

THE BROOKINGS INSTITUTION  
CENSUS 2020:  
NAVIGATING THE NATIONAL AND LOCAL CHALLENGES

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**Welcome:**

CHERYL COHEN EFFRON  
Chair, Charles H. Reyson Foundation  
Member, Brookings Board of Trustees

**State of the Census: What's at Stake for the Nation:**

TARA BAHRAMPOUR, Moderator  
Reporter, The Washington Post

WILLIAM H. FREY  
Senior Fellow, Metropolitan Policy Program  
The Brookings Institution

VANITA GUPTA  
President and Chief Executive Officer  
The Leadership Conference on Civil & Human Rights

JOHN H. THOMPSON  
Executive Director, Council of Professional  
Associations on Federal Statistics  
Former Director, U.S. Census Bureau (2013-2017)

**Responding to Census Challenges in Local Communities:**

CLARENCE E. ANTHONY, Moderator  
Chief Executive Officer and Executive Director, National League of Cities

GARY BASS  
Executive Director, The Bauman Foundation

BETH LYNK  
Director, Census Counts Campaign  
The Leadership Conference Education Fund

**Closing Remarks:**

ALAN BERUBE  
Senior Fellow and Deputy Director, Metropolitan Policy Program  
The Brookings Institution

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## P R O C E E D I N G S

MS. EFFRON: They don't discriminate on height. I know that Alice Rivlin has been here. She is a national treasure and I'm just a teeny bit taller.

Welcome to Brookings. I want to thank Amy Liu, Metro's director; Alan Berube, the census guru; and General John Allen, for gathering us here today. And thank you all for being here this afternoon.

I am Cheryl Cohen Efron, a trustee here at Brookings and treasurer of the board.

For most of the last five years, I sat on the city Planning Commission in New York, where I had the honor to be a colleague of the amazing Joe Salvo, New York's demographer and chief, who was supposed to be here with us today, but air traffic has, unfortunately, kept him from us. But I did want to recognize my dear friend, Shaun Donovan, who was the secretary of HUD and the head of the Office of Management and Budget and knows from that experience, as well as being head of Housing Preservation and Development in New York City before that, just how important the census is.

There is no greater act of democracy than making sure every person is counted. The 10-year census remains the bedrock for American political representation and distribution of public resources. It informs our understanding of who we are and how we are doing, especially for the extraordinary scholars here at Brookings. Notwithstanding a complicated national history that is too often subjugated or excluded people of color, women, or migrants, the census has always endeavored to count everyone in the United States. It is a federally mandated chance to create real equity to make sure everyone counts by making sure we count everyone. As I like to say, perhaps a little bit too often, it just makes census.

And while the first census occurred in 1790, just after Washington was inaugurated as president, I only wish Lin-Manuel Miranda had chosen to write some clever song about the census in his musical Hamilton. I suspect you all agree it would have made the marketing of the subject just a little bit easier if every middle schooler and her parents

were wandering the streets of every city rapping about the census.

Nonetheless, there are both great opportunities and some challenges which require some creative solutions between now and April 1, 2020, Census Day, which is, yes, on April Fool's Day. This census is an existential matter for cities. I believe no one understands the risk and opportunities of cities in this matter better than the Metro program at Brookings and the League of Cities and those of you in the room here today.

In a time when the future of federal funding for the social safety net, such as there is, could increasingly come in the form of block grants, it is necessary for every person to be counted, but also for the states and cities themselves to have a real count of its citizens to whom they will have to deliver services to broaden economic development, provide affordable housing, make transportation decisions, and even create real equity in social justice. Without it, we cannot plan properly, and without planning, those with the least equity tend to suffer the most.

With echoes of claims of recent voter suppression, there are fears of census suppression of residents without citizenship. Much of this is now in the hands of the Supreme Court, and I'm sure we'll hear more on this today.

But equally unknown are the questions around some of the changes in the 2020 Census we know are already happening. With the move to tech-based census taking, will the elderly and under resourced be more difficult to count? The conditions of both the economy and the Census Bureau are different than they were 10 years ago when we were in the midst of the Great Recession with many looking for work. This time we are at nearly full employment.

With the push for citizens rather than green card holders as enumerators, there is concern about where we will find qualified workers. In New York, the business and civic community is coordinating their census efforts in unprecedented ways -- branch libraries, YMCAs, and smaller community-based organizations are poised to work with government leadership and philanthropy. Despite all the cross-sector cooperation, it

becomes clearer each day a successful census requires more help from the federal government.

As a possible bright spot, I wonder how the privately funded election tech developed to increase voter turnout in the 2018 midterms could be repurposed for greater census participation.

In the end, a little friendly competition for cities around counting each of their residents is not a bad thing. New Yorkers do take note when they see Mayor Garcetti and the governor in California allocating resources early to the effort. It is my personal hope that many of you will identify best practices around the census, particularly in hard to count neighborhoods and make them as open source as possible. We are all pushing towards April Fool's Day 2020, and let's make sure cities and their leadership don't foolishly squander this precious time.

For these reasons and others, I'm excited to convene today's conversation which aims to bridge national and local conversations on the state of the 2020 Census, one year ahead of the Census Day. We are all delighted that Brookings Metro has partnered with the National League of Cities Institute for this event. It's executive director, Clarence Anthony, will moderate the second panel featuring experts on how local communities are responding to the challenges of ensuring a fair and accurate count of their populations in 2020.

But first, our opening panel will focus on the national outlook for the census from here in D.C. I am so pleased to introduce our moderator for this panel, Tara Bahrapour from The Washington Post, where she writes about aging, generations, and demography. Thank you, Tara.

MS. BAHRAMPOUR: Okay. Can everyone hear me now? Great.

Thanks so much, Cheryl. And thank you for having us, for Brookings for doing this panel. It's very timely. And so glad to be here with three people that I rely on very often to talk with me and help educate me and give perspectives about the census. Bill

Frey, who is a senior fellow here and demographer; and Vanita Gupta, president and CEO of the Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights; John Thompson, executive director of Council of Professional Associations on Federal Statistics and a former director at the census.

So this census, as a reporter, is really one of the most sort of newsy census I've ever seen for many reasons. Even before the citizenship question there was a lot going on, but in the past year it's really ramped up and front-page news in a way that I hadn't seen before in other decennial censuses. It's become much more politicized. There's questions about funding. And then, of course, it's the first time that it's going to be done online, largely online, and we haven't seen how that's going to work yet. So there's a lot going on.

So without taking up too much more time I want to get into the meat of our discussion and start with the news that came out this morning. There was a tweet by the president saying that the census would be meaningless without the citizenship question. This comes, you know, on Census Day there was an event that the Census Bureau held with Director Dillingham where this didn't come up at the event but it did raise the question of, you know, how is the Census Bureau going to be able to defend against this sort of message, if this is what's coming from the White House?

And John, I'd like to start with you as a former director. Kind of, you know, being in that position and thinking about, you know, how they might respond to this sort of message coming out.

MR. THOMPSON: Well, I know how I would respond, and that is that I disagree with the tweet. I've testified in two court cases that there's no basis for the citizenship question to be on the 2020 Census questionnaire. And, in fact, the research that's been conducted by the Census Bureau itself indicates that it will have an effect that will lower self-response and decrease the accuracy of the census. So I think it was a very unfortunate tweet.

Of course, the director of the Census Bureau, when Dr. Dillingham accepted

the job, Dr. Dillingham understood that the decision had already been made from the administration to put the citizenship question on there. So I have some sympathy for him in terms of not voicing an opinion on it.

MS. BAHRAMPOUR: Vanita?

MS. GUPTA: So I'm assuming many people know the kind of back story to the addition of the question but I think it's worth mentioning that there have been two recent trials, and actually a third where we're awaiting a decision that have challenged the addition of this question. And that when Secretary Ross added this question in March of 2018, he did so under a pretext that the Justice Department had actually asked for this question in order to enforce the Voting Rights Act. And my prior position was that I headed up the Civil Rights Division for President Obama's Justice Department, and we oversaw the voting rights enforcement, and never in the history of the voting rights enforcement framework enacted in 19695 has there ever been a citizenship question on the short form of the question. And so it was pretty clear quite immediately that this was a ruse, although the litigation really, in quite stark terms, in emails and communications that were going back and forth revealed that Steve Bannon and Kris Kobach had been lobbying the Commerce secretary for this question and that the ask of the Justice Department to ask for this question was really a back-end rationale.

And certainly this morning's tweet is deeply unhelpful for those of us who around the country are working to ensure that the hardest account communities have faith that they make themselves counted in this endeavor. When this question was first added, a lot of us as advocates were met with the question, well, should we boycott the census? How do we protect our communities? You all can imagine the level of fear in immigrant communities and communities of color around reporting data. We've seen what happened to dreamers who were told to trust the government and then the administration changed and policy priorities changed.

And so this kind of tweet actually does a real disservice to the ability to get

to a fair and accurate count. As John said, the Census Bureau's own research has been very clear about the concerns around a massive under response should this question remain. For those of us working around the country, we're kind of working to make sure whatever the scenario is, whatever the Supreme Court decision is, whatever Congress -- we were saying we can't just leave it to the courts. Congress should act as well.

But there really is a concern that if communities choose to opt themselves out affirmatively, or if people really try to -- first of all, it's against the law to do that. Second of all, in my mind there's nothing more that Steve Bannon would want than a systematic undercount of communities of color and to radically change how redistricting happens. The ultimate goal is to change the denominator of how districts get carved out.

And so this is an unfortunate incident. It won't probably be the last but we are in the middle of a massive organizing effort to "get out the count" given all that's at stake and there are a lot of people involved. And we have to counter these kinds of messages that really put the census, which should be a nonpartisan activity, at risk.

MS. BAHRAMPOUR: Bill, did you want to add anything?

MR. FREY: Well, I'm a scholar. I'm not working in the outreach community. I'm not working with the Census Bureau. But I've been doing this stuff for a long time and I've been following the Census Bureau's work for a long time. And I think this tweet today and the press conference today showed something that's really kind of important, and that is the people that answered the question or didn't answer that question that was posed to them about the tweet were very much interested in the business of getting the census done. And I think at this point, a lot of the issues that we're going to discuss today and were discussing in the news has been foisted upon the Census Bureau politically and in various other ways in terms of the funding they may have gotten earlier this decade, in terms of the citizenship question which I think as we've heard the in-house folks think it's not going to help have an accurate census, and in terms of other ways such as perhaps cybersecurity issues which are sort of beyond them.

MS. BAHRAMPOUR: You just have to hold it.

MR. FREY: Hold it. Okay. I'm not going to start again but, in a nutshell, I think the census people are under a lot of pressure of other kinds of issues that are politically put upon them and I think they're doing as good as they can to kind of get this census done as best as they can. But because of the kinds of pressure that are developed, it's so important that there's outreach from communities of all kinds of groups at the partnership level, at Complete Count Committees, all of these things. It's more important now than ever that people try to make a good census out of this. The professionals at the census bureau doing their best, but I think they're under a lot of pressure and a lot of sort of bad things happening to them, and I think they'll be able to get around it if everybody contributes.

MS. BAHRAMPOUR: Thank you.

We will circle back again to the citizenship question. But putting it aside for a minute, there are overall concerns about whether the Bureau is adequately resourced to carry out a full, fair, and accurate count based on several matters. There is some question about whether there is enough funding being proposed for the census this coming year. And also, testing was not performed up to the level that had been planned because of earlier funding concerns. And then the census is going to be performed largely on line for the first time and there are also concerns about cybersecurity, hacking, phishing, disinformation campaigns. How worried are you about these factors?

I want to start with you again, Bill, and then we'll --

MR. FREY: Sure. I mean, under a normal census, we've seen for the last several censuses, there are certain groups that tend to be undercounted -- Hispanics, African Americans, renters. But especially people who are under the age of five. About five percent of the people under the age of five were uncouned in the 2010 Census. And if we look at the numbers going forward, and of those people who were under the age of five, the most likely to be undercounted were African Americans and Hispanics, something like seven



percent of kids under age five who were Hispanic were not counted in the 2010 Census.

Now, as we move to this new census, the child population demographically is going to be minority white, the people who are under age five. Latinos are going to be 26 percent of that group. African Americans, 14 percent of that group. Asians, six percent of that group. It's really important of all these groups that young child population gets counted better. And some of the issues, one of them is a demographic change which even though there's been undercount of those groups in the past, and now that the demography is changing, potentially there is going to be a bigger undercount of that group.

Then there's the internet issue. And it may be that some of those households are not as directly linked into the internet as other parts of the population, people who have language, are isolated linguistically, people who are in poverty areas and so forth, aren't going to have that kind of access.

And, of course, this political climate which we're talking about. Maybe more tweets. So I think that, you know, given the changing demography of the United States we're becoming much more racially diverse than we were before. It's even more important that all of these different groups go out and try to get their folks to be involved in the census in any way they possibly can because I think it really is a challenge for a lot of different reasons.

MS. BAHRAMPOUR: John, can you speak to the funding and the testing question?

MR. THOMPSON: I can speak to that.

A little history, and that is the census planning effort from 2012 through 2017 was underfunded by the Congress to the tune of over \$200 million, which caused the Census Bureau to prioritize. And the Bureau prioritized on automation. And in full disclosure, I was part of that prioritization but we didn't think we could do a paper and pencil census anymore. It was just infeasible so we prioritized on the automation. What that meant was that some small operations didn't get automated. We had to scale back some of

the testing, like Tara mentioned, specifically for the end-to-end task, which was going to be three sites and was reduced to one.

On the other hand, it seems that in 2018 and 2019, the Bureau has received the funding it's asked for. In fact, in 2018, they received a billion dollars more than they asked for, and in 2019, they received what they asked for.

So looking at it today, I think the best measures would be how is the Bureau progressing in terms of its spending and buildup? Right now they announced this morning that they're on schedule to lease their offices, that hiring is going well for building up for their address canvassing operation, and that they're on schedule to hire the partnership specialists that they need to hire.

Now, that's what the Bureau says. It seems to me that they do appear to be on schedule at this point. But again, like Bill said, the big thing is that even though the Census Bureau is going to try as hard as they can to count everyone, the climate under which they're conducting this census is going to make that very, very difficult, which is why it's going to be really important to marshal the local resources and partners to get the word out about the importance of the census and that the Census Bureau doesn't give data to anyone. The responses to the census are kept confidential but that message is going to be, I believe, very hard to get at.

MS. BAHRAMPOUR: And Vanita, do you feel that there's adequate resourcing and that the proposed funding is enough?

MS. GUPTA: Well, there's a discrepancy between what Secretary Ross asked for just a few months ago and what was in the president's budget. And so I know the Bureau today has been saying that they have adequate funding, but that discrepancy is confusing to those of us who have been advocating very strenuously for an increased budget. So it doesn't feel to us on the outside that the funding level is yet adequate and we are continuing to push given that we usually typically in this final year before the actual count, the budget should be twice that it was last year because of the amount of investment

that's required in the infrastructure. Given the political climate it seems like that much more important for the Bureau to have a really strong, more robust than ever before communications program, partnerships programs. And look, the Bureau is not going to be able to do this by themselves. That's why you have the State of California kicking in \$90 million for California. We need states, more and more states to be kicking in this money out of a recognition of just how vulnerable communities and people are feeling right now. But also, philanthropy has really kind of organized itself in a much more serious way to be able to assist local organizers and local organizations to get involved. It's not going to work to have men in suits knocking on doors saying I'm from the government. Please give me your information. And so the importance actually of having mayors and local electeds working with local community leaders, church leaders, business leaders and the like, and to have that work funded is as important as ever. So I think the funding issues remain still for those of us in the advocacy community where it's still very concerned. But even the preparedness, and I want to say something about the end-to-end test.

So there were not as many end-to-end tests, which I know is a technical term. But the other thing that has been concerning is that there hasn't been a full end-to-end test that included the citizenship question ever, and partly because of how atypical the process was. Usually, the Census Bureau spends a few years testing a question, literally down to its placement on the page about what the impact will be on response rates. And this was a decision that was made in a very different process laid out in litigation which two federal judges have found to have violated the Administrative Procedures Act. But so there's just even a concern around that kind of thing.

There are tables that have been formed with tech companies to really do scenario planning on some of the security issues, the concerns around disinformation. We all have to be worried. Every democratic institution that we have from voting in our elections to census, these are core democratic pillars, are vulnerable to being manipulated, both by folks within our country and clearly by folks outside. And so this need to really be rigorously

engaged in this effort to protect our democracy technologically is something that both the Bureau has been looking at, as well as other tech companies working on the outside. So there is work being done to address these factors that are putting the census at risk. But these are precisely the things that need to have adequate funding.

MS. BAHRAMPOUR: Okay. And just getting back to the citizenship question a little bit. The Supreme Court is planning to rule on this question later this spring, whether it's going to appear on the form or not. Whether or not it appears on the form, can you talk a little bit about what some of the consequences of this discussion have been and whether it appears -- I mean, I think we've talked a lot about sort of why it would be a bad thing for accuracy if it does appear. But even if it doesn't appear on the form, what sort of consequences might come out of that?

And we'll start with Vanita.

MS. GUPTA: Well, in some ways, some of the damage has been done already, whether or not the question ultimately makes it on because, you know, the sheer fact that the administration sought to have this added has led people to question, you know, the administration's motivations in collecting the data. And that's a real problem. That's not good. As I said, the census is a nonpartisan activity and there are laws in place that protect census confidentiality and you know, the census is not to be used for law enforcement purposes. But in this climate of fear, folks, and you can't say that it's illegitimate, but people are questioning whether those legal protections are going to protect them. And so from where we stand, and organizers around the country are, you know, equipped with the messages to make sure that people still have faith and confidence in the census and understand the legal protections, understand that any effort to nefariously interfere with these protections, it will be met by strenuous legal response. But that is where the harm in some ways we now have to kind of fight against this, whether or not the question ultimately ends up on the form. And that literally is knocking on doors and having conversations and having messages out there and having the right messengers reaching people who are most

in fear and who often -- there's a good overlap with those communities and the communities that are also already traditionally the hardest to count.

MS. BAHRAMPOUR: And Bill, have you done any analyses, or do you have any thoughts on the effect of the citizenship on response rates and on the sort of quality of the data?

MR. FREY: Well, you know, I think that the idea of some of the earlier census surveys and research has shown that the households that are going to be most likely not to respond to the census are households that have at least one noncitizen in them. And that's 14 percent of all the households in the United States. It's 46 percent of all the Latino households in the United States, and 45 percent of all the Asian households in the United States. They tend to be more likely -- households are more likely to be like this if they have children under age 10, if they are in urban areas, and of course, if they're in big immigrant-rich states. Thirty percent of the households in the State of California have at least one noncitizen in them.

And so one of the impacts of this, of course, the Census Bureau has used not only to reallocate the seats in Congress but also to do redistricting within states. So if you have an under enumeration of the young people, of minority people, of urban people in a state like Texas, or in a state like California, what's going to happen is you're going to have an overrepresentation of rural people, older people, and white people in those states, much more so than would normally be the case if you had an accurate census.

The Census Bureau is also going to put out what's called a PL-171 file, the Public Law 171 file, which is used for redistricting in states. And if the citizenship question goes in it, a state legislature might be tempted to only use the citizen population rather than the total population for its redistricting within states. That's a legal issue that's going to go to the courts, but this gives them a possibility of doing that, and that, of course, will underrepresent all of those groups almost uniformly in all the states that want to do that. So I think there's a real risk for our democracy, as well as for undercounting and the rights of

different groups in the United States if this works.

MS. BAHRAMPOUR: John, did you want to add anything?

MR. THOMPSON: I might add just a little bit, and that is if states wanted to use citizenship data, they already could for most parts to do districting because it's available on the American Community Survey. It's available down to block groups, which are about 300 housing units. So the data is there, and that's, again, why it's really mystifying as to why you would put the question on the decennial census.

MS. GUPTA: And just for context, I think to what Bill was saying, in 2016, the Supreme Court, in a case called *Evenwel versus U.S.* I think it was, articulated a decision that said that apportionment can be based on the total population. And I think it's important. This isn't a move -- addition of the citizenship question wasn't just a move that was an anti-immigrant move, per se, but it is about fundamentally changing the denominator of who can be counted and trying to restrict it for some on the basis of citizenship alone and to tee up another case to go before the Supreme Court, a challenge to the *Evenwel* decision. And so this is part of the backdrop of what's going on. And to me, it's of a piece with some of the broader moves to kind of render invisible certain communities and democratic participation.

MS. BAHRAMPOUR: Okay. And then once the census count is over, what news do you expect to see coming out of the 2020 Census? What do you think it will reveal about how the country is changing and, you know, what the narratives of our country are going to be going ahead in the next decade?

And Bill, if you could speak to it.

MS. FREY: Sure. Well, since we're talking about cities, I think this will wind up being the decade of the city. If we looked at some of the results of city growth earlier in this decade, we saw many cities were growing much more rapidly than they were last decade. Some of that has slowed a little bit recently, but in the numbers I've looked at, I think that we're going to see that of the 77 cities of a quarter of a million or more population,

48 of them have already grown as many people now, since 2010, than they grew the entire decade prior to that. So some of the city growth that has to do with millennials staying in the cities and the attraction of cities I think is going to show up in the census results. We're going to have an aging of the population for the very first time. There's going to be an actual decline in the population under age 18 in the United States. We already are seeing that in 29 states, but we're also going to see a growth in the 65 and over population by some 40 percent which we'll see all over the place in suburbs and cities and small neighborhoods and so forth. People aren't moving. They're just staying there and getting old and that's what's going to happen in the census.

And in terms of race and ethnicity, we'll probably see the Asian population grow at a faster rate than the Latino population this time around, and a very, very slow growth rate for the white population. Under age 25, whites will be a declining population in the United States, and some 24 states will show a decline in their white population. So all of the growth in those states, except for a couple of them, might lose population, all of that growth is going to be coming from racial and minorities with Latinos playing a big role in it. Those are some of the things I'm looking for in the 2020 Census.

MS. BAHRAMPOUR: Great. I want to make sure we have enough time to get some questions in, so I'm going to open the floor to questions now. We've got mics going around.

MR. GUTHRIE: Bruce Guthrie.

Given the amorphousness of the current administration's idea of legal requirements, is there anything really that will stop them from releasing this data to law enforcement? I mean, really?

MS. BAHRAMPOUR: John, do you want to speak to that?

MR. THOMPSON: Yes, there is. The Bureau operates under Title 13 U.S. Code, which prohibits them from giving the data in recognizable form to anyone. Even the tabulations they put out, they have to put procedures in place to make sure you can't identify

individuals or characteristics. So it would take changing that law, which would be a very public event, to allow the data to be given to anyone.

MS. BAHRAMPOUR: Thank you.

Back there?

SPEAKER: Hi, good afternoon. First of all, thank you for your comments saying that we need people that look like the community walking in the community, not just people in suits. I really appreciate that.

I'm actually the chair for the Complete Count Committee in Alexandria, and one of my big concerns is related to the technology and how, from my understanding they're going to be mailing stuff out with codes, different codes to everybody's house and then they have to use that code to be able to fill it out. And I just see this as another barrier to trying to fill out the census. So I don't know if you guys could speak to that a little bit and how that might work.

MS. BAHRAMPOUR: The code, I believe, is optional. You can fill it out without the code.

Does that answer?

Question here.

MR. APGAR: Thank you. Sandy Apgar, CSIS.

Because so much of our economy, our urban economy is based on real estate values in one form or another, what's the connection between the census counting and analysis and the way in which we ascribe values to property?

MS. BAHRAMPOUR: Bill, would you like to take that one?

MR. FREY: Well, it's a long-connected route. I mean, first of all, you have to understand that the census is the gold standard for all of our statistics in the United States for our 10-year period. All of the sample surveys, whether it's government surveys, like the American Community Survey, or the kinds of things that private sectors do to be able to evaluate homes and the value of homes and all of that sort of thing is fundamentally based



on the census. So it's nice to have all of these numbers come out toward the end of a census period, but those are the worst numbers of the whole decade. So I think, you know, all of the stuff that you're using is going to depend on a very good census.

MS. BAHRAMPOUR: Okay. We have a question here and then over there.

MS. WHITT: Thank you. I'm Jeanne Whitt with Voice of Vietnamese Americans.

I'd like to come back to the question of confidentiality and cyber hacking. The census could be the foundation and the backbone of our national interest and national security. What if we are not able to secure the system and we put the whole nation online? Have you thought of a way to protect that?

MS. BAHRAMPOUR: John, why don't you start and then we can --

MR. THOMPSON: Okay. So, the Census Bureau works very hard at cybersecurity. They've been working at it all decade and so before any system is released it has to undergo extensive testing, including external penetration testing by other people. That being said, and the Census Bureau also, by the way, works with the Department of Homeland Security, the National Institutes of Science and Technology, experts in the private sector as well, to try to maintain state-of-the-art cybersecurity. That being said though, there is always a risk, and the Census Bureau is going to have to continue to work very, very hard to keep abreast of what's happening in the world of cyber hacking.

MS. GUPTA: And, you know, there is, so just to build on that, there's both private and Bureau efforts on this issue and scenario planning and the like.

I also want to be clear that there will also be door knocking and pen and paper folks. People are sometimes confused that they think the whole thing will only be digital and the only way to fill it out will be digitally, but actually, there will be folks that will be knocking on doors should people fail to complete the census. I know you're asking a different question about cybersecurity which I think, you know, right now there is an acute sense that everything needs to be done to prepare against that and to make sure that the

infrastructure is secure.

MS. BAHRAMPOUR: Although the people working on doors will have iPhone 8s.

MS. GUPTA: Yes. This is true. You're right. It addresses a little bit the digital divide issue but not, you know, that's still -- that's a big issue, too, is that not everyone has access to technology. And the irony here is that the folks that may not have access to it, who may also be the most living in fear of the government and then there will be door knockers. It's again why it returns back to the importance of having people in communities be engaged in this as enumerators in their own community.

MS. BAHRAMPOUR: Absolutely.

MR. PULZER: Thanks. I'm Karl Pulzer. I'm with inequalityink -- i-n-k -- .org.

So the points have been made that the American Community Survey, you can figure out the citizenship issue. It has a question of some way to figure that out and the census doesn't. Is there any -- it kind of puzzles me. So do we have evidence that there's a difference in the response rate between the census and the American Community Survey for minorities? I mean, is there a way of comparing?

And second question. If that question is, you know, invalid or inappropriate for the census, shouldn't it come off the American Community Survey as well?

MS. GUPTA: So one clear difference is the American Community Survey does not go to every household in the country, unlike the decennial census. And so it is used -- estimates are gleaned of this information from the American Community Survey, and that is a distinct difference. It will impact the overall accuracy of the short form that in 2020, once every 10 years, the census form is the short form, is sent to every household. The American Community Survey is not. And maybe I'll defer to my colleagues to get into more granular detail about the difference.

MR. THOMPSON: Well, I think one of the big concerns a lot of individuals,

including myself have, is that the question has never been on the census since 1950. So it's been on a long form. It's been on the American Community Survey. There has been no testing of the effect of that question being asked on a census short form. In addition, there's been no testing of that question being asked without asking the place of birth question right before it. So it's a totally unknown as to what will happen. The Census Bureau did their best to do some research, and it's excellent research. And they did show that based on the research they do expect there will be a decline in self-response of the noncitizen population and a decrease in the accuracy of responses. That's Census Bureau research that's available today. So there are a lot of concerns about that question.

MS. BAHRAMPOUR: Okay. We have one more question in the back.

MS. ROSS: Hi, Denise Ross with the Beck Center at Georgetown.

I was wondering if there's a chance of a complete failure in some geographic areas of the census, and if so, how would we know that the census had failed in a specific community?

MS. BAHRAMPOUR: And by failure you mean?

MS. ROSS: An undercount that is so large that it renders the data not useful for its intended purposes.

MS. BAHRAMPOUR: All right. Bill? Or John?

MR. FREY: Well, it's certainly possible I guess you could say, but I'm not sure that it would -- it's certainly possible but I'm not sure what you would call a complete failure. I mean, at some point there's going to be what's called nonresponse follow up to the people who don't fill out the census form that's very, very expensive. The issue could still be at that point, that's not always perfect. That often has bigger problems than the people who actually fill out the form in the first place because it's going to people who didn't fill out the form in the first place. So I suspect there may be a set of neighborhoods, a couple places that may have, you know, very bad census results. If it was widespread enough that would call the whole question into census -- the whole census into question, but you know, let's

hope that's not the case.

MS. BAHRAMPOUR: Yes, John?

MR. THOMPSON: Can I mention just one thing? You asked, how would they know? So the Census Bureau uses a few different techniques to measure the accuracy of the census, which they will make available. So there will be information regarding the quality of the 2020 Census. Some information will come out concurrent with the release of the first census data. Others will take a little longer. But the Census Bureau and local demographers will definitely be producing measures of the accuracy of the 2020 Census.

MS. GUPTA: And I also think it's why it will be important to have local elected officials really engage because local elected officials know their community, know their towns and cities. And I mean, obviously not, you know, to a tee, but it will be important for local electeds to voice concerns if they are perceiving there to be an undercount, particularly depending on different blocks and the like. And presumably, if there is some sense that there is some kind of systematic undercount, whether it's local or, God forbid, something much bigger, which none of us want to talk about because we're all working to make sure that everyone is counted, there will be litigation. There will be advocacy on The Hill. There will be advocacy locally. So, I mean, there will be a very significant response. That's why the infrastructure that's getting set up right now is going to continue even through 2020 because there will be efforts by the Bureau to make up for whatever. They're going to double check with administrative records and the like to make sure that they have as accurate a count as possible, but then there will be, you know, this ability to local elected and an advocacy response should there be a worst-case scenario, which we're all hoping to avoid.

MS. BAHRAMPOUR: Okay. I thought we had one more question up front. Right here, yeah.

MR. EGAN: Hey, first of all, thank you all for joining us today. Brian Egan with the National League of Cities as well.

One of the things that I think gets lost in a lot of the conversation around the citizenship question is that the previous administration made actual suggestions, proactive suggestions around sexual orientation, around race and ethnicity, around adding, you know, a couple other options. Could you all talk for a moment about what that research kind of panned out to indicate? What suggestions there should have been and why those suggestions weren't adopted?

MR. THOMPSON: What a subject.

MS. GUPTA: I advocated for the inclusions, so somebody else.

MR. THOMPSON: So very briefly, there were a couple things. The Census Bureau itself did a lot of research on how to ask the race ethnicity and determine a better format to ask that than have been used previously, a single question that combined the two. They never got any feedback from OMB, so they were not able to adopt that testing for the 2020 Census. They just ran out of time.

The other issue was the previous -- under the previous Justice Department asked that information on sexual orientation and gender identity be placed on the American Community Survey. There have been a lot of requests for that, including 80 members of Congress wrote a letter to the Census, to me, actually, asking for that. Again, when the administration changed, there was never a push to put that on the American Community Survey, so that sort of went away, too.

MS. BAHRAMPOUR: Okay. I think we're good. Thank you so much. This was really, really informative. Thank you.

(Applause)

MS. BAHRAMPOUR: And we're looking forward now to hearing about the local communities and how they can be involved with the census, so.

(Recess)

MR. ANTHONY: Good afternoon. This is an interesting conversation, and this panel is going to really follow up on a lot of what the first panel talked about. And that is

the role of local leaders in the census count.

But I will tell you, just imagine that every day local mayors, councilmembers, aldermen, from this day on, they're hearing a clock in their head saying tick tock every day because it's a year from now that is probably one of the most important days in the day and life of a city leader because if you think about it, the census is about the distribution of \$800 billion of federal funding. The census is about being able to really create a sense of pride for every person that lives in that community because they really do want to be counted as an American. The census is about resources, that you're being able to serve the right population at the right time with the right amount of money.

So let me tell you. This is an important discussion today providing information, and the National League of Cities Institute appreciates Brookings being able to start this conversation. The panelists here are going to make it exciting, inspiring, and everybody here is going to go back to your hometowns and your cities and villages and go to city hall and ask what are you doing? That's what we want to achieve here today. Not just a great conversation. We want to see action out of this group of leaders that's in America.

So local leaders are consumed every day by this concept of what impact the -- what role they play in the census. So Beth, I'm going to start with you.

Let me just introduce you briefly. Everyone has your bio, but Beth Lynk, who is the director of the Census Counts Campaign at the Leadership Conference. And also, we have Gary Bass, who is the executive director of the Bauman Foundation. Unfortunately, Joe Salvo is in an airport right now but I've heard, you know, Joe is a demographer, and believe me, when I first sat in the audience and they said we're going to hear from a demographer I said, oh, God, it's going to be a long dinner, he was amazing. He really was amazing.

So we've got a great panel here today, but I am going to start with you, Beth. Census Counts Campaign is a national hub for what I consider resources that help people deal with the -- prevent undercounting. So if you were a mayor, a councilmember, a

local leader, what would you be looking for from Census Counts Campaign as a resource?

MS. LYNK: Yeah, absolutely. And thank you so much to Brookings and to the National League of Cities for putting on this important conversation.

You're right. The Census Counts Campaign is a collaborative effort of our 15 and growing national partners who represent organizations or represent communities from the urban American community, to the Asian American and Pacific Islander community, to the Latino community. But also, are speaking to specific community members where they are. So, for example, we work with Faith and Public Life on faith outreach, et cetera. And so the effort is really focused on ensuring that hard to count communities, those communities that are traditionally harder to count are included in the 2020 Census.

Clarence, I think you were spot on in terms of the impact of cities can really not be overstated. I know I was reading about some of the undercount that happened in Phoenix, Arizona, my hometown, and the mayor in that city estimated that the potential losses in that city were in the tens of millions of dollars, and that was probably an underestimate because those people were just missing and it was hard to capture that. It was primarily based off of an undercount of the Hispanic population.

So I think if I can just paint a very fine line that it is really critical and we have a really incredible timely opportunity to educate our communities about the importance of the census now. And so that would be the first thing that mayors and councilmembers can do is educate their communities. The census, the short form comes around once every 10 years and so it's not top of mind for many people. Usually you kind of ask a room, do you remember filling out your census 10 years ago? And it's usually pretty mixed. And so that education piece is really, really critical.

The second thing I would say is you can also work to set up a Complete Count Committee or commission in your state or in your city if you haven't done so already. We're seeing some cities that are partnering with our counties to set up Complete Count Commissions or some that do it in coordination with the state. There are a number of

different ways to do it, and of course, recommend that funding that complete county commission as a part of that establishment is a best practice.

And then the third thing I would say is that the Census Bureau will hire 500,000 people over the course of the census, and so if you have an opportunity to encourage your community members to get hired and empower them and provide those resources, do so. We know that as the previous panel said, we know that having enumerators or partnership specialists that actually represent the community cannot be overstated. So work with your partners in your state and in your community to set up hiring fairs or education efforts.

The last thing I'll say that will be coming up in the next couple of months is that the Census Bureau is establishing questionnaire assistance centers, which will basically be places that people can get help to fill out their census form. Work with your community partners in your community to make sure that those are accessible, those are actually where people go, and that the communities that need to access that are actually weighing in on the decision of where to place those.

MR. ANTHONY: Now, have you spoken to a group of local leaders in the last couple of leaders. Do you think that they are prepared and they are excited or you find that there is a lack or gap of knowledge there?

MS. LYNK: You know, I think it's varied, right? I think that most people understand, and when the impact and the importance of the census is laid out people are like, whoa. And then you realize, okay, we've got less than a year to go and then the eyes get even wider. And that urgency starts to set in. So I think, you know, you've got definitely a variance in how prepared different states or municipalities are right now, and part of that is due to state or local resources. Some of that is due to state or local political will. And a lot of the members are state count action that work which is now in over 30 states where local and state partners are coordinating state tables and coordinating the advocacy and the "get out the count" efforts that will take place in that state. Those folks have been working with



their state legislators, with their local city councilmembers and their mayors to encourage and advocate for the state and local funding that will be necessary to ensure a fair and accurate count, particularly for those -- to reach those communities that are deemed hard to count.

I think there are a couple of different buckets of preparation I would say. There's states like California which it was mentioned previously have designated over \$90 million for census funding, and now are distributing that across the cities and across the various community groups and group community organizations. Then you have states like Georgia we just found out which designated \$1.5 million and set up a Complete Count Committee and is starting to work with those local partners. Very different states and obviously different level of engagement and participation that's going to be necessary. And then there are some states, which due to the climate or resources available are really focusing on the local engagement. So the city of San Antonio in Bexar County just partnered to set up a Complete Count Committee in their area today, and so that's really exciting. So it's really about working now to get prepared because it's a very complicated undertaking and we're happy to help provide any resources to be helpful to folks.

MR. ANTHONY: Thank you, Beth.

Gary, the previous panel referred to making sure that everybody is engaged in this process with local leaders, whether it is the faith-based community, the philanthropic community. What are you seeing from the philanthropic communities as interest in supporting local communities to help get an accurate count?

MR. BASS: Well, I've got to say, in reference to the first panel, there were so many challenges. As I was walking up, I was hoping they would walk out and go April Fool's. I guess you can look at it that someone in government years ago must have had a sense of humor to have Census Day on April 1.

But be that as it may, funders have an enormous amount at stake. As many of you in the room know, the philanthropic community may actually use the census data in

considering how to do grant making. That is, it looks at the data and allocates appropriately. On top of it, what we're mostly concerned about is our grantees, who are involved in all kinds of community activities, whether at the local level involved in service delivery or on the national level or even state level doing research. You know, virtually every grantee in one way or another touches on either the census data or the derivation of the census data as was talked about in the last panel.

On top of it, many funders partner with government and they will do that in the form of various kinds of service delivery. So if the census data is wrong, Clarence, this sets up a whole dynamic about service delivery in the wrong locations. Think about it in terms of planning for schools. If you have the numbers wrong, virtually everything you do is going to be wrong. And of course, from a funder perspective, many funders care about democracy. And we talked about it in the last panel, if you will, there are three pillars of democracy -- voting, census, and redistricting. You get any one of those pillars wrong and you've distorted democracy, if not for that year, then for the next decade.

So from a funder's perspective, getting this right is absolutely essential. And I do think, Clarence, that there is a very big difference from the 2010 cycle to this cycle for the philanthropic community. I mean, first of all, I think the scope and the intensity this time is much, much more extensive. I'm chairing a funder collaborative, and it is remarkable. There are probably about 100 national funders that are engaged in supporting census. Census. Let me remind you all. You know, it's not like the foundation community or any foundation has a portfolio called census. And yet, somehow they're really understanding this. And I think it really comes down to some of the conversation from the first panel about concerns that are happening.

I do want to say that we did start as funders. In your comment, we did start early enough in 2015 to come up with a plan of action. And you heard the comment in the last panel that they haven't seen as much news attention and they haven't seen as much action. I heard that from the Census Bureau. And you should all know that did not happen

by accident. It was the funding that the philanthropic community put together, starting in 2015 with a strategy, that enabled groups to be working on the subject.

What we did was we had a plan that had three parts to it. The first was to support the national organizations and state groups who could work on policy fronts. So everything that you talked about in the last panel around funding for census or issues around the citizenship question, or the questions that didn't make it to the census, the revised questions, that whole policy front.

The second kind of bucket of work was what we're all calling "get out the count," which for the philanthropic community is targeting hard to count communities that was talked about.

And the third kind of bucket of work was to bring new audiences to the table. And that was everything from the faith-based community that Beth just talked about, all the way to state and local governments, to a whole range of other players, like the business community. So that was really the first thing, Clarence.

I do think an important piece to keep in mind from the last panel, there was a survey question that the Census Bureau that didn't come out in the last panel. It was asked around the same point at this timeframe for the 2010 cycle. It was asked of people, how likely are you to fill out the census? And about 87 percent of the public said they would be ready to fill it out. In this cycle, while the wording is slightly different, it was down around 65 percent. You know, we're not only dealing with the politics, the political climate, but there's also survey fatigue. You know, it's just people are tired. Plus, what is really missing in all this is simply the distrust of government. You know, and until we can focus in on trusted messengers and really identify how to get to that audience, we're going to have a heck of a problem in getting a fair and accurate census.

MR. ANTHONY: So, you know, like Beth, I ask, are there any examples, if you will? You talked about L.A. in California, Georgia, and other communities. Could you give us, Gary, any examples where you see philanthropic local communities partnering to do

this the right way? That if our city leaders at the National League of Cities want to reach out to a city or a philanthropic community, where would they go as an example?

MR. BASS: Well, Clarence, I've got to start with state level first.

MR. ANTHONY: Okay.

MR. BASS: You know, I don't think many folks are ready to engage at the city level the way that you're thinking. And I think Beth gave us an incredibly important warning which is you've got to move now in order to do this. I mean, there are a lot of steps in the process of getting a real plan together. You know, for us as the funders, what we're starting to encourage people to think about is sort of a three-part process for getting to this. The first is, really, starting to define the target population. A lot of groups who are going to be working on census are going to be coming out of the voting space. You know, mostly the nonpartisan "get out the vote" kind of crowd. Well, unfortunately, it is not directly analogous; right? You know, the hard to count community may not even be eligible to vote, so they're not going to be part of voter files. So you can't simply go take the local voter file and target in on that and just say, oh, I'm going to focus in on low propensity voters. You've got to do something much more extensive and much more thoughtful as a strategy around defining that local target.

The second thing that we're encouraging people to do is start thinking about how do you reach that target? And while we talked about the concerns of a digital census, we should also be talking about the opportunities it presents for doing outreach in ways that we've never been able to do. For example, you know, how can we start using SMS, you know, text messaging technologies? How can we use social media? How can we design things that are more cell-oriented, since many of the low-income communities and people of color that fit the hard to count model do have? On top of it, how do we use analytics to better monitor the outreach efforts and how successful we are? And then how do we use that data gathering to build something that's stronger and more robust than simply addressing census but builds a civic engagement community?

The third thing beyond identifying the target audience, Clarence, and also how do you reach the audience, I think the third thing is we need to start thinking about the ask of the community, and timing it on the basis of what the Census Bureau is telling us. For example, between now and January, we have to really launch an education and awareness campaign to make people aware of the census. Come January, from January through March, you've got to remember that in January the census forms are going to be sent out in Alaska, and early in March it's going to be sent out to all the rest of us. What we need to do between that period is start a promotion campaign that starts promoting folks and saying fill out the census. And then from May through July we have to do the mobilization to ensure that those that didn't fill out in the first round, didn't self-respond, we target in on that audience and make sure they fill out the census. That's the kind of strategy I think local communities are going to have to figure out.

And I can tell you -- if you want me to keep going or I can take a break -- some examples of state efforts. I think there are great efforts going on.

MR. ANTHONY: So Beth, I can tell that you really want to jump in on the hard to count population in communities. I know the Leadership Conference, it consists of diverse constituents. So what strategies or examples would you recommend the cities that could go into the minority communities and to access them to make them want to vote?

MS. LYNK: Yeah.

MR. ANTHONY: I mean, not vote, be counted.

MS. LYNK: Be counted.

MR. ANTHONY: I'm a former maybe, so still, everything is voting.

MS. LYNK: Well, so, yes. I mean, I think there are a number of things that people can be doing now in terms of planning and how they're reaching hard to count communities.

The first thing I would suggest is make sure that you're speaking in terms and using messages that really resonate with those communities. The Funders Census

Initiative and many of the partners of the Census Counts campaign did message testing over the past six months or so, and presented those results. And those are available to anyone to use and utilize. And there are some really interesting and important findings in that.

One is, you know, some things that are less intuitive, talking about the census as a form of -- as a political action doesn't really resonate in the middle of the country, and isn't something that really pulls or draws people in. It's really about, okay, what's in it for me? Oh, this is about schools, health care, education. And so really, looking at it that way.

And then also, for looking at particular communities. So the Latino community, for example, prefers to fill out a written form. So that's based on research that NALEO Educational Fund did. And so that is helpful as you're thinking about your outreach because it has to come, you know, from the community and from your listening and your work with your community members.

The second thing that I would say is to Gary's point, I cannot stress or overstress the need for engaging trust in messengers. One of the good things about, or one of the many good things about the philanthropic community and then the nonprofit community really getting organized so early in the cycle this time around is that many states have state tables of groups that are ready to go, so to speak, or are prepping and planning for their "get out the count" efforts. And so those are great partners for you to engage with as you're building out your plans and thinking about how should we be building our outreach? What events should we be going to? What are the biggest barriers to awareness in education?

We also, you know, want to ensure that people are utilizing your own voice in your space. One of the things, one of the findings out of that message research is that generally elected leaders are not as trusted of a messenger with the exception of local leaders. So mayors and councilmembers. So use that voice and engage and educate that community.

And then the last thing I'll just say is really encourage all of your outreach efforts to be representative. So if you're planning an engagement or you're filling out a Complete Count Committee or commission in your city or your county or your area, make sure that you have the representation of the relevant hard to count groups. If you haven't checked out, CUNY has a great map that maps hard to count communities, and it goes down to the city level, the county level. And you can pull out to see, okay, what are the highest percentages of hard to count communities in my city. So that as you're planning that effort you're engaging those folks and hopefully bringing those folks to the table as you're building out your infrastructure.

MR. ANTHONY: So question for both of you. You've described to us this complex process and partnership. How do we make sure that it works so its limited duplication and that it's not an overburden, if you will, to residents getting all of these messages from these different partners?

Gary, have you got some thoughts on that to see how we can coordinate the national, state, as well as with the local leaders? Because I feel like it can become overwhelming.

MR. BASS: Yeah.

MR. ANTHONY: Okay.

MR. BASS: Oh, it is overwhelming because it's an overwhelming task and we have to break it apart into smaller pieces so we can achieve it. And I think there are models within states where we're starting to see the partnership work well.

I was thinking of the state of Michigan, for example, where you've got the groups in the state and the funders came together to work with policymakers to get legislation passed in the state that then provided a matching-based fund for census work. And what the groups and the funders did was they came together and came up with a statewide plan of action and then raised the money that served as a match, and they are now working regionally within the state with local community foundations and United Ways

to help then do mini grants to work with the cities and local areas in Michigan. So there are lots of examples.

I think there are probably three steps I would take. One is everyone in this room should stay in touch with Beth. That's one. Get her email. And I think the second is stay in touch with the National League of Cities. You have a toolkit that is incredibly powerful. There you go. Show and tell. I've gone through it. It's incredibly useful. It's very much the very practical kinds of steps. And then I think if you're looking for partnerships, I think there are other kinds of associations that work with mayors across the country. Groups like Cities of Service. And I would say those three kinds of approaches will get you there.

MS. LYNK: Yeah. I would echo a lot of those points and just say I think coordination cannot be overstressed. So that's one of the benefits of a Complete Count Commission and Complete Count Committee in your city or state is that it's a coordinating entity to make sure that there aren't unnecessarily redundancies. And also, communicating with your in-state tables in states.

The last thing I want to mention is work with partners on the ground to engage not only their spaces but also their communities. We know, so today is our one year out from census day in 2020, and across the country, organizations are putting on over 50 events engaging and educating communities on Twitter and really jumpstarting their educational efforts in earnest.

So plug into those efforts. This won't be the last major engagement point. There will be many, many more. And so we at the Census Counts Campaign, but also all of our members and partners, some of whom are in the room right now, I really encourage you to engage and connect with those folks in your community and in your city and in your state.

MR. ANTHONY: Thank you.

Now, we'll open it up to the audience and see if we have any questions.

We have one here.

SPEAKER: Thank you very much. Very interesting.



I just came up with a brainstorm and maybe somebody has already thought about this. But I've seen this happen in communities before. What about getting trusted local leaders to do census questionnaire parties where you get people together. And especially in the Hispanic and African-American communities. I've seen this happen. And I hate to be, you know, gender-based here. It's the women who are the most powerful. Thank you. Yeah, now I'm ready to hand the world over to women, by the way. But, no, I really think that that would be a great way because there's a lot of fear about filling out these forms. But when you do it in a group situation, even if it's 20 or 30 people at a time, you get enough of those and you'll get your count.

MR. BASS: Absolutely. I think that's a great idea. There are a couple of things I would tack on to that. Let's build on that concept and talk about, you know, a sort of faith-based Sunday for census. You know, where we talk about it in the churches and other houses of worship. Why not have other kinds of events that are community based at say the community health center that, you know, has the mobile van moving around?

To your point, I think what we can do is encourage the head of the household to fill out the census. You've got to remember, this isn't about just going to anybody and saying fill out the census. The census is filled out by the head of the household. That's another example where it's not analogous to voting strategies. But I think your idea is a great one. Add to it, why not also have census pledges, you know, where we could go door to door, encourage people to fill out a pledge and then using newer technology remind them periodically about the pledge.

The last thing I would comment about your example is in different communities of color the notion of family and friends is incredibly powerful. And the whole notion of doing digital relational organizing could be a very powerful strategy for tackling the census. The challenge to it is we have to overcome the citizenship question right now and the last vestiges, even if it's removed by the Supreme Court, it has left a really, very big hurdle to get over.

MS. LYNK: And I would just add to that is that I think that that is a great point. And the online option this go-round creates another opportunity that you can literally do it anywhere. So it's, hey, you know, we're waiting in line at a, you know, at a sporting event. Make sure, folks, if you're a head of household filling out your census form or at a church. And this is something that, you know, groups are thinking about and planning around as well, but I think that that is a really critical point.

The last thing I would just add is that Vanita mentioned on the previous panel that around the citizenship question there's a lot of fear in communities, and a lot of the damage has already been done. And so when Gary was talking about kind of those three phases of the campaign and where we are right now is education and awareness, one big thing about the Census Day of action today has been focused on educating people about the importance of the census. For many people, the only thing -- one of the only things they've heard about the census or that has broken through the clutter for them is the citizenship question. And we have to really educate people about this is why the census matters to you, to your life, to your community, and really educating people. So as you're thinking about those kinds of house party ideas or convenings, think about what we can do between now and October or now and January to maybe it's an educational party or, you know, talking about, you know, educating people and having just, you know, a conversation about, okay, what are you afraid of? Okay, here is the truth, that census data is protected. We know there's a lot of uncertainty in the world right now but participating in this census is incredibly critical for your participation, and then just listening. So I think that it's really critical to have some of those conversations early before we get into the "get out the count" phase.

MR. ANTHONY: Question? Any other questions?

I'm not in charge. You give to whoever. You're in charge. I'm just -- I just ask. Yes?

SPEAKER: Could you just clarify, what is the mandate of the census in

terms of who is to be counted? What about Americans living overseas? My next-door neighbor who works for the World Bank, not an American citizen, has kids who were born in the United States, all sorts of categories like that.

MS. LYNK: Yeah. So the Constitution states that every person, regardless of citizenship status, should fill out the census. And it also does include people living in group quarters or people who are overseas serving. The Census Bureau has processes to count those people.

MR. ANTHONY: Next question? We're going to be real quick in responding to your questions.

SPEAKER: Thank you. Am I correct that there was a test run in Rhode Island again this year? Can you give us any feedback on what did and didn't work and how the technology is faring in this round?

MS. LYNK: So there was an end-to-end test, which it's important to say, you know, it was an end-to-end test because usually, and if the Census Bureau had had the funding that they needed it would have been a full dress rehearsal but they had to shift it due to some insufficient funding.

The end-to-end test in Rhode Island did employ, you know, some of the digital tools and, you know, the Census Bureau would say, you know, that they found out, okay, having those -- that technology for all the doors is really critical, et cetera.

The other thing that happened was right before that test started the citizenship question was put on the form. And so there was a lot of fear in communities, but also, there was a lot of confusion of what that meant. And so that was a really critical point as well.

MR. BASS: Just two seconds worth. GAO still puts it on the high risk even after that.

MS. LYNK: Yeah.

MR. ANTHONY: Next question?

SPEAKER: Joe, from CHN.

One of the biggest problems with the undercounts as we learned in the first panel is that the biggest undercount population is children under five. And one of the biggest issues is that those children who are undercounted, four out of five of them were actually in households that responded to the census. Could you guys talk about the importance of filling out and how it's filled out and who gets counted as part of a "household"?

MS. LYNK: Oh, yeah. Absolutely.

So yes, you're absolutely right that the highest age group that was undercounted was children under five, and many of those folks were in households that were counted. That is why, you know, from the stakeholder community and advocates, it is so critical that we're talking to people about the importance of the census and counting everyone in your household. It's the head of household that fills out the form. There's a number of hypotheses about why that undercount happened in the way that Joe laid out. One is that there's some kind of mixed households, so intergenerational households who didn't count the youngest children in the household, or some kind of transitory pieces. Or some people just didn't count young kids. And so talking about how important it is that everyone in your household is counted, it means, you know, when they're of age, this is going to span 10 years. So when they're of age, making sure that their schools are properly resourced, that they have the books that they need. So that's why in some of those roundtable conversations or house party conversations, specifically speaking to the importance of counting young children and children under five is really important.

MR. BASS: Two really fast points. One to add to the situation. Bill, you didn't mention that a lot of people of color are going to be new to the census. You were citing the numbers, but you're going to have a lot of new populations that have never filled out a census.

The second is that there's new research coming out of the Population

Reference Bureau that another demographer, Bill O'Hare, and another set of authors just put out and said, good example, you can't just take the model of hard to count and apply it to zero through five -- through four. That there are other factors that work better as predictor of a net undercount. That's the kind of detailed work that we're all going to have to look at.

MR. ANTHONY: Okay, last question.

SPEAKER: Hi. So you were talking about the government -- you were talking about distrust toward the government and how that's going to affect the census. Information is power, and politically, they might not want to give that kind of power to the federal government. Can you talk about your experience and knowledge about state and county political leaders and their feelings about allowing the census to come in and do that on-the-ground work in their communities?

MR. ANTHONY: I'll let you guys. I'm moderating today. Go ahead. It's hard but I am. Go ahead.

MR. BASS: Well, you know, you are absolutely right that political power is not something give up easily in any environment. If I were preaching I would want to preach that the census is nonpartisan and that we're all in it together. And I think what's happened in this environment is too many other voices have politicized it and has made it very challenging for all of us. So that's how I would answer you. We can talk about how to deal with it on a local level and how to balance those things, but I think we've got to first and foremost talk about we're in the boat together.

MR. ANTHONY: I'll just add that, you know, most mayors, councilmembers, don't care what party you are in. They just want their citizens to be counted. And I hope that with all the information that's been provided today that you remain optimistic that we can do it and we can make sure that every American is counted. And that this is not just a technical exercise. This is a real democratic opportunity to participate in an American process that really means something and is not just a technical exercise.

And I'm going to close. I think Cheryl made a Hamilton reference. You

know, I don't want us to throw away our shot. This is our shot. And I'm mature now in age so 10 years from now I want another count, I hope, but this one here is so important. Everyone is important, but this is the 24<sup>th</sup> one, I think, and I'll tell you, there is something special about this that every American should be counted. And we need to, in this room, leave here within a month, go to our local leaders and ask what are you doing? And I will tell you, they are going to tell you what they're doing. So let's get counted. Let's don't throw away our short.

Andy, why don't you come to close?

SPEAKER: You kind of did it, Clarence. That was great.

MR. ANTHONY: Alan, I'm sorry.

MR. BERUBE: Superfluous in a way. Hey, I'm Alan, from the Metro program.

I did want to share on that political note a breaking tweet from President Trump. "My earlier tweet was ill advised and I regret misleading the American public as to the value of the 2020 Census. I hope everyone participates. I'm sorry about this whole citizenship question." (Laughter)

MR. ANTHONY: Thank you, Alan.

MR. BERUBE: April Fool's. Yeah, sorry. I couldn't resist.

Look, you all don't need -- I think Clarence said it very well. Folks in this room don't need a reminder from the president or anybody else about why this is important. I think we got really clear reminders of that from both of our panels today, and especially from this great second panel about what we can do at the national and the local levels to promote a complete, fair, and accurate 2020 Census.

One thing that I think is worth emphasizing that the conversation didn't quite capture is that Bill Frey and I rely on good census data every single day in our jobs, so I encourage you to make everyone count just so we have some value to the world to provide. (Laughter)

I'm really grateful to all of our expert panelists today. To Clarence, our greater partners at the National League of Cities Institute. Hold up the action kit again. This is a great tool. There might be copies outside. Go online and look at it, share it with your friends, share it in your communities. It's just a really great resource. And thank you as well to Cheryl for your leadership locally in New York and then nationally here at Brookings on these issues.

Thank you all for being here today. Go forth and be counted.

(Applause)

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