Census 2020: What it means for Illinois

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MALDEF
EQUALITY, EDUCATION AND
JUSTICE FOR ALL
2020 U.S. Census

• Count of everyone living in the U.S. every 10 years required by Constitution

• Every person is counted regardless of citizenship, age, or legal status

• Information shared is protected by federal law
How does the Census work?

• Census Bureau will send out **1 page letter**
  
  • Response options = Internet, Phone or Mail (**after 4th letter**)

• **Non-Response** follow-up by Census workers
Citizenship Question

On **American Community Survey** sent to 3.5 million homes yearly (Long form)

**Decennial Census**, every 10 years, counts everyone (Short form)

No **short form** citizenship question since (1950)
Why Include The Citizenship Question?

To Make Latinos And Immigrants Politically Invisible
Threat #1 – Allocation of Political Power

- **Total number of seats are divided among states for both:**
  - the House of Representatives and Electoral College

- **Distribution of millions of federal resources and aid to states**

- **States also use Census data to draw district lines for:**
  - Congressional and State legislative seats – to ensure communities are fairly represented
Threat #2 – State and Local Redistricting

Total Population - Current Standard

- Districts must have nearly equal total population
- One Person One Vote - *Reynolds v. Sims* (1964)

Total Voters – SCOTUS Has Not Commented

- Nearly equal citizen voting age population (CVAP)
- No states used CVAP in 2011 redistricting / Illegal for Congressional dist.
- Nebraska Constitution: “The basis of apportionment shall be the population excluding aliens, as shown by the next preceding federal census”
Legal Challenges – 7 Lawsuits

- **New York v. US Dept. of Commerce** ~ remove question (APA violation) Direct S. Ct. appeal

- **California/San Jose v. Ross** ~ remove question (APA & Enumeration Clause); 9th Circuit appeal ongoing

- **La Union del Pueblo v. Ross / Kravitz v. United States Dep't of Commerce**
  - remove question (APA and Enumeration Clause); appealed to 4th Circuit
  - new evidence raising “substantial issue” of Equal Protection and § 1985 claims, **June 25** - 4th Circuit remanded back down to district court
What's at Stake?

Federal Funding

- At least $1,800 per year for each person undercounted in 2020
- Federal programs that distribute funds based on the Census:
  - Medicaid and CHIP
  - SNAP, WIC, and LIHEAP
  - Title 1 Grants and Head Start
  - Highway Construction
Why Will People **Avoid** the Census?

- **Trust** - suspicious of government / citizenship question; Information Sharing/Confidentiality
- **Education** - No one explained the Census and its importance
- **Time** - People are busy and forget to fill it out
- **Barriers** - Non-english speaking, not tech savvy, low civic engagement

**Top Hard-Count Groups**

- Low-income families; Renters; Children 0-5 years old.
The 2020 Census is critically important to Cook County in Illinois!

Based on the latest census estimates (for the 2013-2017 period), 5,146,835 people live in 1,555,561 households in this county, and 91,756 people live in group quarters. (Total population = 5,238,541.)

Some population characteristics that may affect this county's participation in the 2020 Census include:

Census Self-Response

In 2010, 76.9% of the county's households mailed back their 2010 census questionnaire, requiring more costly and difficult in-person follow up to enumerate the remaining 23.1%.

Based on the latest census estimates, approx. 32% of Cook County's current population (or 1,667,990 people) lives in hard-to-count neighborhoods, shaded in light orange-to-dark red on the map. These are census tracts where almost a quarter or more households did not mail back their census questionnaires in 2010. Without higher self-response, more households in these and other neighborhoods in the state are at risk of being missed in the 2020 census.

In 2020, for the first time the Census Bureau will be urging most households to submit their census responses online via the internet (though you will have a choice to submit your responses either online, by phone, or mailing back a paper questionnaire). During 2013-17, 18.9% of Cook County's households had either no internet access or dial up only, according to the latest American Community Survey estimates. (Read more about the importance of internet access for the 2020 Census.)
CONTACT INFORMATION

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