

It's time. Make yourself count.

Census 2010



The Importance of the Census to Immigrant Communities

It's important for everyone to be counted.

Every 10 years the Census Bureau counts everyone living in the United States, no matter what their legal or immigration status. Census numbers are used by governments and private companies to decide where to spend money for schools, housing, health care, job training, economic development and more. They're used to determine representation in Congress, state legislatures, and local governments – and to decide where ballots and other materials will be made available in languages other than English. Communities that are undercounted lose out in all those areas.

Getting counted helps bring very real benefits to people in your community. Every person who goes uncounted could cost the community at least \$12,500 in needed resources.

Getting counted brings immigrant communities power and respect.

There's strength in numbers. In the past, immigrant communities have been more likely to be undercounted in the census – and that meant losing out on representation and resources that could benefit individuals and strengthen families.

Getting everyone counted will demonstrate the strength of our communities and will give us a bigger voice in government, business, and other decisions that affect our lives and families. In 2008, we wanted to be sure every vote was counted. In 2010, we need to make sure every person is counted.

Census answers cannot be used against you in any way.

People may fear that answering the census questionnaire may be used against them in some way, but that's not true. Individual census responses are confidential and protected by the strongest national privacy laws on the books. The census form does not even ask about citizenship status.

The U.S. Department of Justice has issued a statement declaring that no other law – not even the PATRIOT Act – trumps the confidentiality protections that apply to the census. The statement means that information given to the Census Bureau is safe and secure.

The Census Bureau has a solid record of protecting the confidentiality of personal census responses. No other government agency – not immigration officials, law enforcement, housing authorities, or the courts – can get any person's individual census answers for the next 72 years. ***Not even the President of the United States has the power to violate the confidentiality of the census.***

Every census worker – including the Census Bureau director -- has to swear an oath to keep information confidential – and anyone who violates that confidentiality can be imprisoned for up to five years and fined \$250,000. These laws are strictly enforced.

Boycotting the census would give us less power, not more.

Some people say that boycotting the census will help build political pressure to pass immigration reform. They're wrong. Boycotting the census will take power away from our communities, and it will take educational and health resources away from our families for the next 10 years.

Immigration reform is important. We're more likely to get Congress to pass immigration reform by showing the growing size and strength of our communities and getting the political representation we deserve. A boycott

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would have the opposite effect. We should channel our frustrations and energy into getting everyone counted, and then building on our show of strength to get immigration reform passed.

Census figures are also used to help with the enforcement of civil rights laws; a boycott would make it harder to identify and combat discrimination.

[Community leaders are urging everyone to be counted.](#)

Community and civil rights leaders agree that everyone should be counted. They know it's the best way to build stronger and more powerful communities. They would not support the census if they thought it could hurt the people they represent.