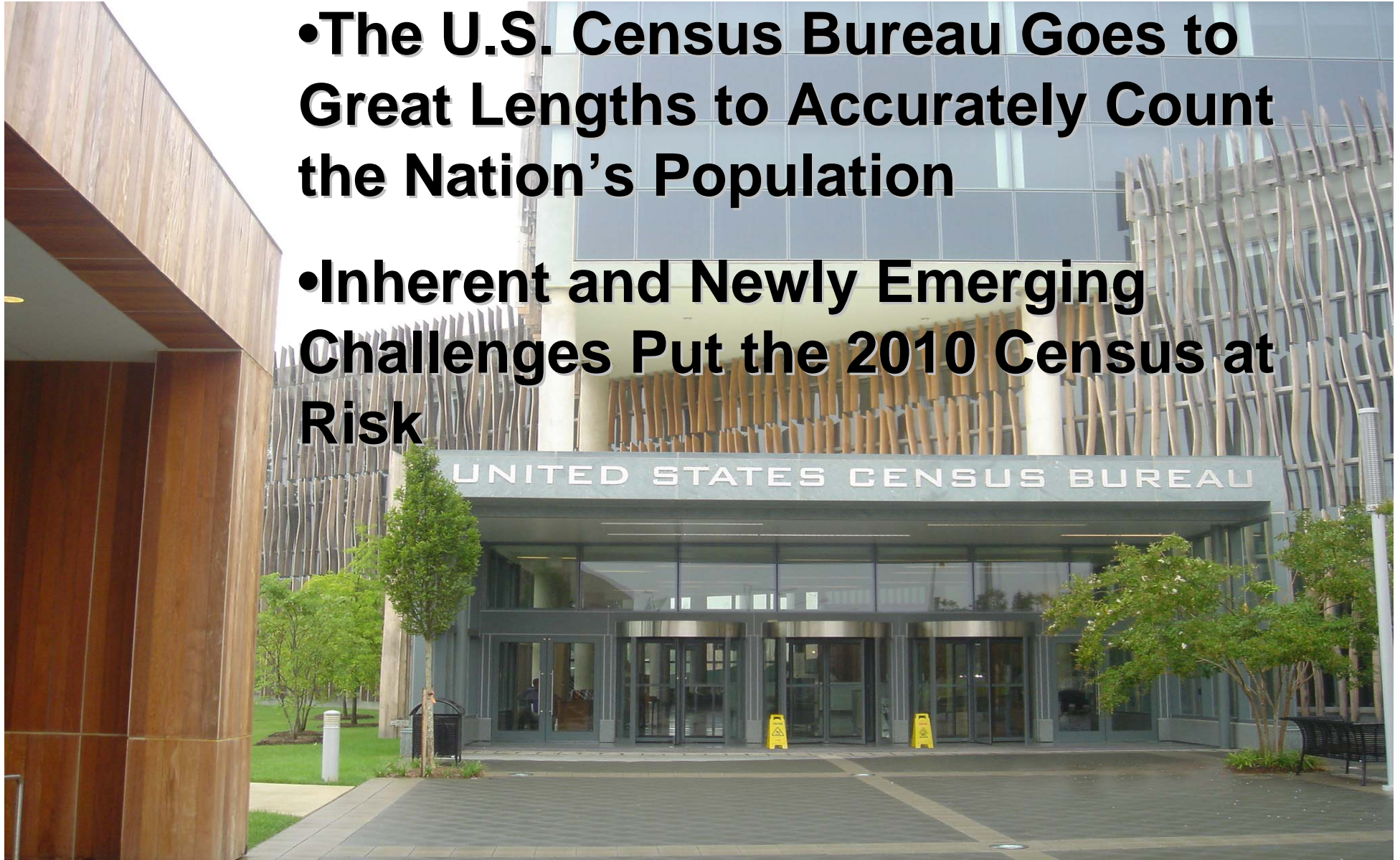


Opportunities and Challenges Facing the 2010 Census



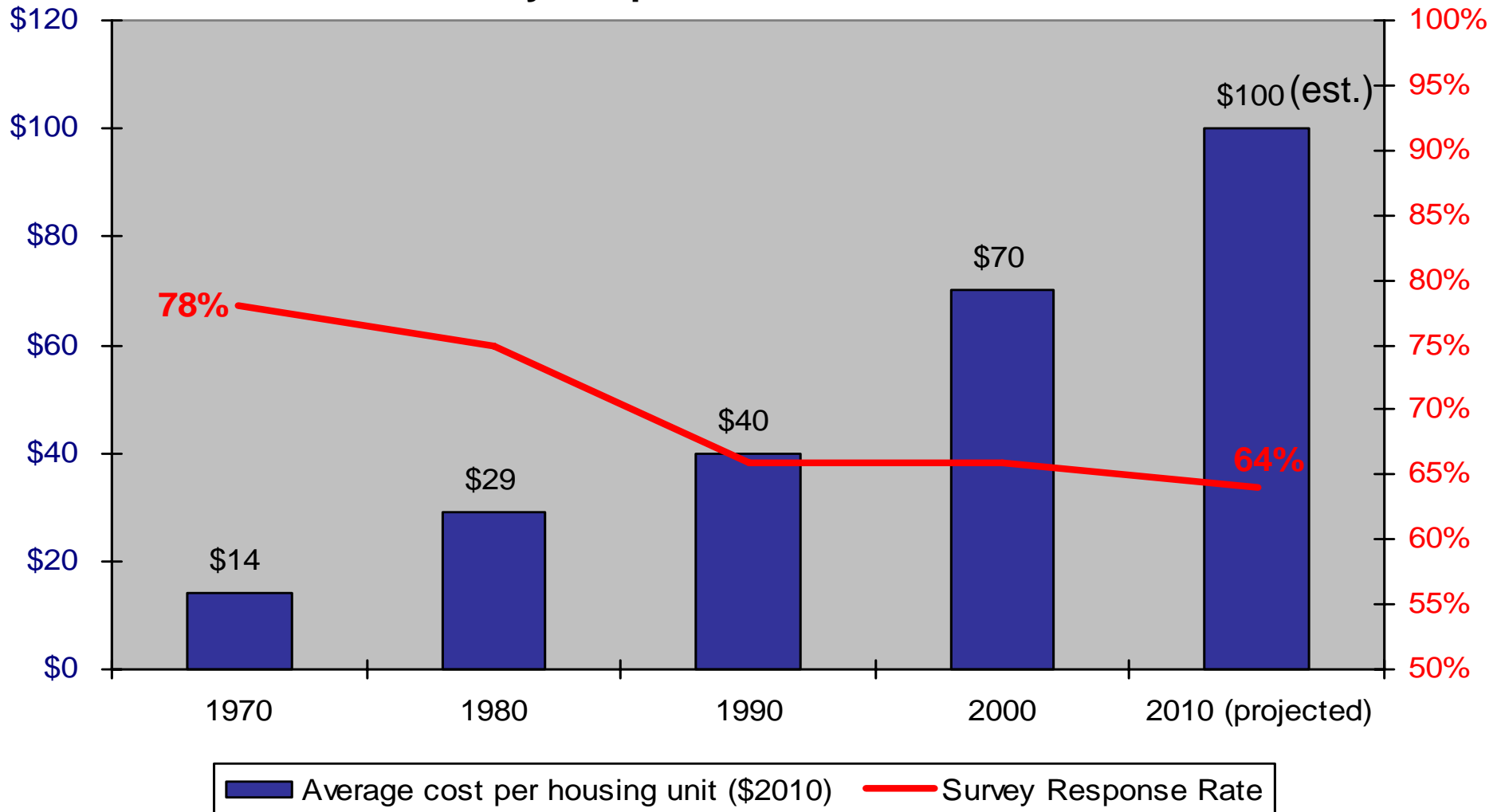
Key Points

- **The U.S. Census Bureau Goes to Great Lengths to Accurately Count the Nation's Population**
- **Inherent and Newly Emerging Challenges Put the 2010 Census at Risk**



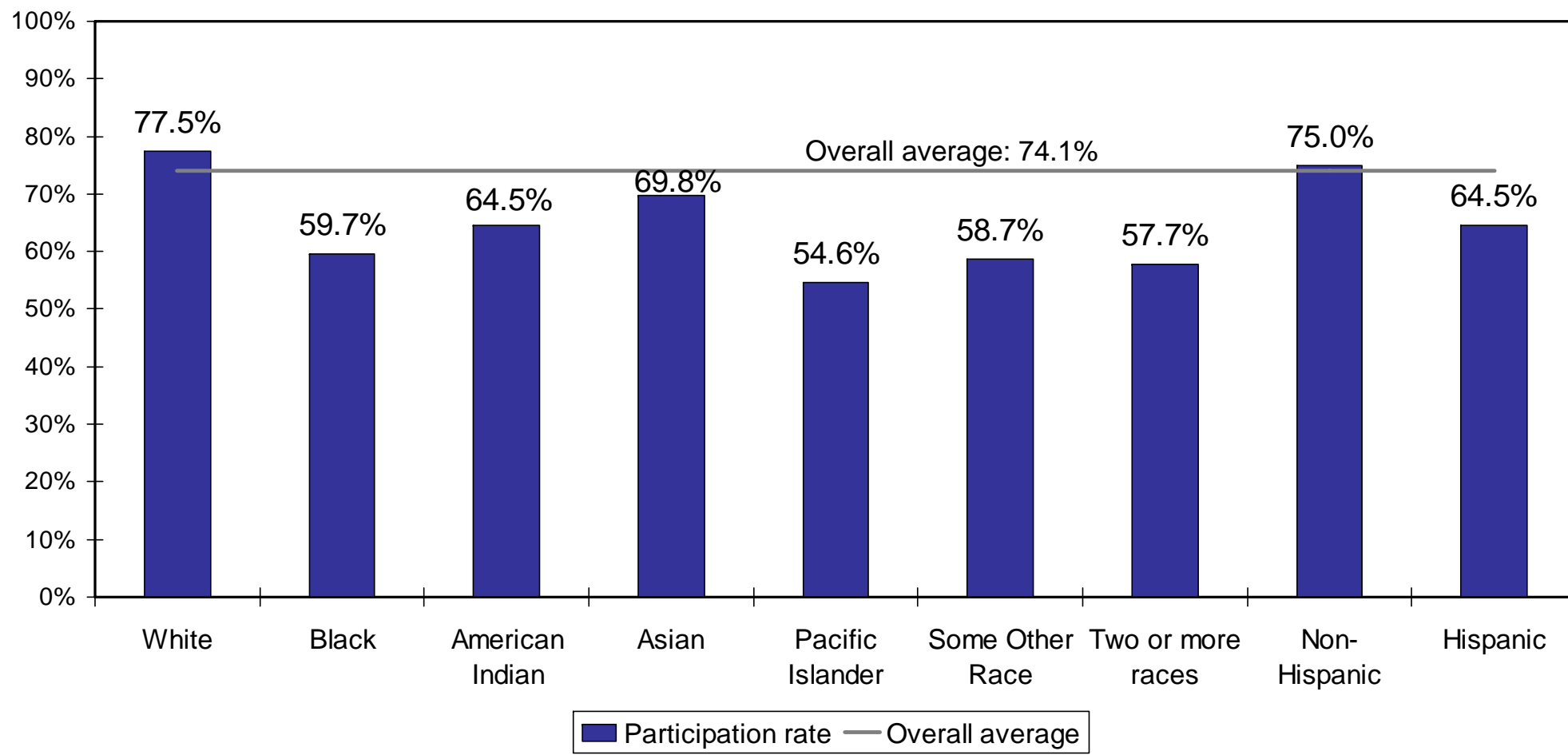
Inherent Challenge: Increasing Costs, Marginal Returns

Average Cost per Housing Unit (constant 2010 dollars) and
Survey Response Rate: 1970 – 2010



Inherent Challenge: Reducing Differential Participation and Undercounts

Return Rate, by Race/ Ethnicity



Note: Data are for the 50 states and the District of Columbia.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

Inherent Challenge: Housing

More People Are Residing in “Non-Traditional” Dwellings

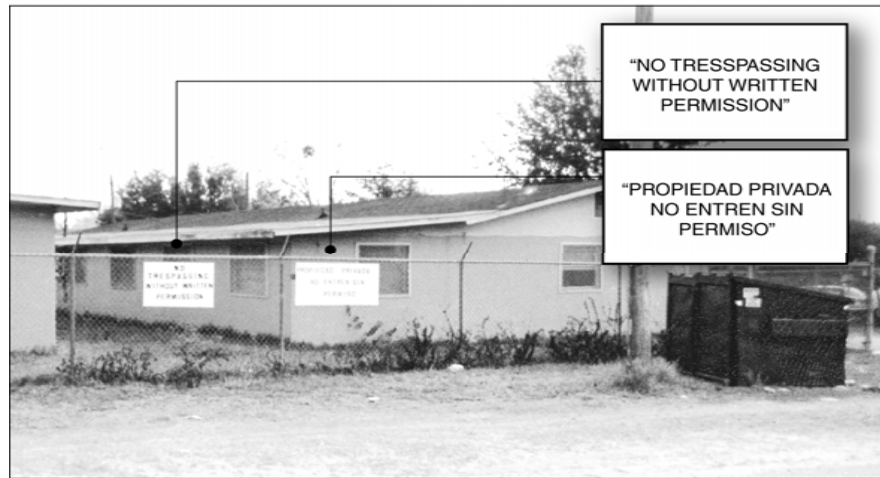
FEMA Trailers after Katrina



Migrant farm worker dormitories in central Florida.



Source: GAO.



Source: GAO.

Census workers had trouble entering certain communities.



Source: GAO, 2004.

Group Quarters or single housing unit?

Inherent Challenge: Housing

Hidden Housing Units Require Special Attention



Source: GAO.



Source: GAO.

Inherent Challenges: A Changing Nation

The Census Bureau Has to Work Harder Just to Stay in Place Because of:

- Divided families
- Gated communities
- Hidden housing units
- Second homes/Snowbirds
- Homelessness
- Migrant and seasonal farm workers
- Language barriers
- Increasing immigrant population, many undocumented
- Distrust of government
- Concerns over privacy
- Post 9/11 environment
- Nontraditional living arrangements

Newly Emerging Challenges

- Limited Dress Rehearsal—key operations not tested under operational conditions
e.g.:
 - Fingerprinting
 - Mailing replacement questionnaires

Newly Emerging Challenges

- Key IT Systems Not Fully Tested
 - Limited integration and end-to-end testing
 - Handheld computers not fully tested in an operational environment



Newly Emerging Challenges

- Lack of Precise Cost Estimates
- Schedule is Compressed

Moving Forward, it will be Important for the
Census Bureau to:

- Strengthen executive-level oversight to monitor testing and manage risks.
- Develop metrics to monitor completion of IT tests.
- Prioritize by focusing on critical systems.
- Focus on risk and cost management.

GAO Will Focus its Work on the Key Ingredients for a Successful Census

- Developing a complete and accurate address list
- Effective marketing to boost participation
- Field infrastructure for data collection
- Effective IT systems
- Robust evaluation systems
- Reliable cost model to estimate resources