

**ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE  
HOUSE LABOR AND COMMERCE STANDING COMMITTEE**

February 5, 2010

3:25 p.m.

**MEMBERS PRESENT**

Representative Kurt Olson, Chair  
Representative Mike Chenault  
Representative Bob Lynn  
Representative Tammie Wilson  
Representative Robert L. "Bob" Buch

**MEMBERS ABSENT**

Representative Mark Neuman, Vice Chair  
Representative Lindsey Holmes

**COMMITTEE CALENDAR**

OVERVIEW ON UNITED STATES CENSUS

- HEARD

**PREVIOUS COMMITTEE ACTION**

No previous action to record

**WITNESS REGISTER**

HECTOR MALDONADO, Partnership Coordinator  
Seattle Regional Census Center  
US Census Bureau  
Seattle, Washington

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Presented a PowerPoint overview of the 2010 Census in Alaska

WENDY HAWLEY, Area Manager  
Seattle Regional Census Center  
U.S. Census Bureau  
Bothell, Washington

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Testified and answered questions during the Overview of the U.S. Census.

MARK TANGUAY, Director  
Alaska Local Census Office  
U.S. Census Bureau  
Anchorage, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Presented during the overview of the 2010 U.S. Census in Alaska.

ERIC DAVENPORT, SR., Partnership Specialist  
Cascadia, Olympus, and Tongass Team Leader  
U.S. Census Bureau  
Olympia, Washington

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Presented an overview during the discussion of the U.S. Census Bureau 2010 Census.

#### **ACTION NARRATIVE**

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**CHAIR KURT OLSON** called the House Labor and Commerce Standing Committee meeting to order at 3:25 p.m. Representatives T. Wilson, Lynn, Buch, and Olson were present at the call to order. Representative Chenault arrived as the meeting was in progress. Representative Gruenberg was also in attendance.

#### **Overview on United States Census**

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CHAIR OLSON announced that the only order of business would be an Overview of the U.S. Census.

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HECTOR MALDONADO, Partnership Coordinator, Seattle Regional Census Center, U.S. Census Bureau, introduced his team: Wendy Hawley, Area Manager for Alaska and part of Washington State; Eric Davenport, Senior Partnership Specialist for Cascadia and Olympus, and Mark Tanguay, Tongass Team Leader, and Director of the Alaska Local Census Office, and Partnership Specialists Eric Morrison, Lavern Lamereaux, Donald Woodkey, Michael Clemens, and Gerry Donohoe.

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MR. MALDONADO showed a short video as a means of introducing the 2010 Census in Alaska.

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MR. MALDONADO explained that his overview would cover the reasons for the census, the constitutional mandate and responsibility, the Census Bureau Structure, the ease and safeguards, and importance of the census, the goals, objectives, and implementation of the Partnership in Alaska Program [slide 2].

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MR. MALDONADO discussed the constitutional mandate for the U.S. Census [slide 3]. Each census since 1790 has been mandated by the U.S. Constitution. Article 1, Section 2 of the Constitution of the United States requires the federal government to count the population of this country for apportionment and distribution of funds. After the final population count, on December 31, 2010, the census must be submitted to the President and Alaska, along with the other states, will begin the redistricting process, based on its population.

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MR. MALDONADO described the Census Bureau structure as the four pillars of the 2010 Census, which are Operations, Geography, Census Coverage Measurement, and Partnership & Data Services (slide 4). The accuracy of the census depends on its operations and field staff. The specific housing units within the state are identified and help ensure each home receives a questionnaire. The census coverage measurement provides an assessment of the overall census performance. The Partnership and Data Services is the public relations branch of the U.S. Census Bureau that conducts outreach to ensure all entities within the state are used to inform citizens about the census.

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MR. MALDONADO discussed the importance of the census data [slide 5]. The U.S. Census data helps states make informed decisions. States need accurate data to help local communities. Over \$400 billion is distributed to states and communities based on census data. U.S. Census data helps guide planning for local services and infrastructure for schools, roads, and capital projects. Additionally, the U.S. Census data helps determine the need for special initiatives to serve the needs of local communities, including determining whether bilingual programs or special transportation systems are needed.

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MR. MALDONADO discussed the ease of the census questionnaire [slide 6]. The 2010 census questionnaire is easier than ever. It consists of 10 questions that should take approximately 10 minutes or less to complete. Detailed data will be collected on an ongoing survey, the American Community Survey, which will be sent to a small sample of the population. While previous censuses consisted of a long form, the 2010 U.S. Census format has changed and will only be given in a short form.

MR. MALDONADO explained the confidentiality of the 2010 Census [slide 7]. The data collected is completely confidential. The individual responses are safeguarded by Title XIII U.S.C. The Census Bureau employees cannot share data with anyone, including federal and local law enforcement agencies. No one can access the specific data for 72 years and the only data that can be shared is statistical data.

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MR. MALDONADO discussed the U.S. Census's goal, which is to count everyone [slide 8]. In Alaska, the census workers will mail, hand deliver, or personally enumerate 281,616 households. He anticipated that the U.S. Census Bureau will survey over 681,000 residents, containing 19,349 people in group quarters, and covering 663,268 square miles.

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MR. MALDONADO discussed the hiring practices [slide 9]. The U.S. Census Bureau will hire locals to do local work, promises to obtain an accurate count, and will save taxpayer money by increasing the mail response rate (MRR).

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WENDY HAWLEY, Area Manager, Seattle Regional Census Center, U.S. Census Bureau, stated that her area covers portions of Alaska and Washington State. She related she has 26 years of experience with the U.S. Census Bureau and as a geographer understands the geography in Alaska. She previously served as an area manager in 2000, although she did not serve Alaska. She related that she understands the size, the transportation difficulties, and welcomes the opportunity to meet challenges of the U.S. Census [slide 2].

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MS. HAWLEY offered that each Congressional District has a local census office [slide 3]. In Alaska, the local office is located in Anchorage. The U.S. Census conducts all of its operations in Alaska from that office. The U.S. Census Bureau has depots or distribution centers in Juneau and Fairbanks, but the management staff is based in Anchorage. The U.S. Census Bureau employees in Anchorage are Alaskan residents and have the knowledge and understanding of the challenges in Alaska. Their job is to insure that everyone is counted once, and only once, and in the correct place.

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MS. HAWLEY reviewed the 2010 Census timeline and key dates in Alaska [slide 4]. She explained that the population data must be submitted to President Obama by December 31, 2010. She related that the operational dates are firm dates and do not change, that additional people are hired to insure the work is completed timely. The U.S. Bureau of Census employees completed address canvassing in the spring 2009. Census employees went door-to-door to update address lists and maps. Beginning with the 2000 master address file, the addresses were updated prior to delivering questionnaires, by mail, or by hand. Since Fall 2009, the U.S. Census Bureau began to recruit census takers and will continually recruit workers through April or May 2010. Remote enumeration began in Noorvik on January 25 and is currently ongoing. An assistant manager works on remote enumeration for approximately 217 villages or communities in Alaska. In February - March 2010, the Mailout/Mailback, Update/Leave, and rural enumeration process will be completed. April 1, 2010 is the reference date for the 2010 Census. The surveys are mailed out prior to that date but people are asked to use the April 1st date when completing the questionnaires. She asked, "Where were you or where will you be living on April 1st." Non-response follow-up refers to the effort taken to capture those who did not answer the questionnaire. When a person does not mail back their questionnaire, a census worker will physically contact the person. Some people live in group quarters and not in housing units. Others live in transitory locations, such as marinas, under bridges, or in soup kitchens. At the end of March census takers will spend an evening to help insure that the census will count everyone, even people who are homeless.

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MS. HAWLEY referred to the types of enumeration areas [slide 5]. She explained that Mr. Tanguay will identify the specific areas for mail out and enumeration in Alaska. She discussed the details of enumeration that is planned for Southeast Alaska [slide 6]. She related that most of Southeast Alaska will be counted using the "update leave or update enumeration" processes.

[3:49:10 PM](#)

MARK TANGUAY, Director, Alaska Local Census Office, U.S. Census Bureau, began by explaining the enumeration methodologies for Alaska [slide 7]. He pointed out that Alaska is diverse so a variety of methods will be used to complete the U.S. 2010 Census in Alaska. The main method used will be a "Mailout/Mailback (MO/MB) process, which is the process that will be used in most of the Lower 48 and about 85 percent of Alaska, in Anchorage, Fairbanks, and Juneau. The block groups must be 70 percent or more for this type of delivery. The next type the "Update/Leave (U/L)" is used when the map is updated to show housing units and forms will be left at the door. Thus, a census worker would literally go to every door and leave a form for residents to return in a pre-paid postage return envelope. The U/L process will be used for the remaining sections of Anchorage, the Fairbanks North Star Borough, the eastern side of Kenai Peninsula, and the Mat-Su Borough. The U/L process is expanded in 2010. The U/L method will also be used in hub areas in rural Alaska, such as Dillingham or Bethel. He restated that the census workers would canvass each block and leave a questionnaire at every door along with the pre-paid postage envelope.

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MR. TANGUAY explained the enumeration methodologies for Rural Alaska [slide 8]. Rural Update Enumerate is a method used in Southeast Alaska and applies to areas with communities that are sparsely populated. This enumeration process is used in areas of Southeast Alaska, in which people cannot readily access a U.S. Post Office. The areas included contain approximately 4,500 housing units, and tend to have a geographic social, cultural, or linguistic characteristic that could affect the questionnaire response rates. Most of these houses are only accessible by boat. The census taker will use a boat or float plane to contact the parties, and will fill out the questionnaire at the time, as well as update the lists and maps. The intent is to cover every square inch of Alaska.

MR. TANGUAY highlighted that the remote Alaska enumeration is currently happening and will cover approximately 27,000 housing units in villages [slide 9]. The census worker will train local villagers to conduct the surveys. He stressed the importance of having locals involved to obtain a better response rate since they are familiar with the rural residents and often know them. Census takers will update the address list and maps and interview the household in person, even in outlying areas. This includes attending cultural events, fish camps, and due to weather and events is considered a fluid schedule.

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MR. TANGUAY covered additional enumeration methodologies for Alaska, including that the U.S. Census Bureau will work directly with the military to count military personnel on military installations, whether they live on-base or off-base [slide 10]. This method includes Group Quarters (GQ), which are places where people live or stay, such as college dormitories, jails, fish processors, nursing homes, and elder housing.

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MR. TANGUAY outlined the enumeration of homeless [slide 11]. He stated that the U.S. Census Bureau will hold a three-day operation, including census taking at emergency shelters on March 29th, soup kitchens and regularly scheduled food vans on March 30th, and targeted non-sheltered outdoor locations on March 31st. He remarked that it is important to stress confidentiality as many homeless do not want to be located, but it is the census worker's job to find them.

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MR. TANGUAY related the enumeration at transitory locations [slide 12]. He explained that between March 19 and April 12, 2010, the U.S. Census Bureau will conduct the U.S. 2010 Census to capture recreational vehicle (R/V) parks, marinas, racetracks, camp grounds, carnivals, fairs, circuses, and designated hotels and motels. The target date of April 1st will be used as the date for people to use as their location date, keeping in mind that the people in this group are mobile.

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MR. TANGUAY described the Non-Response Follow-up (NRFU) [slide 13]. He explained the process the U.S. Census Bureau will use for people who do not return their questionnaires. Despite the efforts taken, and the partnerships used, some people will not return their forms. They may think the questionnaire is junk mail or may be too busy to fill out the form. In 2000, 58 percent was the NRFU rate. The constitution and federal law determines how the 2010 Census is conducted and the methods used are constitutional. He recapped that the U.S. Census Bureau uses master address files, an opportunity exists for local communities to provide additional information, the areas are canvassed, and other procedures are used for specific issues such as fires. Census takers physically knock on doors and use checks and balances to insure that people are counted whether they reside at a lakeside cabin or in a home.

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MR. TANGUAY described the field verification operation, which is a final check on the existence of specific addresses in specific census blocks. The field verification is designed to verify the existence of homes in order to be certain that a home is not accidentally deleted from a list. Telephone questionnaire assistance may provide information on additional housing. Thus, in the event a person provides information about a housing unit that is not included in the 2010 Census records, the census personnel will verify the existence of the home, and whether an individual or a family resides at the location.

MR. TANGUAY outlined the "Be Counted Questionnaires," which are similar to absentee ballots and are available to those who did not receive their initial questionnaire. This questionnaire will be cross-referenced to be certain the person is not counted twice.

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MR. TANGUAY explained the process for "Non Response Follow-up Vacate/Delete Check [slide 15]." He explained that any housing unit that is reported as non-existent or deleted by an enumerator during the NRFU is double checked by an enumerator to be certain a house is not missed. People may be visited several times during the process since a certain sample is double checked for accuracy and data is sometimes incorrectly reported, such as a person's tendency to write the current year as his/her birth date. A method exists to identify new address in the

process of conducting the census, such as new construction, which can be cross referenced with the U.S. Post Office.

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MR. TANGUAY described the quality control and quality assurance process [slide 16]. He stressed the importance of an accurate census count. Depending on the field operation, 5 to 10 percent of each census employee's work is re-interviewed. If errors in a census employee's work are discovered, the entire assignment area will be redone.

MR. TANGUAY discussed office and field jobs and salaries [slide 17]. U.S. Census workers receive fair wages. The census taker or enumerators are temporary positions and workers are paid \$25 per hour. Some people consider this work to be their civic responsibility.

[4:06:07 PM](#)

MR. TANGUAY highlighted the importance of decennial staffing [slide 18]. Census work is labor intensive since workers must verify every address and interview every household. Census workers may sleep on gym floors, and they understand the hardships involved. He described the census takers as extremely loyal. Additionally, he emphasized the importance of having local people involved. The 2010 Census will require a sufficient number of census takers in all areas of the state.

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MR. TANGUAY outlined the qualifications for the U.S. Census Bureau employees, including that they must be U.S. citizens, a minimum of 18-years-old, have a valid social security number, and all males born after December 31, 1959 must be registered with selective service.

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MR. TANGUAY explained the census taker duties [slide 20]. Census takers travel the assignment area to update map features and update housing units, interview, and leave or complete census forms for all housing structures. Census workers check work for accuracy and completeness, and may be hired as guides or interpreters.

[4:08:28 PM](#)

ERIC DAVENPORT, SR., Partnership Specialist, Cascadia, Olympus, and Tongass Team Leader, U.S. Census Bureau, presented an overview of partnering during the U.S. 2010 Census [slide 1]. Reasons to partner are that the stakes are high, that fewer funds and underrepresentation can happen that affect everyone in Alaska's communities [slide 2]. Since January 1, 2010, 528 babies have been born in this state and need to be counted and the accuracy of the census is important to insure these children are counted for the school count. Some states like Michigan may lose seats, but others may gain additional Congressional seats. He emphasized that people are working hard to insure accuracy of the 2010 Census.

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MR. DAVENPORT related that this is the 23rd census since 1790 [slide 3]. The questions have changed over time and federal marshals are no longer used to conduct the census as they created undue fear. Some things have worked well. Traditionally, Native Americans are undercounted in the U.S. Decennial Census counts, but are actively engaged in the current process. For example, in Alaska, the U.S. Census Bureau will use a specialist in Tlingit/Haida. The Partnership Program has broadened and will help the U.S. Census Bureau obtain a better count.

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MR. DAVENPORT provided a brief historical perspective [slide 3]. The first census was taken in 1790. The U.S. Constitution requires a decennial count. If a household is missed, the mail response rate in 2000 was 67 percent. Thus, one third of the households did not mail their questionnaires back. It is expensive to send field workers, or enumerators, to count them. It is a costly process. Every percentage point of non-returned questionnaires costs the U.S. between \$80 and \$90 million. In 2000, \$2.8 billion was spent to count the one-third of Americans that did not return their questionnaires.

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MR. DAVENPORT discussed mail return rates [slide 4]. Between 1960 and 1990 the mail rates declined. For the U.S. 2000 Census, partnering was stressed, and Complete Count Committees were used, which has increased the partnering rate. He related that partnering and Complete Count Committees (CCC) work [slide

5]. Partnering works because states know their citizenry better than the U.S. Census Bureau. The U.S. Census Bureau wants local involvement since people can affect change, and change is what is needed to improve the mail in rate. Thus, partnering and working with the CCCs is very important, has an impact, and improves the mail-in rate.

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MR. DAVENPORT reviewed Alaska's Mail-Response Rate in Census 2000 [slide 6]. The national mail in response rate was 67 percent, but Alaska's mail in response rate was only 56 percent. The mail in response rate for the Anchorage Borough was 62 percent. Some other rates for mail in response rates for Alaskan cities during the 2000 Census were: Juneau at 60 percent, Kenai at 47 percent, North Pole at 42 percent, and Soldotna at 49 percent. He stressed that the U.S. Census Bureau needs help to improve these rates. He stated that leveraging is what the U.S. Census Bureau does best [slide 7]. Pooling assets and minimizing weaknesses will accomplish results nationwide. He said, "Pooling assets is a critical part of this whole entire effort."

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MR. DAVENPORT pointed out specific strengths [slide 8]. Key resources to increase the mail response rates include facilities, communication outlets, human resources, and knowledge of the people. He discussed specific strategies, including Transportation Systems. The U.S. is a mobile society, including buses, trains, vehicles, and the AMHS system. He explained that the U.S. Census Bureau has brochures and posters on each of the ferries in the Washington State Ferry System. It would be great to do the same in the AMHS, as a means to serve some coastal Alaskan communities. Additionally, the U.S. Census Bureau had cards printed to place on buses since many of the hard to count populations rely on bus transit systems for their primary transportation. Imaging helps to break down reluctance to participate. Alaska also has a state railroad and the various terminals statewide provide great visibility to advertise the importance of the U.S. Census 2010, and that the process is easy to participate in and is safe.

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MR. DAVENPORT outlined public communication outlets and utilities. He stated that this meeting is a great way to

partner with the U.S. Census Bureau, to disseminate information to people and let them know contact information in the event they have questions. Other ways the U.S. Census Bureau will communicate with the public is through public television, and by creating drop-in articles to use in constituent newsletters or other newsletters or billings, such as slogans to enclose in utility billing. Additionally, the U.S. Census Bureau will use public service announcements (PSAs).

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MR. DAVENPORT discussed state and local governments [slide 11]. He explained that state and local governments can be especially helpful in conducting the 2010 Census because they are rich in facilities, communication, and human resources. This can be helpful because the U.S. Census Bureau needs to have places to train people. Often times, the U.S. Census Bureau looks to schools and city halls for conference rooms as a means of partnering with local communities. Additionally, other resources that can be helpful are posters and rack cards on display, bookmarks at check-out counters at libraries, all of which can be low-cost ways to get the message out.

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MR. DAVENPORT related that the Schools and Youth Programs are robust [slide 12]. He referred to their website at census.gov, which provides information and curriculum that can be printed. The materials are geared for the K-12 classrooms. He pointed out that the website provides a great resource for rural communities. He stated that the U.S. Census Bureau would love to obtain the endorsement of the Department of Education in Alaska. For example, the Washington State Commissioner of Education provided an endorsement for the census that then went to schools. He said, "Getting the message home through the dinner table has a whole different resonance to it than when it comes across the television or it comes through other media." Thus, promoting the census information and integrating this information through families can result in positive participation. He highlighted efforts to work with some state departments [slide 13]. He offered his belief that the recent meetings with Alaska's Commissioners for the Department of Labor & Workforce Development and Department of Commerce, Community, & Economic Development indicate their strong support for the U.S. Census Bureau's efforts to conduct the 2010 Census.

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MR. DAVENPORT referred to slide 14, titled "So where does this lead us?" He answered that no single person or entity can do this alone. He related that many low cost or no cost strategies exist, but that partnering is the key component for the success of the 2010 Census to increase the mail-in response rate of census questionnaires and reduce the overall Census 2010 costs. The impacts are substantial [slide 15]. On a national basis, the anticipated appropriation for the 2010 Census is \$1,400 for each person or \$5,600 for a family of 4. Only one census is conducted per decade. Thus, if one family of 4 is not counted, the potential impact is a loss or reduction to the state of \$56,000.

MR. DAVENPORT offered to partner with legislators and the state to build a machine in Alaska that will result in a complete count [slide 16].

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CHAIR OLSON remarked that the meeting came about informally, that the Gavel-to-Gavel coverage will be aired at least six times and the presentation is also streaming live statewide. He emphasized that the committee wants everyone counted. It is important for the appropriation process as well as for reapportionment. He welcomed participation and wants to help people get counted for the U.S. 2010 Census. He offered to meet informally to discuss ways to help.

[4:27:23 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE T. WILSON asked whether people will be counted at their physical location as legislators will be in Juneau on April 1, but she resides in North Pole.

MR. TANGUAY answered that she would receive a census questionnaire at her home in North Pole and also at her temporary residence here. He related that the system has methods to recognize duplication, and the final question on the Census Questionnaire is whether the person normally resides at another location. In the event that the form mailed to her North Pole address is not returned, a census taker will physically go to the address to find out why it had not been returned.

REPRESENTATIVE T. WILSON asked what would happen in the event that a person does not want to answer all ten questions. She

elaborated that some people may believe some questions are not the government's business.

MR. TANGUAY responded that a specific purpose exists for all ten questions. He explained that some questions identify if a school or senior citizen center should be built. One issue that arose in an election process was that not enough language ballots had been provided. The U.S. Census 2010 forms help identify the breakdown of primary languages to help address that issue. Birthdates are important to capture the age groups, so one question asks the specific ages since some people put in the wrong birth year. Reasons exist for each question, and if people understand the reason for each question, they will be less likely to avoid answering the questions. Part of the enumerator's job is to help educate people with respect to the importance of each question.

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REPRESENTATIVE T. WILSON asked specifically whether a person will be counted if he/she does not answer all of the questions on the 2010 Census Questionnaire.

MS. HAWLEY answered yes. She stated that the person will be counted even if they do not answer 100 percent of the questions. In further response to Representative T. Wilson, she answered that the U.S. Census Bureau does not mail to U.S. Post Office boxes but does list each residential address in its data bases. Each housing unit is uniquely identified with a code. In the event a Census Questionnaire is not returned, a census taker will physically go to the door to determine why the form was not returned. She related that often times a person did not realize they received the form and may have inadvertently tossed the form out.

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REPRESENTATIVE LYNN remarked that he is interested in genealogy. He expressed concern that genealogists will not have access to the information for 72 years. He inquired as to whether middle initials would be used.

MS. HAWLEY responded that the Census Questionnaire is mailed to a housing unit, not to a specific person. She stated that it is a self-enumeration process and will be up to the individuals to determine how they will list their names. She related that the form contains a space for the middle initial. In further

response to Representative Lynn, she explained that if ten people live in a household but the family only lists five, that only five will be counted. She related that the Decennial Census has always been self-enumeration and the forms are provided and people fill them out. She emphasized the importance in obtaining accurate information and her hopes that partnering will help inform people of the importance in answering the forms truthfully. She remarked that it does not matter if the information reveals someone is in the state illegally, and that some states like California have issues with illegal aliens.

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REPRESENTATIVE LYNN noted that many families are non-traditional families. He asked how people answer those types of questions.

MR. MALDONADO answered that again, the person decides how to identify his/her relationship to the head of household. He agreed that many unique relationships exist.

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REPRESENTATIVE LYNN remarked that a National Archives Office is located in Anchorage and contains information on U.S. Censuses taken dating back to 1790. He inquired as to whether the records will also be on microfilm.

MS. HAWLEY answered that the information is scanned. In further response to Representative Lynn, she related that one of the last questions asked is for a phone number in case the questionnaire information cannot be read.

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REPRESENTATIVE LYNN asked to have the 10 questions that will be asked on the Census Questionnaire briefly described.

MR. TANGUAY stated that Question 1 is: "How many people were living or staying in this house, apartment, or mobile home on April 1, 2010?" This question sets the timeframe and number of persons. He stated that Question 2 asks a follow up question, "Were any additional people staying here April 1, 2010 that you did not include in Question 1?" This question is designated to trigger a person's memory, for example, a person may recall that he/she did not include a new baby in the count or he/she

remembers that a grandfather is residing in their home for a year or two.

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MR. TANGUAY said Question 3 asks, "Is this a house, apartment, or mobile home..." This question basically provides an understanding of whether the house or apartment is rented or owned and who is staying at the home. Question 4 asks, "What is your telephone number?" The telephone number is requested in case any follow-up contact is needed.

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MR. TANGUAY related that Question 5 asks for the person's name, last name, first name, and middle initial, which provides self identification. Question 6 asks for the person's sex, male or female. Question 7 asks for the person's age and his/her birth date as an identifier, and to identify any duplication. Question 9 asks whether the person is of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin, noting that for this census, Hispanic origins are not considered races. Question 9 asks for the race, and lists blocks that can be checked or a block to enter another race not listed. Question 10 asks whether the person sometimes lives or stay somewhere else. This helps to identify the situation described earlier, in which a legislator has a home but is in Juneau on April 1 to attend the legislative session.

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REPRESENTATIVE LYNN offered his strong support for the U.S. Census, both for political and national reasons, but also for the genealogical aspects.

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REPRESENTATIVE GRUENBERG asked from a constitutional or legal point of view, what protection the person answering the Census Questionnaire would have since, even if the person is illegally in the country, they must fill out the form. He inquired as to how a person who may be wanted by law enforcement under a court order, or as a military deserter would be treated. He inquired as to what constitutional rights the person would have to not identify themselves.

MR. TANGUAY remarked that he strongly supports the constitutional, legality, and confidentiality of the Census

Questionnaire. He answered that he has held conversations with the director of the Division of Alaska State Troopers, Colonel Holloway, and if he were to release any data he would be subject to five years of incarceration and \$250,000 fine.

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REPRESENTATIVE GRUENBERG asked whether the information is subject to a subpoena.

MR. TANGUAY answered no. The information cannot be released to any law enforcement, any governmental entity, individual, or organization, he stated. Additionally, if a person photocopied a census form, law enforcement could not use any of the information in a court of law. He stressed that all census information is protected and cannot be used against a person.

[4:43:13 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE GRUENBERG explained his interest in bilingual voting. He related that many villages conduct bilingual voting and in Kodiak, since so many Filipino people reside in these areas and speak Tagalog. He asked for the bilingual process for the U.S. Census 2010.

MR. MALDONADO offered that the U.S. Census 2010 forms are available in Russian, Vietnamese, Korean, Chinese, and Spanish. Certain parts of the country that have high Hispanic populations will receive the questionnaire bilingually. Other areas can request the questionnaire in those five languages.

REPRESENTATIVE GRUENBERG recalled that under the election laws some areas must conduct bilingual voting by political subdivision. He inquired as to whether any provision is made for bilingual translators, since some languages in the Alaska Native culture do not have any written languages.

MR. MALDONADO offered that the U.S. Census Bureau partners with local communities and have identified Questionnaire Assistance Centers (QAC). He explained that within the communities of Anchorage, Juneau, and Fairbanks, and Kotzebue, the U.S. Census Bureau will make efforts to find Tagalog speakers for Filipino citizens to work at the QAC. Other people can receive assistance by telephone. In the event an enumerator physically contacts a non-responsive home, the Census taker will have access to 59 languages to determine which language is spoken in the home. In the event that a person needs translator, the U.S.

Census Bureau will hire one to translate for one household, if necessary.

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REPRESENTATIVE GRUENBERG remarked that some people are very senior and cannot leave their place of residence, that over 50 languages are spoken in the local elementary schools, and over 90 languages are spoken in high school, including Sudanese. He related that his district is the gateway communities for immigrants, as well as from rural Alaska. He said he hopes that the U.S. Census Bureau will make necessary efforts to count the bilingual population.

[4:47:32 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE CHENAULT asked for the reason that the U.S. Census Bureau asks Question 8, and separates out the Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origins.

MR. MALDONADO explained that the questions in the U.S. Census Bureau's Questionnaire were developed by the U.S. Office of Management and Budget, with guidance from the Congress. The U.S. Census Bureau is instructed which questions to ask.

[4:48:41 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE CHENAULT speculated that perhaps the U.S. government is interested in the ratio or percentage of Cuban or Puerto Rican people in the U.S. He said he was just curious about the reason that Native Hawaiians are singled out versus other Pacific Islanders, as well as the reason American Indian or Alaska Native people are specifically identified.

[4:49:47 PM](#)

MS. HAWLEY reiterated that the U.S. Office of Management and Budget (OMB) approved the questions. She explained that OMB has a Steering Committee for the Questionnaire which is comprised of statisticians and political appointees that reevaluate the prior census and the needs of the government. She suggested that the question of race and ethnicity was compiled from the frequency of its use in the U.S. Census 2000. Thus, instead of having to write the information in a block, a person would check a box instead. The overall size of the form is limited to one page. It is up to OMB to approve the final suggestions made by the

Steering Committee for the Questionnaire. She recalled that a person from Alaska served on the steering committee.

[4:51:13 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE CHENAULT said he was not suggesting anything was wrong with the form, but it appeared that the steering committee was attempting to better identify the Latino or Hispanic populations versus people from other countries.

REPRESENTATIVE LYNN imagined that the questions were likely aimed at identifying trends, noting that he did not know. He pointed out that most of the census forms dating back to 1850 had occupation listed. He said he was amazed that was not listed on the form.

MR. MALDONADO related that the more robust demographic and housing data is now compiled through the American Community Survey, which used to be the long form. Since 2005, the U.S. Census Bureau has been collecting ongoing data of the demographics in the U.S.

[4:53:16 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE LYNN asked how the U.S. Census 2010 will guard against a census taker who might submit extra forms to deliberately skew the count.

MR. TANGUAY explained the form in member's packets is for informational purposes. Each and every official US Census 2010 form is bar-coded for a specific housing unit. If a response is not received, the housing unit receives a personal visit. The U.S. Census Bureau also conducts internal checks, with a standard chain of command, to provide quality control support, and the region also provides quality control. Additionally, a separate Quality Assurance Department also conducts random spot checks on a certain percentage of forms for accuracy. If an error is discovered, the U.S. Census Bureau area will redo the area. Finally, the U.S. Census Bureau has a separate section that confirms a percentage of the work that is performed to insure accuracy of the census.

[4:55:51 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE LYNN asked whether any estimate is available for the undercount in the U.S. Census 2000 or the U.S. Census 1990.

MR. MALDONADO answered that undercounts have happened. The U.S. Census 2000 used a method, the Accurate Count Evaluation (ACE) to determine accuracy, but that process is now called the Census Count Measurement (CCM), and is used to determine any undercount or over count of the census. After the final operation is completed, the CCM conducts a census using a much smaller sample size, reviews responses, variances, and performs comparisons to determine if an under or over count exists. Historically, in Alaska the native community has under counted. The robust American Indian/Alaska Native partnership program and policies have been designed to reverse that trend.

[4:57:51 PM](#)

MR. MALDONADO, in response to Representative Lynn, related that the U.S. Census 1990 was underreported by 12 percent, but that dropped to about 3.5 percent in the US Census 2000.

[4:58:20 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE CHENAULT asked whether the census form can account for more than 12 people.

MS. HAWLEY related that the instructions on the right column, has a block that instructs people to turn the page over and continue. The U.S. Census Bureau will call the housing unit if 12 or more people reside at that location.

REPRESENTATIVE CHENAULT remarked that Representative Lynn has likely reviewed more census forms than anyone on the committee.

[4:59:53 PM](#)

CHAIR OLSON asked for the effect that the U.S. Census 2010 will have on places like New Orleans, since a number of its residents are now scattered around the country due to an emergency disaster.

MR. MALDONADO related 12 regions in the U.S. comprise the Census Bureau and have been grappling with that issue. He related that the U.S. Census 2010 will count people where they live and not where they used to live. He agreed it will be a big change in New Orleans, which will present unique challenges, including the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) housing.

[5:01:15 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE GRUENBERG expressed concern that as baby boomers reach retirement age that the snowbird concept applies and many will not be back in Alaska by April 1st, but they consider themselves to be Alaskans. Additionally, the Alaska National Guard members may be counted where they are stationed instead of where they customarily live.

MR. TANGUAY related that the U.S. Census 2010 enumerates by housing unit. If a housing unit does not respond, the census taker will determine if anyone is living in the housing unit.

[5:04:24 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE GRUENBERG clarified that he is not concerned about the physical process, just that more and more seniors are relocating to warmer climates. He asked for the reason that the questions are not designed to determine the location where the person customarily lives.

MS. HAWLEY explained that part of this is how the person answers the questionnaire. A person can fill out a questionnaire in Arizona and state that their home is in Alaska. It is where the person spends most of their time. Since it is self-enumeration, it is up to the person to indicate their home.

REPRESENTATIVE GRUENBERG stated that the person would answer on April 1 but can list his/her permanent residence.

MS. HAWLEY clarified that people are asked to reference April 1. She referred to the preface to Question 1, which read, "Count all people, including babies, who live and sleep here most of the time. Thus, if a person does not live at that location most of the time, he/she would not count themselves on that form. That person would respond on the form that is mailed to their residence. She related a scenario, in which she lives in Arizona, but wants to be counted in Alaska, which is her home. She related she does not count herself on the form, but would return it. She said the census taker would contact a neighbor to obtain the name of the person who lives at the non-response location. In that way, the person will be counted in Alaska, he stated.

MR. MALDONADO answered that the non-response follow up (NRFU) continues into the summer, during June - August, when most people will be back in Alaska. He related that the census takers will go back to the house six times to attempt to reach the person who resides in the home.

[5:08:10 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE GRUENBERG referred to the person temporarily residing in the resort. He did not see a place in the ten questions on the form to allow the person to state that they temporarily reside at the resort location.

MS. HAWLEY answered that the U.S. Census 2010 is not attempting to determine a person's location on April 1.

[5:08:44 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE T. WILSON related that she has a university student, but would not be counted at her home. Her daughter lives at her home and votes in her district. She asked whether the college student would be counted at her home.

MS. HAWLEY answered that when a student lives in the dormitory or residence at the college, that he/she is counted in that state.

REPRESENTATIVE T. WILSON suggested that the student should be counted in the district.

MS. HAWLEY answered that the place the student lives nine months of the year is the location for the census count.

[5:10:01 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE T. WILSON expressed concern that university students would not be counted in Alaska. She asked if she would be wrong to count the student in Alaska.

MS. HAWLEY answered yes.

REPRESENTATIVE T. WILSON clarified that the student in question will reside in Alaska for nine months of the year.

MR. MALDONADO responded that if the student resides in Alaska for nine months of the year that he/she would be counted in Alaska for the census.

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**ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business before the committee, the House Labor and Commerce Standing Committee meeting was adjourned at 5:10 p.m.