowledgeable and trusted reach into California's uncounted communities that no one else can claim. We look forward to the challenge.