



Presidential Statements Related to the Use of the Decennial Census in Collecting Information for Purposes Other than Apportionment (1805 – 2010)

Excerpts Selected by Andrew Reamer, Research Professor

Thomas Jefferson: Fifth Annual Message to Congress, December 3, 1805

Whether it will be necessary to augment our land forces will be decided by occurrences probably in the course of your session. In the mean time you will consider whether it would not be expedient for a state of peace as well as of war so to organize or class the militia as would enable us on any sudden emergency to call for the services of the younger portions, unencumbered with the old and those having families. ***Upward of 300,000 able-bodied men between the ages of 18 and 26 years, which the last census shews we may now count within our limits, will furnish a competent # for offense or defense in any point where they may be wanted,*** and will give time for raising regular forces after the necessity of them shall become certain; and the reducing to the early period of life all its active service can not but be desirable to our younger citizens of the present as well as future times, in as much as it engages to them in more advanced age a quiet and undisturbed repose in the bosom of their families.

John Quincy Adams: Fourth Annual Message to Congress, December 2, 1828

On a review of the former enumerations it will be found that the plan for taking every census has contained ***many improvements*** upon that of its predecessor. The last is still susceptible of much improvement. The 3rd Census was the first at which any account was taken of the ***manufactures of the country***. It was repeated at the last enumeration, but the returns in both cases were necessarily very imperfect. They must always be so, resting, of course, only upon the ***communications voluntarily made by individuals*** interested in some of the manufacturing establishments. Yet they contained much valuable information, and may by some supplementary provision of the law be rendered more effective.

The ***columns of age***, commencing from infancy, have hitherto been confined to a few periods, all under the number of 45 years. ***Important knowledge would be obtained by extending these columns, in intervals of 10 years, to the utmost boundaries of human life. The labor of taking them would be a trifling addition to that already prescribed, and the result would exhibit comparative tables of longevity highly interesting to the country.***¹ I deem it my duty further to observe that much of the imperfections in the returns of the last and perhaps of preceding enumerations proceeded from the inadequateness of the compensations allowed to the marshals and their assistants in taking them.

¹ Congress incorporated this request in the [Census Act of 1830](#) (March 23, 1830).

Martin Van Buren: Second Annual Message to Congress, December 3, 1838

In recommending to Congress the adoption of the necessary provisions at this session for taking the next census or enumeration of the inhabitants of the United States, the suggestion presents itself whether ***the scope of the measure might not be usefully extended by causing it to embrace authentic statistical returns of the great interests specially intrusted to or necessarily affected by the legislation of Congress.***

Martin Van Buren: Special Message to Congress, February 28, 1839

I transmit herewith a communication ***from the Secretary of War, respecting the importance of requiring the officers who may be employed to take the next general census to make a return of the names and ages of pensioners, and, for the reasons given by the Secretary of War, I recommend the subject for your favorable consideration.***²

Zachary Taylor: Annual Message to Congress, December 4, 1849

By the act of the 3d of March, 1849, a board was constituted to make arrangements for taking the Seventh Census, composed of the Secretary of State, the Attorney-General, and the Postmaster-General; and it was made the duty of this board "to prepare and cause to be printed such forms and schedules as might be necessary for the full enumeration of the inhabitants of the United States, and also proper forms and schedules for collecting in statistical tables, under proper heads, ***such information as to mines, agriculture, commerce, manufactures, education, and other topics as would exhibit a full view of the pursuits, industry, education, and resources of the country.***" The duties enjoined upon the census board thus established having been performed, it now rests with Congress to enact a law for carrying into effect the provision of the Constitution which requires an actual enumeration of the people of the United States within the ensuing year.

Millard Fillmore: Second Annual Message, December 2, 1851

The Superintendent of the Seventh Census is diligently employed, under the direction of the Secretary of the Interior, in classifying and arranging in tabular form all the statistical information derived from the returns of the marshals, and it is believed that ***when the work shall be completed it will exhibit a more perfect view of the population, wealth, occupations, and social condition of a great country than has ever been presented to the world.*** The value of such a work as the basis of enlightened legislation can hardly be overestimated, and I earnestly hope that Congress will lose no time in making the

² Congress fulfilled this request in the [Census Act of 1839](#). The Secretary of State delivered "[A Census of Pensioners for Revolutionary or Military Services](#)" in 1841.

appropriations necessary to complete the classifications and to publish the results in a style worthy of the subject and of our national character.

James Buchanan, Special Message, January 21, 1859

To the House of Representatives:

I have this day transmitted to the Senate ***a digest of the statistics of manufactures, according to the returns of the Seventh Census***, prepared under the direction of the Secretary of the Interior in accordance with a provision contained in the first section of an act of Congress approved June 12, 1858, entitled "An act making appropriations for sundry civil expenses of the Government for the year ending the 30th of June, 1859." The magnitude of the work has prevented the preparation of another copy.

Ulysses S. Grant: Second Annual Message to Congress, December 5, 1870

The work of the Census Bureau has been energetically prosecuted. The preliminary report, ***containing much information of special value and interest***, will be ready for delivery during the present session. The remaining volumes will be completed with all the dispatch consistent with perfect accuracy in arranging and classifying the returns. We shall thus at no distant day be furnished with ***an authentic record of our condition and resources***. It will, I doubt not, ***attest the growing prosperity of the country***, although during the decade which has just closed it was so severely tried by the great war waged to maintain its integrity and to secure and perpetuate our free institutions.

Ulysses S. Grant: Fourth Annual Message to Congress, December 2, 1872

The Ninth Census is about completed. Its early completion is a subject of congratulation, inasmuch as the use to be made of the statistics therein contained depends very greatly on the promptitude of publication.

The Secretary of the Interior recommends that a census be taken in 1875, which recommendation should receive the early attention of Congress. ***The interval at present established between the Federal census is so long that the information obtained at the decennial period as to the material condition, wants, and resources of the nation is of little practical value after the expiration of the first half of that period. It would probably obviate the constitutional provision regarding the decennial census if a census taken in 1875 should be divested of all political character and no reapportionment of Congressional representation be made under it. Such a census, coming, as it would, in the last year of the first century of our national existence, would furnish a noble monument of the progress of the United States during that century.***

Ulysses S. Grant: Fifth Annual Message to Congress, December 1, 1873

The Ninth Census has been completed, the report thereof published and distributed, and the working force of the Bureau disbanded. ***The Secretary of the Interior renews his recommendation for a census to be taken in 1875, to which subject the attention of Congress is invited. The original suggestion in that behalf has met with the general approval of the country; and even if it be not deemed advisable at present to provide for a regular quinquennial census, a census taken in 1875, the report of which could be completed and published before the one hundredth anniversary of our national independence, would be especially interesting and valuable, as showing the progress of the country during the first century of our national existence.*** It is believed, however, that a regular census every five years would be of substantial benefit to the country, inasmuch as our growth hitherto has been so rapid.³

James A. Garfield: Inaugural Address, March 4, 1881

The census has already sounded the alarm in the appalling figures which mark how dangerously high the tide of illiteracy has risen among our voters and their children.

Chester A. Arthur: Second Annual Message to Congress, December 4, 1882

The census returns disclose an alarming state of illiteracy in certain portions of the country, where the provision for schools is grossly inadequate. It is a momentous question for the decision of Congress whether immediate and substantial aid should not be extended by the General Government for supplementing the efforts of private beneficence and of State and Territorial legislation in behalf of education.

Grover Cleveland: Third Annual Message to Congress (first term), December 6, 1887

By the last census it is made to appear that of the 17,392,099 of our population engaged in all kinds of industries: 7,670,493 are employed in agriculture, 4,074,238 in professional and personal service (2,934,876 of whom are domestic servants and laborers), while 1,810,256 are employed in trade and transportation and 3,837,112 are classed as employed in manufacturing and mining.

For present purposes, however, the last number given should be considerably reduced. Without attempting to enumerate all, it will be conceded that there should be deducted from those which it includes 375,143 carpenters and joiners, 285,401 milliners, dressmakers, and seamstresses, 172,726 blacksmiths, 133,756 tailors and tailoresses, 102,473 masons, 76,241 butchers, 41,309 bakers, 22,083 plasterers, and 4,891 engaged in manufacturing agricultural implements, amounting in the aggregate to

³ Congress did not approve this request.

1,214,023, leaving 2,623,089 persons employed in such manufacturing industries as are claimed to be benefited by a high tariff.

Benjamin Harrison: Inaugural Address, March 4, 1889

Let us exalt patriotism and moderate our party contentions. Let those who would die for the flag on the field of battle give a better proof of their patriotism and a higher glory to their country by promoting fraternity and justice. A party success that is achieved by unfair methods or by practices that partake of revolution is hurtful and evanescent even from a party standpoint. We should hold our differing opinions in mutual respect, and, having submitted them to the arbitrament of the ballot, should accept an adverse judgment with the same respect that we would have demanded of our opponents if the decision had been in our favor.

No other people have a government more worthy of their respect and love or a land so magnificent in extent, so pleasant to look upon, and so full of generous suggestion to enterprise and labor. God has placed upon our head a diadem and has laid at our feet power and wealth beyond definition or calculation. But we must not forget that we take these gifts upon the condition that justice and mercy shall hold the reins of power and that the upward avenues of hope shall be free to all the people.

I do not mistrust the future. Dangers have been in frequent ambush along our path, but we have uncovered and vanquished them all. Passion has swept some of our communities, but only to give us a new demonstration that the great body of our people are stable, patriotic, and law-abiding. No political party can long pursue advantage at the expense of public honor or by rude and indecent methods without protest and fatal disaffection in its own body. The peaceful agencies of commerce are more fully revealing the necessary unity of all our communities, and the increasing intercourse of our people is promoting mutual respect. ***We shall find unalloyed pleasure in the revelation which our next census will make of the swift development of the great resources of some of the States. Each State will bring its generous contribution to the great aggregate of the nation's increase. And when the harvests from the fields, the cattle from the hills, and the ores of the earth shall have been weighed, counted, and valued, we will turn from them all to crown with the highest honor the State that has most promoted education, virtue, justice, and patriotism among its people.***

Benjamin Harrison: Third Annual Message, December 9, 1891

The work of the Census Bureau is now far in advance and the great bulk of the enormous labor involved completed. ***It will be more strictly a statistical exhibit and less encumbered by essays than its immediate predecessors. The methods pursued have been fair, careful, and intelligent, and have secured the approval of the statisticians who have followed them with a scientific and nonpartisan interest.*** The appropriations necessary to the early completion and publication of the authorized

volumes should be given in time to secure against delays, which increase the cost and at the same time diminish the value of the work.

Benjamin Harrison: Fourth Annual Message to Congress, December 6, 1892

The official returns of the Eleventh Census and those of the Tenth Census for seventy-five leading cities furnish the basis for the following comparisons:

- In 1880 the capital invested in manufacturing was \$1,232,839,670.
- In 1890 the capital invested in manufacturing was \$2,900,735,884.
- In 1880 the number of employees was 1,301,388.
- In 1890 the number of employees was 2,251,134.
- In 1880 the wages earned were \$501,965,778.
- In 1890 the wages earned were \$1,221,170,454.
- In 1880 the value of the product was \$2,711,579,899.
- In 1890 the value of the product was \$4,860,286,837.

I am informed by the Superintendent of the Census that the omission of certain industries in 1880 which were included in 1890 accounts in part for the remarkable increase thus shown, but after making full allowance for differences of method and deducting the returns for all industries not included in the census of 1880 ***there remain in the reports from these seventy-five cities an increase in the capital employed of \$1,522,745,604, in the value of the product of \$2,024,236,166, in wages earned of \$677,943,929, and in the number of wage earners employed of 856,029. The wage earnings not only show an increased aggregate, but an increase per capita from \$386 in 1880 to \$547 in 1890, or 41.71 per cent.***

Grover Cleveland: Second Annual Message (second term), December 3, 1894

The completion of the Eleventh Census is now in charge of the Commissioner of Labor. The total disbursements on account of the work for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1894, amounted to \$10,365,676.81. At the close of the year the number of persons employed in the Census Office was 679; at present there are about 400. ***The whole number of volumes necessary to comprehend the Eleventh Census will be 25, and they will contain 22,270 printed pages.*** The assurance is confidently made that before the close of the present calendar year the material still incomplete will be practically in hand, and the census can certainly be closed by the 4th of March, 1895. After that the revision and proof reading necessary to bring out the volumes will still be required.

The text of the census volumes has been limited as far as possible to the analysis of the statistics presented. This method, which is in accordance with law, has caused more or less friction and in some instances individual disappointment, for when the Commissioner of Labor took charge of the work he

found much matter on hand which according to this rule he was compelled to discard. ***The census is being prepared according to the theory that it is designed to collect facts and certify them to the public,*** not to elaborate arguments or to present personal views.

William McKinley: Third Annual Message to Congress, December 5, 1899

In accordance with the act of Congress approved March 3, 1899, the preliminary work in connection with the Twelfth Census is now fully under way. The officers required for the proper administration of the duties imposed have been selected. ***The provision for securing a proper enumeration of the population, as well as to secure evidence of the industrial growth of the Nation, is broader and more comprehensive than any similar legislation in the past.*** The Director advises that every needful effort is being made to push this great work to completion in the time limited by the statute. ***It is believed that the Twelfth Census will emphasize our remarkable advance in all that pertains to national progress.***

William McKinley: Fourth Annual Message to Congress, December 3, 1900

The Director of the Census states that the work in connection with ***the Twelfth Census is progressing favorably. This national undertaking, ordered by the Congress each decade, has finally resulted in the collection of an aggregation of statistical facts to determine the industrial growth of the country, its manufacturing and mechanical resources, its richness in mines and forests, the number of its agriculturists, their farms and products, its educational and religious opportunities, as well as questions pertaining to sociological conditions.***

The labors of the officials in charge of the Bureau indicate that the four important and most desired subjects, namely, population, agricultural, manufacturing, and vital statistics, will be completed within the limit prescribed by the law of March 3, 1899.

The field work incident to the above inquiries is now practically finished, and as a result the population of the States and Territories, including the Hawaiian Islands and Alaska, has been announced. The growth of population during the last decade amounts to over 13,000,000, a greater numerical increase than in any previous census in the history of the country.

Bulletins will be issued as rapidly as possible giving the population by States and Territories, by minor civil divisions. Several announcements of this kind have already been made, and it is hoped that the list will be completed by January 1. Other bulletins giving the results of the manufacturing and agricultural inquiries will be given to the public as rapidly as circumstances will admit.

The Director, while confident of his ability to complete the different branches of the undertaking in the allotted time, finds himself embarrassed by the lack of a trained force properly equipped for statistical work, thus raising the question whether in the interest of economy and a thorough execution of the census work there should not be retained in the Government employ a certain number of experts not

only to aid in the preliminary organization prior to the taking of the decennial census,, but in addition to have the advantage in the field and office work of the Bureau of trained assistants to facilitate the early completion of this enormous undertaking.

Theodore Roosevelt: First Annual Message to Congress, December 3, 1901

For the sake of good administration, sound economy, and the advancement of science, the Census Office as now constituted should be made a permanent Government bureau. This would insure better, cheaper, and more satisfactory work, in the interest not only of our business but of statistic, economic, and social science.

Calvin Coolidge: Address to the Convention of the National Education Association: "Education: The Cornerstone of Self-Government," July 4, 1924

It is not alone the youth of the land which needs and seeks education, but we have a large adult population requiring assistance in this direction. ***Our last census showed nearly 14,000,000 foreign born white persons residing among us, made up largely of those beyond school age, many of whom nevertheless need the opportunity to learn to read and write the English language, that they may come into more direct contact with the ideals and standards of our life, political and social. There are likewise over 3,000,000 native illiterates.*** When it is remembered that ignorance is the most fruitful source of poverty, vice, and crime, it is easy to realize the necessity for removing what is a menace, not only to our social well being, but to the very existence of the Republic. A failure to meet this obligation registers a serious and inexcusable defect in our Government. Such a condition not only works to a national disadvantage, but directly contradicts all our assertions regarding human rights. One of the chief rights of an American citizen is the right to an education. The opportunity to secure it must not only be provided, but if necessary made compulsory.

Herbert Hoover: News Conference, April 1, 1930

The census starts tomorrow, that is, the decennial enumeration of the whole of the 120 millions of people, ***and I am very much in hopes that the whole country will cooperate in making it expeditious and effective. The values which flow from the census taking are of paramount importance both from a point of view of government, economic advancement, social determinations, and every person in the country has an interest in making it absolutely effective. It furnishes a datum point from which we move in every advancement of the country.***

Herbert Hoover: Informal Remarks on Presenting Census Schedule to the Federal Census Taker, April 2, 1930

It is well to have a confidential census taken by the Government to enumerate the people. I hope you will have everywhere the assistance you deserve. ***The census is vital to the progress and determination of many social policies. In fact, it is the great stocktaking of American progress.***

Herbert Hoover: Address to the Chamber of Commerce of the United States, May 1, 1930

One of the subsidiary proposals in our examination 7 years ago, directed to increase stability, was that ***improved statistical services should be created which would indicate the approach of undue speculation and thereby give advance storm warnings to the business world and the country.*** Great improvements were made in the statistical services, and by reading the signals thousands of businessmen avoided the maelstrom of speculation and our major industries came through strong and unimpaired--though the people generally did not grasp these warnings, or this crisis would not have happened. We should have even more accurate services in the future and a wider understanding of their use. ***We need, particularly, a knowledge of employment at all times, if we are intelligently to plan a proper functioning of our economic system. I have interested myself in seeing that the census we are taking today makes for the first time a real determination of unemployment. I have hopes that upon this foundation we can regularly secure information of first importance to daily conduct in our economic world.***

Herbert Hoover: News Conference, July 29, 1930

I am today appointing a committee to advise the Government departments on methods for revision of the statistical services for the determination of unemployment and to establish some basis for cooperation between Government departments and business. Congress, at the last session, added somewhat to the requirements of this service, the purpose of such information being not only as a barometer of business but more importantly as a contribution to methods for placing people in employment and in relief of unemployment. The need for more systematic information has been generally recognized by business and labor organizations for some years and we now have opportunity to see if we can put it on a sounder basis.

The Committee will be made representative of the American Federation of Labor, the United States Chamber of Commerce, the Railway Employees and other labor organizations, the National Bureau of Economic Research, the Committee on Economic Changes, and other economic bodies who have been interested in the problem for many years. Mr. [Ethelbert] Stewart of the Statistical Division of the Department of Labor and Mr. [William M.] Steuart, Director of the Census, will be ex officio members, together with a representative from the Department of Agriculture.

The question is not as simple as it appears on the surface. Fortunately, ***we secured an accurate determination of the amount of unemployment in the census taken April 1. We have there a base on which to formulate plans to better advantage than before.*** But if we were to attempt such an absolutely accurate determination of employment once every 3 months it would require a house-to-house canvass of the entire Nation and would cost \$10 or \$15 million a year. I do not assume Congress has any intention of providing for an operation of that character.

Herbert Hoover: News Conference, October 21, 1930

The actual amount of unemployment, just for your own information, taking the base of the census of April 1 and applying to it the factor of employment as shown by the Department of Labor employment index, probably at the present moment is somewhere about 3 1/2 million. . . . And furthermore, the census will show that there are an average of about 1 3/4 breadwinners per family in the United States. So that when you talk about 3 1/2 million, or reduce it to 2 1/2 million of people who are continuously out of employment, you are not talking about 2 1/2 million families; you are talking about a lesser number of families without breadwinners, and you have that in contrast to the entire population of the country with all of its strength.

Herbert Hoover: Annual Message to the Congress on the State of the Union, December 2, 1930

The number of those wholly out of employment seeking for work was accurately determined by the census last April as about 2,500,000. The Department of Labor index of employment in the larger trades shows some decrease in employment since that time. The problem from a relief point of view is somewhat less than the published estimates of the number of unemployed would indicate. The intensive community and individual efforts in providing special employment outside the listed industries are not reflected in the statistical indexes and tend to reduce such published figures. Moreover, there is estimated to be a constant figure at all times of nearly 1,000,000 unemployed who are not without annual income but temporarily idle in the shift from one job to another. ***We have an average of about three breadwinners to each two families, so that every person unemployed does not represent a family without income.*** The view that the relief problems are less than the gross numbers would indicate is confirmed by the experience of several cities, which shows that the number of families in distress represents from 10 to 20 per cent of the number of the calculated unemployed. This is not said to minimize the very real problem which exists but to weigh its actual proportions.

Harry Truman: Annual Budget Message to the Congress: Fiscal Year 1948, January 10, 1947

In the past year, we have made a fine start in building up the business service programs of the Department of Commerce from their low wartime levels. To provide necessary information for business, provision of funds is recommended for a census of manufactures (already authorized by law) and

likewise for a census of business to be authorized by proposed legislation. No census has been taken in either area since 1939 and present information is badly out of date. A small but necessary increase in the business service activities of the Bureau of Foreign and Domestic Commerce is also recommended.

Harry Truman: Annual Budget Message to the Congress: Fiscal Year 1950, January 10, 1949

A census of housing should again be authorized as part of the regular decennial census in 1950. Such a census would provide comprehensive and up-to-date information needed by both private industry and public agencies.

Harry Truman: Annual Budget Message to the Congress: Fiscal Year 1951, January 9, 1950

Seventeenth decennial census.--The seventeenth decennial census of population, housing, and agriculture, to be taken this year, ***will provide basic data essential to important decisions by businessmen, governments, and other groups throughout the Nation.***

Harry Truman: Veto of Bill To Revise the Laws Relating to Immigration, Naturalization, and Nationality, June 25, 1952

The greatest vice of the present quota system, however, is that it discriminates, deliberately and intentionally, against many of the peoples of the world. The purpose behind it was to cut down and virtually eliminate immigration to this country from Southern and Eastern Europe. A theory was invented to rationalize this objective. ***The theory was that in order to be readily assimilable, European immigrants should be admitted in proportion to the numbers of persons of their respective national stocks already here as shown by the census of 1920.*** Since Americans of English, Irish and German descent were most numerous, immigrants of those three nationalities got the lion's share--more than two-thirds--of the total quota. The remaining third was divided up among all the other nations given quotas.

The desired effect was obtained. Immigration from the newer sources of Southern and Eastern Europe was reduced to a trickle. The quotas allotted to England and Ireland remained largely unused, as was intended. Total quota immigration fell to a half or a third--and sometimes even less--of the annual limit of 154,000. People from such countries as Greece, or Spain, or Latvia were virtually deprived of any opportunity to come here at all, simply because Greeks or Spaniards or Latvians had not come here before 1920 in any substantial numbers.

Harry Truman: Letter in Response to the Latest Reports From the Bureau of the Census, January 5, 1953

Dear Dr. Peel:

I appreciate most highly receiving the latest census reports which show so graphically the wonderful economic conditions of the United States.

These figures confirm the facts, obvious to most of us, that the American people are today better off than ever before in our history. I am deeply satisfied to know just how great has been our amazing progress during the last ten years.

Sincerely yours,

HARRY S. TRUMAN

[Honorable Roy V. Peel, Director, Bureau of the Census, Department of Commerce, Washington, D.C.]

Note: Dr. Peel's letter to the President follows:

Mr. President:

During your administration, the people of the United States have made tremendous gains in their incomes, standard of living, education, housing, and in numerous other ways which have been reflected in Census figures. These gains are unparalleled in American history.

The Seventeenth Decennial Census, which recorded the facts relating to the condition of the country on April 1, 1950, showed that there were nearly 151 million people, grouped in well over 43 million households with 46 million dwelling units at their disposal. ***Over half of all dwellings were occupied by owners; and of these own-homes, some 56.4 percent were free of mortgage indebtedness.*** Although the total of 5,400,000 farms was smaller than in 1940, there were 78 million more acres devoted to farming than a decade earlier. Three-quarters of all farms are now operated by the owners. Never before in history have so many farmers had the help of modern facilities, machinery and equipment. In 1950, over five and a half million farmers reported sales exceeding 22 billion dollars, an all-time high. These are the salient facts revealed by the 1950 Censuses of Population, Housing and Agriculture.

The Census of Manufactures, covering operations in 1947, enumerated 241 thousand establishments with value added by manufacture amounting to 74-5 billion dollars. Last year, according to the Census Bureau's annual survey of trends, value added was about 102 billion dollars.

The Census of Business, covering operations in 1948, gave the facts on nearly 3 million retail stores, wholesale establishments and service businesses. Retail sales in 1948 totalled 130.5 billion dollars. At the present time, retail sales exceed 160 billion dollars.

The Census Bureau's current statistical reports show that there are now some 158 million Americans. Preliminary studies of transportation and mining, and current surveys of foreign trade, carried out by

the Bureau of the Census, indicate that in these fields, too, the achievements of the American people are without parallel in the history of the whole world.

Believing that these facts documenting our growth and greatness as a nation, will be a source of gratification to you, the President of the United States, under whose direction this magnificent record of accomplishment was compiled, I have the honor to present to you token copies of the most recent reports on the Censuses of Manufactures, Business, Population, Housing and Agriculture. It is our hope to place in your hands, the final, complete volumes as soon as they are published. May you and the Americans of future generations derive both satisfaction and inspiration from this portrayal of the might of America.

ROY V. PEEL

Harry Truman: Annual Budget Message to the Congress: Fiscal Year 1954, January 9, 1953

The 1950 census showed that only 38 percent of our farms had telephones--a smaller percentage than in 1920. Furthermore, many farms with telephones had unreliable service. I am therefore recommending an increase of 30 million dollars in the loan program for rural telephones.

Census Bureau.--Expenditures for census work will rise substantially in the fiscal year 1954 because the Census Bureau will take the basic 5-year censuses of business, transportation, manufactures, and mineral industries, and will begin preliminary work on the 1954 census of agriculture. As a result of improvements in the methods of collecting and compiling data, the total expenditure for the censuses of business and manufactures will be less than the last time they were taken despite increases in salary rates and other costs.

Dwight Eisenhower: Annual Budget Message to the Congress: Fiscal Year 1956, January 17, 1955

Another aspect of general-purpose research is the statistical work of the Census Bureau. ***We do not have all the statistical information required in our dynamic economy.*** I am therefore recommending a government-wide effort to improve statistics in those areas where our work has been most handicapped by incomplete information. Increases in appropriations are recommended for the Census Bureau for statistics on the labor force and for an intercensal survey on housing. At the same time, in other parts of the budget, increases are recommended for statistics on agriculture, production, construction, employment, and finance.

Dwight Eisenhower: Annual Message to the Congress on the State of the Union, January 5, 1956

I recommend that the number of persons admitted to this country annually be based not on the 1920 census but on the latest, the 1950 census. Provision should be made to allow for greater flexibility in the

use of quotas so if one country does not use its share, the vacancies may be made available for the use of qualified individuals from other countries.

Dwight Eisenhower: Annual Budget Message to the Congress: Fiscal Year 1960, January 19, 1959

This budget recommends a major increase in funds for obtaining fundamental economic and demographic data through the 18th decennial census. It also provides for improvements in the compilation of regular price, construction, manpower, and related data to help produce more sensitive and useful information on which many private and Government policies are based.

John F. Kennedy: Remarks at the Swearing In of Robert C. Weaver as Housing and Home Finance Administrator, February 11, 1961

Public housing, urban renewal, private housing, all of this represents a basic aspiration of American families to house themselves securely. ***There are, according to our latest Census Bureau figures, over 25 million Americans who live in substandard housing.*** It is the ambition of this administration to try to provide decent housing for all American families, and Mr. Weaver's responsibility will be to lead this important national effort.

John F. Kennedy: Special Message to the Congress on the Needs of the Nation's Senior Citizens, February 21, 1963

A far greater proportion of senior citizens live in inferior housing than is true of the houses occupied by younger citizens. ***According to the 1960 census, one-fourth of those aged 60 and over did not have households of their own but lived in the houses of relatives, in lodging houses, or in institutions. Of the remainder, over 30 percent lived in substandard housing which lacked a private bath, toilet, or running hot water or was otherwise dilapidated or deficient, and many others lived in housing unsuitable or unsafe for elderly people.***

For roughly four-fifths of those older citizens not living on the farm, housing is a major expense, taking more than one-third of their income. About two-thirds of all those 65 and over own their own homes-but, while such homes are generally free from mortgage, their value is generally less than \$10,000.

Lyndon Johnson: Special Message to the Congress on Housing and Community Development, January 27, 1964

The living conditions of our rural families—including the nearly one-third of our elderly who live on farms or in small towns—likewise deserve and need special consideration.

--more than a million rural families still live in homes of such poor condition that they actually endanger the health and safety of the occupants.

--three million rural families live in homes that need major repairs.

--a third of our rural homes do not have complete sanitary facilities.

--nearly two-thirds of rural homes are without adequate heating. . . .

At the time of the 1960 census, 7 million nonfarm dwellings were found to be deteriorating, including 2.2 million occupied by their owners. Rehabilitation and preservation of existing housing wherever possible is a key element in the urban renewal process today. Elderly homeowners in urban renewal areas with low, fixed incomes are at a particular disadvantage in trying to meet the increased housing payments required by rehabilitation. To assist them, I recommend a program of federal insurance and purchase of low-interest loans, with a deferral of amortization of principal, for home rehabilitation by elderly homeowners in urban renewal programs

Lyndon Johnson: Special Message to the Congress: "Toward Full Educational Opportunity," January 12, 1965

Federal action is needed to assist the States and localities in bringing the full benefits of education to children of low-income families. Assistance will be provided:

--On the basis of Census data showing the distribution of low income families among the counties or school districts within States.

--Through payments made to states for distribution to school districts.

--With the assurance that the funds will be used for improving the quality of education in schools serving low-income areas.

--On the condition that Federal funds will not be used to reduce state and local fiscal efforts.

--For the benefit of all children within the area served, including those who participate in shared services or other special educational projects

Lyndon Johnson: Remarks to Members of the National Council of Senior Citizens, June 3, 1966

The 1960 census shows us that nearly 3 million elderly families were living in totally inadequate housing. We would like to correct this. We intend to correct this. We want to give every senior American a dwelling that is not only adequate, but also designed for his particular comfort and safety. One of the most promising answers to this special problem is the new rent supplement program that is now before Congress that will permit private building to help us solve this great problem

Lyndon Johnson: Remarks at the Swearing In of Stanley Ruttenberg as Assistant Secretary of Labor for Manpower, June 17, 1966

I should also like to have the fastest possible collection of complete manpower resources information in those 5,000 census tract areas with the greatest unemployment.

Richard Nixon: Special Message to the Congress on Problems of Population Growth, July 18, 1969

For some time population growth has been seen as a problem for developing countries. Only recently has it come to be seen that pressing problems are also posed for advanced industrial countries when their populations increase at the rate that the United States, for example, must now anticipate. Food supplies may be ample in such nations, but social supplies--the capacity to educate youth, to provide privacy and living space, to maintain the processes of open, democratic government--may be grievously strained. . . .

In 1917 the total number of Americans passed 100 million, after three full centuries of steady growth. In 1967--just half a century later--the 200 million mark was passed. If the present rate of growth continues, the third hundred million persons will be added in roughly a thirty-year period. This means that by the year 2000, or shortly thereafter, there will be more than 300 million Americans.

This growth will produce serious challenges for our society. I believe that many of our present social problems may be related to the fact that we have had only fifty years in which to accommodate the second hundred million Americans. In fact, since 1945 alone some 90 million babies have been born in this country. We have thus had to accomplish in a very few decades an adjustment to population growth which was once spread over centuries. And it now appears that we will have to provide for a third hundred million Americans in a period of just 30 years.

The great majority of the next hundred million Americans will be born to families which looked forward to their birth and are prepared to love them and care for them as they grow up. The critical issue is whether social institutions will also plan for their arrival and be able to accommodate them in a humane and intelligent way. We can be sure that society will not be ready for this growth unless it begins its planning immediately. And adequate planning, in turn, requires that we ask ourselves a number of important questions.

Where, for example, will the next hundred million Americans live? If the patterns of the last few decades hold for the rest of the century, then at least three quarters of the next hundred million persons will locate in highly urbanized areas. Are our cities prepared for such an influx? The chaotic history of urban growth suggests that they are not and that many of their existing problems will be severely aggravated by a dramatic increase in numbers. Are there ways, then, of readying our cities? . . .

Other questions also confront us. How, for example, will we house the next hundred million Americans? Already economical and attractive housing is in very short supply. New architectural forms, construction techniques, and financing strategies must be aggressively pioneered if we are to provide the needed dwellings.

What of our natural resources and the quality of our environment? Pure air and water are fundamental to life itself. Parks, recreational facilities, and an attractive countryside are essential to our emotional well-being. Plant and animal and mineral resources are also vital. A growing population will increase the demand for such resources. But in many cases their supply will not be increased and may even be endangered. The ecological system upon which we now depend may seriously deteriorate if our efforts to conserve and enhance the environment do not match the growth of the population.

How will we educate and employ such a large number of people? Will our transportation systems move them about as quickly and economically as necessary? How will we provide adequate health care when our population reaches 300 million? Will our political structures have to be reordered, too, when our society grows to such proportions? Many of our institutions are already under tremendous strain as they try to respond to the demands of 1969. Will they be swamped by a growing flood of people in the next thirty years? How easily can they be replaced or altered?

Finally we must ask: how can we better assist American families so that they will have no more children than they wish to have? In my first message to Congress on domestic affairs, I called for a national commitment to provide a healthful and stimulating environment for all children during their first five years of life. One of the ways in which we can promote that goal is to provide assistance for more parents in effectively planning their families. We know that involuntary childbearing often results in poor physical and emotional health for all members of the family. It is one of the factors which contribute to our distressingly high infant mortality rate, the unacceptable level of malnutrition, and the disappointing performance of some children in our schools. Unwanted or untimely childbearing is one of several forces which are driving many families into poverty or keeping them in that condition. Its threat helps to produce the dangerous incidence of illegal abortion. And finally, of course, it needlessly adds to the burdens placed on all our resources by increasing population.

None of the questions I have raised here is new. But all of these questions must now be asked and answered with a new sense of urgency. The answers cannot be given by government alone, nor can government alone turn the answers into programs and policies. I believe, however, that the Federal Government does have a special responsibility for defining these problems and for stimulating thoughtful responses.

Perhaps the most dangerous element in the present situation is the fact that so few people are examining these questions from the viewpoint of the whole society. Perceptive businessmen project the demand for their products many years into the future by studying population trends. Other private institutions develop sophisticated planning mechanisms which allow them to account for rapidly changing conditions. In the governmental sphere, however, there is virtually no machinery through which we can develop a detailed understanding of demographic changes and bring that understanding

to bear on public policy. The federal government makes only a minimal effort in this area. The efforts of state and local governments are also inadequate. Most importantly, the planning which does take place at some levels is poorly understood at others and is often based on unexamined assumptions.

In short, the questions I have posed in this message too often go unasked, and when they are asked, they seldom are adequately answered.

It is for all these reasons that I today propose the creation by Congress of a Commission on Population Growth and the American Future.

The Congress should give the Commission responsibility for inquiry and recommendations in three specific areas.

First, the probable course of population growth, internal migration and related demographic developments between now and the year 2000.

As much as possible, these projections should be made by regions, states, and metropolitan areas. Because there is an element of uncertainty in such projections, various alternative possibilities should be plotted.

It is of special importance to note that, beginning in August of 1970, population data by county will become available from the decennial census, which will have been taken in April of that year. ***By April 1971, computer summaries of first count data will be available by census tract and an important range of information on income, occupations, education, household composition, and other vital considerations will also be in hand. The Federal government can make better use of such demographic information than it has done in the past, and state governments and other political subdivisions can also use such data to better advantage. The Commission on Population Growth and the American Future will be an appropriate instrument for this important initiative.***

Second, the resources in the public sector of the economy that will be required to deal with the anticipated growth in population.

The single greatest failure of foresight--at all levels of government--over the past generation has been in areas connected with expanding population. Government and legislatures have frequently failed to appreciate the demands which continued population growth would impose on the public sector. These demands are myriad: they will range from preschool classrooms to post-doctoral fellowships; from public works which carry water over thousands of miles to highways which carry people and products from region to region; from vest pocket parks in crowded cities to forest preserves and quiet lakes in the countryside. Perhaps especially, such demands will assert themselves in forms that affect the quality of life. The time is at hand for a serious assessment of such needs.

Third, ways in which population growth may affect the activities of Federal, state and local government.

In some respects, population growth affects everything that American government does. Yet only occasionally do our governmental units pay sufficient attention to population growth in their own

planning. Only occasionally do they consider the serious implications of demographic trends for their present and future activities.

Yet some of the necessary information is at hand and can be made available to all levels of government. Much of the rest will be obtained by the Commission. For such information to be of greatest use, however, it should also be interpreted and analyzed and its implications should be made more evident. It is particularly in this connection that the work of the Commission on Population Growth and the American Future will be as much educational as investigative. The American public and its governing units are not as alert as they should be to these growing challenges. A responsible but insistent voice of reason and foresight is needed. The Commission can provide that voice in the years immediately before us. . . .

In order that the Commission will have time to utilize the initial data which results from the 1970 census, I ask that it be established for a period of two years. An interim report to the President and Congress should be required at the end of the first year.

I would take this opportunity to mention a number of additional government activities dealing with population growth which need not await the report of the Commission.

It is my view that no American woman should be denied access to family planning assistance because of her economic condition. I believe, therefore, that we should establish as a national goal the provision of adequate family planning services within the next five years to all those who want them but cannot afford them. This we have the capacity to do.

Clearly, in no circumstances will the activities associated with our pursuit of this goal be allowed to infringe upon the religious convictions or personal wishes and freedom of any individual, nor will they be allowed to impair the absolute right of all individuals to have such matters of conscience respected by public authorities. . . .

One of the most serious challenges to human destiny in the last third of this century will be the growth of the population. Whether man's response to that challenge will be a cause for pride or for despair in the year 2000 will depend very much on what we do today. If we now begin our work in an appropriate manner, and if we continue to devote a considerable amount of attention and energy to this problem, then mankind will be able to surmount this challenge as it has surmounted so many during the long march of civilization.

When future generations evaluate the record of our time, one of the most important factors in their judgment will be the way in which we responded to population growth. Let us act in such a way that those who come after us--even as they lift their eyes beyond earth's bounds--can do so with pride in the planet on which they live, with gratitude to those who lived on it in the past, and with continuing confidence in its future.

Richard Nixon: Statement on Signing the Bill Establishing the Cabinet Committee on Opportunities for Spanish-Speaking People, December 31, 1969

IN THE 1970 census we will learn, for the first time, exactly what portion of the American public is made up of Spanish speaking and Spanish-surname Americans. It is estimated that between 8 and 10 million of our people draw upon a Mexican, Puerto Rican, or Cuban heritage.

Many members of this significant minority group have been too long denied genuine, equal opportunity. For example, many have been denied the dignity that comes from useful job training, good jobs, and a real share in American business enterprise.

The bill before me transforms the Inter-Agency Committee on Mexican American Affairs into a statutory Cabinet Committee on Opportunities for Spanish-Speaking People, and authorizes funding for this important activity. This was made necessary when legislation passed in 1968 prohibited financing of interagency committees through contributions from member agencies.

In signing this bill, I reaffirm the concern of this Government for providing equal opportunity to all Spanish-speaking Americans--to open doors to better jobs and the ownership and management of business.

Richard Nixon: Proclamation 3973 - Nineteenth Decennial Census of the United States, March 24, 1970

By the President of the United States Of America

A Proclamation

The Founding Fathers set forth in Article I of our Constitution the requirement that an "... Enumeration shall be made within three Years after the first Meeting of the Congress of the United States, and within every subsequent Term of ten Years in such Manner as they shall by Law direct." Accordingly, the first Census was taken in 1790. The Nineteenth Decennial Census will be taken beginning April 1, 1970.

As our population has grown from the nearly four million counted in the first Census to over two hundred million, so the needs for the Census have expanded. Today, more than ever, we need reliable measures of the great changes which have occurred in the growth, location and characteristics of our people in their housing and activities.

Every American can be sure that there will be no improper use of the information given in the Census. Government officials and employees are forbidden by law to use information recorded on the Census form for the purposes of taxation, investigation, regulation, or for any other purpose whatsoever affecting the individual. Every employee of the Census Bureau is prohibited from disclosing information pertaining to any individual.

Now, Therefore, I, Richard M. Nixon, President of the United States of America, do hereby declare and make known that under the law it is the duty of every person over eighteen years of age to answer all

questions in the Census schedules applying to him and the family to which he belongs, and to the home occupied by him or his family.

The prompt, complete and accurate answering of all official inquiries made by Census officials is of great importance to our country. I ask all Americans to extend full cooperation to the 1970 Decennial Census of Population and Housing.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this twenty-fourth day of March, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred seventy, and of the Independence of the United States of America the one hundred ninety-fourth.

RICHARD NIXON

Richard Nixon: Special Message to the Congress on Indian Affairs, July 8, 1970

Our new census will probably show that a larger proportion of America's Indians are living off the reservation than ever before in our history. Some authorities even estimate that more Indians are living in cities and towns than are remaining on the reservation. Of those American Indians who are now dwelling in urban areas, approximately three-fourths are living in poverty.

The Bureau of Indian Affairs is organized to serve the 462,000 reservation Indians. The BIA's responsibility does not extend to Indians who have left the reservation, but this point is not always clearly understood. As a result of this misconception, Indians living in urban areas have often lost out on the opportunity to participate in other programs designed for disadvantaged groups. As a first step toward helping the urban Indians, I am instructing appropriate officials to do all they can to ensure that this misunderstanding is corrected

Gerald Ford: Statement on Signing the Bill Providing for a Mid-Decade Census of Population, October 18, 1976

Passage of this bill provides us with a major opportunity to improve the statistical information which is often the basis for decisions on major issues of public policy. With better information available at 5-year intervals, we will no longer need to rely on data which are often obsolete. The historic method of counting the population every 10 years simply does not meet the Nation's current needs. This legislation will also make it possible for us to update Federal statistical programs dealing with social statistics, since the mid-decade effort will provide for a periodic updating of significant national, social, and demographic characteristics.

This is important because

- ***\$39 billion are distributed annually using formulae which use population data.***
- ***Federal, State, and local planners depend heavily on current population data.***

- *The need for a variety of expensive “ad hoc” surveys between censuses will be reduced.*
- *We will be able to identify the needs of various groups in the American public.*

Jimmy Carter: Congressional Hispanic Caucus Remarks at the Annual Dinner, September 13, 1979

We also know that accurate information about our country is a fundamental weapon in the struggle for social justice. ***In this connection, the 1980 census is a major opportunity and a personal challenge to me and to everyone in this room. If Hispanic Americans are to be full partners in all aspects of American life and to share in its full benefits, we must have an accurate count of how many Hispanic Americans live in the United States of America.***

I have for the first time directed the Census Bureau to hire bilingual census takers, to print questionnaires in Spanish, and to work with community groups and leaders who understand their own community, to encourage cooperation. It's important, because of the sensitivity of some people's lives who live here, that the confidentiality of individual census information will be protected. And I have directed, without equivocation, that this be done.

I cannot look at the individual information, your Congressman cannot look at it, and no other Government agency can look at this individual confidential information that will give us accurate information. ***An accurate count will mean better Government funding for areas that have a high population of Hispanic Americans and better political representation. And a much larger Congressional Hispanic Caucus will result from better counts of those who live in our country. That in turn will put much more muscle behind the efforts that all of you tonight in this room will espouse for the benefit of those in our country who speak Spanish.***

Jimmy Carter: Proclamation 4701 - Census 1980, November 6, 1979

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

Our Constitution requires that there be a census of the people in the United States once every ten years. The Twentieth Decennial Census will be taken beginning April 1, 1980.

It is vitally important to everyone that this census be a complete and accurate report of the Nation's population and resources. Its results determine the representation of the States in the House of Representatives, the redrawing of congressional boundaries, and State and local redistricting. ***They also provide the basis for distributing large amounts of funds under various Federal programs among the States and communities.***

The census is also important for a broader purpose. Americans are a free and mobile people. Significant and rapid changes take place in our country. To better understand ourselves and make intelligent decisions for the future, we depend greatly on our census.

Now, Therefore, I, Jimmy Carter, President of the United States of America, do hereby declare and make known that under the law it is the duty of every person to participate in the census by answering all questions in the census schedule applying to him or her and the family to which he or she belongs, and to the home being occupied.

Every person in the United States can be sure that there will be no improper use of the information given in the census. Answers cannot be released in any way which will harm the individual. By law individual information collected will not be used for purposes of taxation, investigation, or regulation, or in connection with military or jury service, the compulsion of school attendance, the regulation of immigration, or with the enforcement of any national, State, or local law or ordinance.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this sixth day of November, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred seventy-nine, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and fourth.

JIMMY CARTER

George H. W. Bush: Proclamation 6105 - Twenty-First Decennial Census, 1990, March 6, 1990

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

In 1790, barely a year after our Nation's government was established, the first Census of Population was taken by the United States Marshals under the direction of then-Secretary of State Thomas Jefferson. A total of 3.9 million residents were counted. This year, another census will be taken -- the 21st in the history of the United States. Each decennial census has helped to chart the growth and change experienced by our vast country during the past 200 years.

The primary purpose for the census remains the same today as it was in 1790: to serve as the source of State population totals so that the number of seats in the House of Representatives can be properly apportioned among the States. Mandated by the Constitution, the use of census figures in guaranteeing representative government has been expanded over the years by the courts. It now includes the reshaping of voting district boundaries for State legislatures and local governments, as well.

Since our Nation's founding, the census has been a way of taking a "statistical snapshot" of our people and determining their number and location. Over the years, census information has become essential in the distribution of billions of dollars annually under Federal and State programs for such worthwhile purposes as education, health care, community development, transportation, and crime prevention.

Government policymakers routinely use census data to make decisions on where to locate or expand public facilities and services, while business planners employ census numbers to devise strategies for the Nation's economic development.

Data from the 1990 census will serve as the basis for many of the Nation's official statistics during the coming decade. Leaders in government and the private sector will use the information it provides in making critical decisions as we prepare to enter the 21st century.

Abraham Lincoln once observed: "If we could just know where we are and whither we are tending, we could better judge what to do and how to do it." The census helps to provide us with such insight.

Now, Therefore, I, George Bush, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, ***do hereby declare and make known that under the law it is the responsibility and obligation of every person who usually resides in the United States to take part in the 1990 Census of Population and Housing by truthfully answering all questions on the census forms applying to him or her and to each member of the household to which he or she belongs, and to the residence being occupied.***

Every resident of the United States is hereby assured that the information provided in the census will be used solely for the purposes allowed by law. Only combined statistical summaries of answers to census questions are published. By law, individual and household answers cannot be released in any way that will identify or harm any person or household. Individual information collected will not be used for purposes of taxation, investigation, or regulation, or in connection with military or jury service, the compulsion of school attendance, the regulation of immigration, or the enforcement of any other Federal, State, or local law or ordinance.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this sixth day of March, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and ninety, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and fourteenth.

GEORGE BUSH

George Bush: Remarks at a White House Briefing for the American Legislative Exchange Council, April 27, 1990

So, let me say it plain and simple: I am a believer in the Jeffersonian tradition. I believe that innovation springs from these 50 laboratories of democracy. And I believe in the inherent wisdom and leadership of the States.

Federalism must be a dynamic partnership if we're to end that age-old affliction of mankind: poverty -- poverty of knowledge and skills, poverty of opportunity, poverty of hope. We're going to need such a partnership if we're to meet new missions to keep expanding opportunity in this field that we were just

talking about -- improving education, to implement a national transportation strategy, and to fight the scourge of illegal drug use.

Our partnership must begin with an accurate account of the depth and scope of our needs that can only begin with the U.S. census, a project that needs your involvement. Again, at this moment these census workers are beginning to visit all addresses from which they haven't come back in. And we really need to get moving on this, because census data will help you make important decisions for the States. And it really fits into this theme of decentralization, part of the decentralization of government, of putting our trust where it belongs: with the people.

George Bush: Remarks on Signing the Asian/Pacific American Heritage Month Proclamation, May 7, 1990

Consider this: ***The last U.S. Census showed that 75 percent of Asian Americans age 25 and over had at least a high school degree -- well above the national average of 66 percent.*** This nation is incomparably richer because of great scientists like Nobel Prize winner Dr. Yuan Lee and the late An Wang. We are richer because of the talent of Michael Chang and the courage of the late Ellison Onizuka. And we are richer because of Asian Pacific American leaders, many of them with us here today.

William Clinton: Remarks to the Cleveland City Club, May 10, 1993

We are the only advanced country, the only one, that doesn't worry about having a systematic way of training high school graduates who don't go on to college. ***And yet we now have clear evidence, in the 1990 census, that anybody who graduates from high school but gets no further training or who drops out of high school who goes into the work force is likely to have declining earnings.***

William Clinton: Remarks to the Conference on the Future of the American Workplace in Chicago, Illinois, July 26, 1993

Finally, we very much want to create a program of training for people who don't get 4-year college degrees, that merge the partnership and efforts of the private sector, the education system, and the Government. Everybody in this country who doesn't go on to a 4-year college needs to finish high school and get at least 2 years of further training, either in a school, on the workplace, or in the service. Everybody. ***All the demographic figures are clear now from the '90 census. All the people in this country who have high school plus 2 years, if it's good, are highly likely to get jobs with growing incomes. Those who have less are highly likely to get jobs with shrinking incomes.*** You know, you don't have to be Einstein to figure out we should do what is likely to give people jobs with growing incomes and that, in the aggregate, it's better for you in the workplace and better for the country as a whole. So we're trying to do that.

William Clinton: Remarks at a National Democratic Club Dinner, January 9, 1996

You ought to care if we eliminate the direct student loan program, which gives people lower cost, more hassle-free loans with better terms of repayment, because we need more young people going on to college. **If you look at the 1990 census, it is absolutely chilling to see what has happened to young people who don't have at least 2 years of education after high school, what happens to their job prospects, their earnings, their prospects for health care, for retirement, for continuing education, for stability in their lives.** It is chilling.

William Clinton: Remarks to the Community in Concord, New Hampshire, February 2, 1996

You know, all the young people here probably know this, but every 10 years our country does a census, and we not only count how many people are living in the United States and break them down by gender, by race, by State, by neighborhood, we also do a lot of other things. We break them down by income and educational level, and we try to find as much as we can out, and then we can look at this census and look at the one before and see how America is changing.

And I want every young person in the audience to listen to this, because it's very important: ***In the 1990 census, last time we counted everybody, we found that there was a huge break in income in the 1990 census compared with the 1980 census, that came among people who had at least 2 years of education after high school. People who had at least 2 years of education and training after high school tended to get jobs where they made a decent living starting out and then they had a chance slowly to get raises. People who didn't tended to get jobs where they didn't get a raise or even suffered declines in income, especially compared with inflation, and where they had less stability. And this really hit younger people.***

So whether you like it or not, if you're a young American, you need to be thinking about what you're going to do after high school to get enough skills, to get enough knowledge, to develop the capacity to learn for a lifetime so that if you go into the work force you can succeed in this exciting but very challenging new world.

William Clinton: Executive Order 13005 - Empowerment Contracting, May 21, 1996

"Area of general economic distress" shall be defined, for all urban and rural communities, ***as any census tract that has a poverty rate of at least 20 percent*** or any designated Federal Empowerment Zone, Supplemental Empowerment Zone, Enhanced Enterprise Community, or Enterprise Community. In addition, ***the Secretary may designate as an area of general economic distress any additional rural or Indian reservation area after considering the following factors:***

- (1) Unemployment rate;**
- (2) Degree of poverty;**
- (3) Extent of outmigration;** and
- (4) Rate of business formation and rate of business growth.

William Clinton: Statement on the Nomination of Kenneth Prewitt To Be Director of the Bureau of the Census, June 23, 1998

A fair and accurate census is a fundamental part of representative democracy and good government. To ensure that we conduct a sound and successful census in the Year 2000, I am pleased to nominate Dr. Kenneth Prewitt to be the next Director of the United States Census Bureau.

The decennial census is the foundation for our most important public values. It is the means by which everyone in this country is counted. It is the basis for providing equality under the law. And it is the single most important source of information about the American people.

By using the census, the Federal Government is able to designate funding for and evaluate programs across the Federal Government, in every State and every locality. It is the instrument that Congress and the executive branch use to properly allocate the more than 180 billion dollars in Federal funds every year for many programs like Head Start, programs for older Americans, the disabled, and for transportation. Conducting an accurate census truly affects every person in this country, and the quality of Census 2000 will have ramifications for decades to come.

William Clinton: Statement of Administration Policy: S. 2260 - Commerce, Justice, State, the Judiciary, and Related Agencies Appropriations Bill, FY 1999, July 21, 1998

The Administration appreciates the Committee's support for the Department of Commerce overall, and in particular its full funding of the President's request for the Decennial Census, the Nation's single largest statistical operation. However, the Administration remains concerned about funding for a number of high priority programs, including:

Statistics initiatives that are necessary to upgrade the Nation's core statistical infrastructure, particularly efforts to improve our current measurements of the Gross Domestic Product, Poverty Rate, and other fundamental economic indicators crucial to sound private and public sector decision-making. ***Increased funding is also vitally important to maintain the full development of the Continuous Measurement program, which will provide critical demographic data about the Nation's communities every year.***

William Clinton: Statement of Administration Policy: H.R. 4276 - Commerce, Justice, State, the Judiciary, and Related Agencies Appropriations Bill, FY 1999, July 22, 1998

Statistics Initiatives. The Administration is concerned about inadequate funding for high- priority statistical initiatives, especially the improvement of National Account measures, the Poverty Measure initiative, and ***the Continuous Measurement program, which will provide annual demographic information on the population and eliminate the need for the "long form" in the 2010 Census.***

William Clinton: Statement on the 2000 Census, April 1, 1999

Exactly one year from today, America will commence the first census of the 21st century. The responsibility to conduct the census is nearly as old as our Nation. Beginning in 1790, and every 10 years since, America has counted its people, charted its growth, and by doing so, prepared for its future.

The census is a vital statistical snapshot that tells us who we are and where we are going as a nation. And though it is taken only once a decade, it is important to our everyday lives. The census helps communities determine where to build everything from schools to supermarkets and from homes to hospitals. It helps the Government decide how to distribute funds and assistance to States and localities. It is used to draw the lines of legislative districts and reapportion the seats each State holds in Congress.

The Census Bureau estimates it will count about 275 million people next year across our Nation. But America must be accurate—and more so than we have been in the past. The previous census, in 1990, missed 8.4 million people and counted more than 4 million twice. Children, minorities, and low income Americans have been often overlooked. We must do better. Every person in America counts—so every American must be counted.

I am committed to ensuring that Census 2000 is as accurate, complete, and fair as possible. That will be an enormous undertaking—demanding the largest peacetime mobilization in our Nation's history, involving hundreds of thousands of local census takers and community volunteers. I have, therefore, asked every executive department and agency of the Federal Government to develop an action plan that helps recruit census workers and promotes full participation in Census 2000. The Census Bureau has put forth a comprehensive and complete plan that includes a full enumeration and modern scientific methods. The Bureau will also build unprecedented partnerships with business, community groups, schools, and State, local, and tribal governments and use, for the first time, radio, television, and billboard advertisements to encourage everyone to participate in Census 2000.

Working together, we can ensure that Census 2000 truly reflects who we are as a people and that each American can make the best of the opportunities of the 21st century

William Clinton: Statement of Administration Policy: H.R. 2670 - Departments of Commerce, Justice, and State, the Judiciary, and Related Agencies Appropriations Bill, FY 2000, August 4, 1999

In addition to concerns about the decennial census, the Administration urges that full funding be provided for high-priority initiatives such as the continuous measurement program. Continuous measurement will provide valuable annual demographic information and eliminate the need for the "long form" in the 2010 census.

William J. Clinton: The President's Radio Address, April 1, 2000

Good morning. Today I want to speak with you about an opportunity to shape the future of our country, and a responsibility we all have to make our voices count. I want to talk about this year's census and the importance of filling out and sending in your census form right away.

The Constitution mandates that our Nation conduct a census every 10 years. The first was taken back in 1790 and was directed by Thomas Jefferson when he served as Secretary of State. Every decade since then, ***the census has helped tell the story of America—who we are and what we're becoming.***

Census 2000 is our chance to write the latest chapter in the unfolding epoch of America. Even though the census is taken only once in a decade, it has an impact on our lives every day. A report I'm releasing today by the Council of Economic Advisers shows just how much we need the census.

We need the census to help decide how almost \$200 billion in Federal funds will be invested in States and communities. We need the census to draw legislative district lines and allocate seats for each State in the U.S. House of Representatives. We need the census to help our hometowns determine where to build everything from roads to schools to hospitals to child care centers. And we need the census to help businesses make decisions about where to invest and help individuals make informed decisions about where to buy a home or take a job.

For all of these reasons, it's important to make sure the first census of the 21st century is fair, accurate, and complete. ***After all, if we want to make good decisions about where we need to go as a nation, we first have to know where we are.***

In the last census, we didn't know where more than 8 million people were. They were left uncoun-
ted. Many of them were children, minorities, and low income families. When people are uncoun-
ted, their voices are unheard in the Halls of Congress and in their own communities.

Those who suggest that filling out your census form isn't essential are plainly wrong. An inaccurate census distorts our understanding of a community's needs, denies people their fair share of resources, and diminishes the quality of life not only for them but for all of us. If we believe everybody in our American community counts, we simply must make sure everyone is counted.

That's an enormous undertaking. This year's census represents the largest peacetime mobilization in American history, involving hundreds of thousands of local census takers and community volunteers. But the most important person in the process is you.

I want to thank the millions of Americans who have sent in their forms. As of today, we're halfway there. But we must do better. ***We need the most accurate picture of America in the dawn of the 21st century.***

So today I'm issuing a proclamation declaring this Census Day and urging all Americans to take a little time this weekend to fill out and send in your form. I've also issued a memorandum to all Federal employees urging them to do the same. Having completed our census form, I can tell you it only takes a few moments.

You can also fill out your census form online, as the Vice President did just recently. The on-line form can be found at www.2000.census.gov. It won't take long. The short form is the shortest since 1820. The long form is the shortest in history. And ***every question on both forms was reviewed by Congress 2 years ago.***

But more important, information from the long form is critical for everything from helping communities design mass transit systems to providing 911 emergency services. It also helps us calculate cost-of-living increases for Social Security, military retirement, and veterans' pensions.

I know Americans are concerned about their privacy, and that's why I also want to stress that the information you provide is strictly, absolutely confidential. Individual information will not be available to anyone outside the Census Bureau for any reason.

So whether you have a long or a short form, please fill it out completely and send it in promptly. ***America is counting on you. This is your future. Don't leave it blank.***

Thanks for listening.

William Clinton: Proclamation 7286 - Census Day, 2000, April 1, 2000

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

Every 10 years, as mandated by our Constitution, all persons living in the United States are called upon to participate in the census. ***As the foremost method of gathering information about our Nation, the census plays a crucial role in helping us to maintain our democratic form of government.***

An accurate census helps to ensure that the rights and needs of every person are recorded and recognized as we shape public policies, programs, and services. Too often in the past, children, minorities, and low-income individuals have not been counted and, as a result, have not been fully and fairly served. Census data are also used to determine the number of seats each State is allocated in the

U.S. House of Representatives, and State and local governments depend upon these data to draw legislative districts that accurately represent their residents.

The census also serves as the basis for many public funding and private investment decisions. Census results play a part in determining the portion each State receives of more than \$185 billion in funds distributed by the Federal Government each year. State and local public officials use census data to decide where to build public facilities such as schools, roads, hospitals, and libraries. Census data also are a valuable resource for businesses that are trying to identify where to build stores, office buildings, or shopping centers.

The census is unique. It reaches every population group, from America's long-time residents to its most recent immigrants, and every age group from newborns to centenarians. The census touches every social class and every racial and ethnic group. The census is truly a democratic process in which we all can participate.

Census 2000 offers each of us an important opportunity to shape the future of our Nation. By taking part, we help ensure the well-being of our families and our communities, and we fulfill one of our fundamental civic duties. The U.S. Census Bureau has taken unprecedented steps to ensure full participation in this first census of the new millennium. At the same time, the Bureau will continue its long tradition of protecting the personal information of America's citizens, and no other Government agency will be able to see any individual or family census form. ***I strongly urge every man and woman living in the United States to fill out and return his or her census form or to cooperate with census takers who will help them do so.***

Now, Therefore, I, William J. Clinton, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim April 1, 2000, as Census Day. I call upon all the people of the United States to observe this day with ceremonies, activities, and programs that raise awareness of the importance of participating in Census 2000.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this first day of April, in the year of our Lord two thousand, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-fourth.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

William Clinton: Statement of Administration Policy: H.R. 4690 - Departments of Commerce, Justice, and State, the Judiciary, and Related Agencies Appropriations Bill, FY 2001, June 22, 2000

While the Administration appreciates the bill's funding for the decennial census, the Congress should ensure that the census is not burdened with restrictive reprogramming language. Moreover, ***other statistical programs are inadequately funded, including the Census Bureau's continuous measurement program, which will provide current information to allocate nearly \$200 billion in Federal funds annually,*** and the economic statistics programs in the Bureau of Economic Analysis.

William Clinton: Statement of Administration Policy: H.R. 4690 - Departments of Commerce, Justice, and State, the Judiciary, and Related Agencies Appropriations Bill, FY 2001, October 6, 2000

The Administration appreciates the Senate bill's funding for the decennial census, base restoration, and e-business initiatives in the Census Bureau, as well as the funding provided for the Economic and Statistics Administration. However, ***we urge the Senate to include full funding for the Census Bureau's continuous measurement program (which will provide current information to allocate nearly \$200 billion in Federal funds annually)***, demographic survey sample redesign (an interagency process that updates the sample populations of the major national demographic surveys after the decennial census), and planned improvements in measuring economic well-being and exports.

William Clinton: Statement on Census 2000, December 28, 2000

Today I am pleased to receive from the Department of Commerce the first data released from Census 2000, our country's 22d decennial census. I congratulate Secretary Norman Mineta, Secretary William Daley, and Census Bureau Director Kenneth Prewitt for their leadership in ***Census 2000, the longest continuous scientific effort in American democracy. Since 1790, these data collected during each decennial census help to tell the ongoing story of America, its rich heritage and broad diversity.*** Most importantly, I want to thank the American people for their participation in Census 2000. With their help, the country is better equipped to meet the needs of every American and the challenges in the 21st century.

George W. Bush: Statement of Administration Policy: H.R. 2862 - Departments of Commerce and Justice, Science, and Related Agencies Appropriations Bill, FY2006, September 8, 2005

The Administration is concerned that, at the same time, the Senate bill reduces the request for the Census Bureau by \$150 million (17 percent). This reduction would suspend the American Community Survey, increase the lifecycle cost of the 2010 Census by over \$1 billion, and lead to a less accurate Census. Timely and accurate Census data are necessary for decision makers at every level of government for budgetary and planning purposes, and in recovery efforts for crisis situations.

George W. Bush: Statement of Administration Policy: H.R. 5672 - Science, State, Justice, Commerce, and Related Agencies Appropriations Bill, FY 2007, June 28, 2006

The Administration commends the Committee for its support of the Census Bureau, especially in providing funding for the American Community Survey and 2010 Census testing and planning.

Barack Obama: Proclamation 8488 - Census Day, 2010, March 31, 2010

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

Since our Nation's earliest days, the census has played an important role in identifying where resources are most needed. This procedure, enshrined in our Constitution, informs our Government's responses to the evolving needs of American communities. By completing this year's survey, we can ensure they receive adequate funding for schools, hospitals, senior centers, and other public works projects. The 2010 Census will also aid employers in selecting locations for new factories and businesses as our economy recovers. On Census Day, I urge all Americans to fulfill their civic duty by participating in the 2010 Census.

While the first United States census surveyed a young country with fewer than 4 million people, this year's census will assess a Nation of over 300 million. America's diversity defines our national character, yet, in the past, the census has too often undercounted minorities, young people, and low-income residents. ***As our Nation grows, getting the count right will help ensure that our families and neighbors receive the services they need, and accurate and proportional representation in the United States House of Representatives.***

The 2010 Census is safe and easy to complete, and the Census Bureau aggressively protects all census participants' private information, which is never used against them or shared with other government or private entities. ***By mailing the Census form back, we help save taxpayer dollars and ensure that all Americans get the support they deserve and a voice in our democracy.***

Now, Therefore, I, Barack Obama, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim April 1, 2010, as Census Day. I call upon all Americans to observe this day by completing their census form and mailing it back.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this thirty-first day of March, in the year of our Lord two thousand ten, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirty-fourth.

BARACK OBAMA

Source: [American Presidency Project](#), University of California at Santa Barbara