



California Complete Count Committee

Access and Outreach Working Group

August 27, 2018 3:00 pm - 5:00 pm



Members Present:

Tho Vinh Banh (Chair)

Disability Rights California

Carolyn Coleman

League of California Cities

Efrain Escobedo

California Community Foundation

Regina Brown Wilson

California Black Media

Nicholas Hatten

San Joaquin Pride Center

Kate Kendall

National Center for Lesbian Rights

Members Absent:

Christopher Wilson

Alliance San Diego

Eloy Ortiz Oakley

California Community Colleges

Jennifer Rodriguez

Youth Law Center

Other Committee Members, Staff:

California Complete Count Committee

Dan Torres, Chair

Patricia Vazquez-Topete, Liaison

California State University, Sacramento

Ariel Ambruster, Dave Ceppos and Meagan Wylie

Handouts and Presentations:

- July 30, 2018 Draft Working Group Meeting Minutes
- Complete Count Committee Process Plan for Report to the Governor

1. Opening Procedures

Chair Tho Vinh Banh called the meeting to order. She welcomed members and referred to Patricia Vazquez-Topete, California Complete Count Committee (CCCC), for a roll call. A quorum of at least five members is established with five members present and four absent. [Note: Efrain Escobedo joined the meeting at approximately 4:00 pm.] Vazquez-Topete explained that the handout referenced in the agenda, *Working Group Information -Revised*, would not be a document presented during this meeting and it might be brought forward for discussion during a future meeting.

Following review of the meeting objectives, agenda, and meeting procedures, Chair Banh drew members' attention to the draft July 30th Working Group meeting minutes. The following two revisions to the draft minutes were proposed and discussed:

- Page 3, revise "access plan" to "operations plan"
- Page 5, strike reference to Medicare, Title 1, as members do not recall that specific reference being made during discussion.



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Nicolas Hatten moved to approve the July 30th meeting minutes as amended. His motion was seconded by Chair Banh. Meeting minutes were approved as amended, with Kate Kendell abstaining from the vote.

2. Committee Initial Report to Governor – Context and Schedule

Dan Torres, CCCC Chair, reviewed the purpose, process and timeline for drafting the Complete Count Committee's Initial Report to the Governor's Office (Report), due October 1, 2018. The purpose of the Report is to recommend initial outreach strategies to encourage full participation in Census by California residents, and avoid an undercount in Census 2020. The report is being drafted by staff at California State University Sacramento in collaboration with California Complete Count Office (CCC) staff. He reviewed the outline of the Report, and emphasized that as this is the *initial* report to the Governor's Office, the issues, concerns and recommendations captured within the Report will be high-level and not intended to be specific.

There will be an iterative draft and review process between now and October 1st. Key dates are listed in the handout. The CCCC will have final review and vote on the report to submit to the Governor's Office at their next meeting on October 1st.

3. Committee Initial Report to Governor – Working Group Purpose

Chair Banh asked Working Group members to consider how they would like their specific purpose memorialized in the Report. She opened the discussion by sharing the perspective that the CCCC is mindful of how diverse California, and Californians, are. It is imperative to ensure any census information / material created is done so with this diversity in mind, including but not limited to, diversity in: race, age, ability, language and language access, sexual orientation, residential status, citizenship status, and socioeconomic status.

Carolyn Coleman suggested a purpose of the Working Group is to design and develop smart strategies to ensure the State is able to *outreach* to the diversity of people as just described, and that all people are able to *access* the census, to ensure a complete and accurate census count. Kate Kendell added that the diversity of any California resident should not be a barrier to access to the census or the census information that people need, and the Working Group should support efforts to ensure the broadest possible outreach across the state. Chair Banh expressed that people hired to support the complete count (e.g. enumerators) should further represent the diversity seen across the state.

Dan Torres suggested that therefore, the purpose could discuss access to materials, jobs, etc. He stated that "hard to count" (HTC) is a term of art, and he recommended the Working Group consider including this terminology in its purpose statement.

General discussion ensued about the specific meanings of "access" and "outreach" CCCC support staff person, Dave Ceppos of California State University, Sacramento offered the clarification that "access" refers to various forms of delivery of information, and "outreach" refers to the strategies of how to apply



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access to information. Chair Banh asked members if that resonated with them and several confirmed that it did as a way to frame the difference.

4. Committee Initial Report to Governor – Specific Issues of Concern and Recommended Outreach Strategies

The Working Group elected to consider agenda items 4 and 5 jointly, and structured their conversation such that an issue or topic of concern was noted, and recommendations on outreach strategies to address that issue/concern were subsequently discussed.

- **Concern:** Language and language access: Chair Banh noted that the U.S. Census Bureau (USCB) will provide census information in only 12 languages. However, there are more than 200 different primary languages spoken throughout the state, and many of these people speak little to no English. Dan Torres and Chair Banh conveyed the importance that translated materials will need to be accurate/ appropriate/ culturally sensitive in the respective language.
- **Recommendation(s):** Census materials should be produced in as many languages as possible, most importantly languages other than the 12 languages translated by USCB. A bilingual translation/review committee in each language should be formed to review translated materials, and ensure materials are translated accurately and in a way that is culturally competent.
- **Concern:** Historically undercounted communities: Regina Brown Wilson commented on the importance of outreaching to historically undercounted communities. She provided an example of the African American community in Sacramento.
- **Recommendation(s):** Review statewide data to identify historically undercounted communities, prioritize these communities' needs, identify the respective barriers these communities face, and develop approaches to overcome these specific barriers.
- **Concern:** Physical disabilities as barriers to census participation: Carolyn Coleman discussed how physical disabilities could function as a barrier to accessing census information and participating in the census. Examples include deafness or blindness. It was further noted that any web-based materials may not be accessible to persons with physical disabilities.
- **Recommendation(s):** State and federal census materials are developed to be accessible to persons with disabilities. This would include materials being available in braille, extra-large font, American Sign Language and screen-reader accessible. Sample materials should be tested by a group of diverse disability communities, including intellectual, mental health, physical and sensory disabilities, before being published.
- **Concern:** Outreaching to those in non-traditional housing or shifting housing circumstances: Kate Kendell described how the myriad non-traditional housing arrangements of California residents will contribute to challenges in outreach (e.g. multiple families living in a single-family residence, residents living in group quarters such as prisons, jails and dorms,



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converted garages and basements, etc.), and as a result these HTC communities will be undercounted. This is a topic that will overlap with the Housing Working Group. At the previous meeting, Jim Miller, Department of Finance, described how some prisons have highly efficient systems for counting populations and reporting to census, while others do not. In addition, there are outreach challenges for populations such as those on probation, students who may be in-state or out-of-state, or others who may be transitioning housing during the count.

- **Recommendation(s):** Consult with Department of Finance and other entities that have data on non-traditional housing, then consider how to best outreach to people in these living situations so they have information as to how and when to complete the census form. For example, identify who at a particular prison is responsible to complete the form on behalf of all persons currently residing there. The Access and Outreach group additionally requests a briefing on group quarters from the USCB to better inform their development of recommended access and outreach strategies.
- **Concern: Apathy and/or lack of trust in government:** Carolyn Coleman described the general public sentiment of distrust of government at the state, federal and local levels, as well as concerns around how individual census information might be used. This distrust may be further projected on to enumerators, census kiosk workers, trusted messengers, media campaigns, and others providing census outreach and support.
- **Recommendation(s):** Create census media messaging that includes trusted messengers, and is tailored to and responsive to a particular community culture.
 - Dave Ceppos reminded the group of the Message Testing Coordination Work Group that meets to share information on testing of different HTC communities and their responsiveness to messages. Ariel Ambruster of California State University, Sacramento reminded the group that the Message Testing Coordination Work Group provided a report out at the July 30th CCCC meeting. This work group is comprised of private entities – foundations and non-governmental organizations, as well as state staff - and what information they report on is at their discretion. Efrain Escobedo from this Working Group also participates on the Message Testing Coordination Work Group and can serve as a liaison. Chair Banh asked that the Working Group be kept in the loop on any public information available from that message testing group. Regina Brown Wilson expressed concerns that message testing organizations are not focusing on African American communities, and that messaging actors will use their resources to work against the concerns that this Working Group is expressing.
- **Concern: Literacy level of outreach materials:** Efrain Escobedo mentioned the importance of ensuring materials are accessible to the full range of reading levels to ensure they are accessible to the greatest number of people.
- **Recommendation(s):** Utilize “plain language” in census outreach and informational materials, keeping reading level in mind when developing content.



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- **Concern: Media Messaging:** Efrain Escobedo expressed a concern that media messaging and efforts may be inconsistent over the course of the outreach period. He further expressed concern about media contracts going to organizations that do not have an established history of working in and with HTC communities. Regina Brown Wilson expressed concerns about a possibility that the Legislature suspended state contracting rules for census media contractors. Others were not aware of this and agreed that the situation should be clarified. There is a concern that HTC communities have input into state media outreach, and that

Action Item: Efrain Escobedo and Regina Brown Wilson to work offline to articulate concerns and recommendations surrounding media messaging in paragraph form for potential inclusion in the report.

- **Recommendation(s):** Any media outlets that are contracted for census outreach should consult with key leaders/ trusted messengers within the communities of concern to develop/review/approve appropriate media campaign strategies. The state should have contracting rules in place that protect smaller media entities such as ethnic media and additionally, provide selection priority to organizations that have a record of working with HTC communities This requirement may need to be written in to the RFP process for contracting. Additionally, all forms of media should be used to reach all Californians, and use of ethnic media that are trusted by local communities should be prioritized.

Other concerns and recommendations:

- **Concern:** In the past, census enumerators could be non-citizens. This is not the case for the 2020 census. To increase the likelihood that the enumerator population is reflective of diverse communities, many more HTC people must apply than the number of open positions.
- **Recommendation(s):** In order that the population of enumerators hired by the USCB for California are reflective of the diverse communities they are working with, the state should include a requirement to contractors and county-level CCCs that they prioritize outreaching to HTC communities about enumerator recruitment, and assist with sharing job announcements when posted by USCB. In addition, the state should fund hiring of community navigators to help answer census questions and fill the gaps in enumerator HTC expertise and familiarity.
- **Recommendation:** Connect with CBOs to understand types of outreach efforts they are embarking on in order to maximize resources and avoid duplication of efforts.
- **Concern: Digital Access.** Develop messaging to communities that have limited to no digital access so that they have access to census survey information via phone or paper forms.

A member of the public suggested ways to overcome barriers to electronic access that homeless and other communities face, such as providing census form kiosks, or trainings to local leadership on how to reach homeless populations and help them complete forms online.

5. Next Steps



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Due to time constraints, the Working Group was unable to complete discussion regarding its purpose. They agreed to meet via conference line again, in 10-12 days' time, to revisit this conversation and finish draft text for inclusion in the Initial Report to the Governor's Office. They requested that support staff from Sacramento State University prepare a draft purpose statement based on today's discussion for review and refinement during the upcoming call.

6. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 5:02 pm by group consensus.

ADDENDUM

Draft Working Group Purpose, proposed by Sacramento State, 08-29-2018:

The purpose of the Access and Outreach Working Group is to develop recommendations and smart strategies related to:

- **Access** – So that all of California's diverse communities, for the purpose of being counted, have access to:
 - The Census, via digital, paper, phone and in-person methods;
 - Necessary information, materials, and support related to the Census;
 - The languages necessary to understand and receive that information, materials and support; and
 - Jobs related to Census enumeration and outreach.
- **Outreach** – so that:
 - The State and its partners can reach California's diverse Hard-to-Count communities;
 - Marketing strategies are developed and implemented with the state's diversity in mind;
 - Various diverse communities know the importance of the Census; and
 - All residents have access to being counted in 2020.