

How Does the U.S. Census Benefit the People?

Federalism in the United States of America is the shared power between federal, state, and local governments. The People pay taxes, but what does that money provide? Who decides what the money is spent on? Finally, how is an individual's voice heard and how are their interests represented in the federal government? Article I of the U.S. Constitution states, "*Representatives and direct Taxes shall be apportioned among the several States which may be included within this Union, according to their respective Numbers...*"

The U.S. Constitution also states that "*The actual Enumeration shall be made within every subsequent Term of ten Years, in such Manner as they shall by Law direct.*" The

number of Representatives shall not exceed one for every thirty Thousand, but each State shall have at Least one Representative..." The enumeration, or counting of every resident, citizen or resident alien, documented or undocumented, must be completed for the **decennial census**. This means that every man, woman, and child of every state, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico and the island territories must be counted every ten years by law.

The data collected from the census allows government agencies to determine and adjust the proper number of Representatives awarded to each state through apportionment followed by **redistricting**. Members of the House of Representatives live in the districts they represent and help enact laws that benefit their

constituents. Census data also allows government officials and lawmakers to make informed policy decisions and provide federal funds to states based on the number of people living there. Taxes are collected and redistributed through federal agencies based on the information collected from the census. The more residents who live in a state, the more Representatives and federal funding the state receives based on the census data. Therefore, the census can benefit

communities and individuals living in the United States by ensuring that they receive accurate representation and critical funding.

So, when all people make sure they are counted in the census, states will more likely receive the support they deserve and need.

However, because some people living in the United States

are intimidated by the census reporting process, they may avoid being counted even though law requires the Census Bureau to keep information confidential. Others may feel that it is a violation of their privacy. What happens to states that are underfunded because residents went uncounted? Analyze Documents A-F to respond to the following question: *How does Federalism benefit individuals?*

