



## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

From June to December 2009, the Asian American Legal Defense and Education Fund (AALDEF) undertook a focused six-month monitoring project, evaluating the Census Bureau's outreach plans to the Asian American community. As the Bureau did in 2000, significant efforts were made to educate racial, ethnic, and language minorities to increase participation in the 2010 census. While the Bureau has generally been responsive to the needs of Asian Americans, AALDEF's assessment identified some deficiencies. Widespread problems included the following: insufficient support from some Partnership Specialists, limited or no opportunity to preview draft advertisements, misinformation about key programs like the Questionnaire Assistance Centers and Be Counted sites, mistranslations of census materials, and persistent concerns about the confidentiality of census information.

AALDEF worked with more than 100 Asian American community-based organizations (CBOs) in fifteen states: New York, New Jersey, Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, Maryland, Virginia, Georgia, Florida, Ohio, Michigan, Illinois, Texas, Louisiana, Washington, and California. Members of the National Asian American Census Task Force included OCA National, South Asian Americans Leading Together, National Korean American Service & Education Consortium, Chinese for Affirmative Action, Asian Law Caucus, and Asian American Federation of New York. Through personal interviews, conference calls, and an online survey, community leaders provided feedback and insight on their experiences with the Bureau's programs, particularly the Partnership Program, Language Assistance, and Other Operations.

### **Partnership Program**

The Bureau's Partnership Program consists of many components, but AALDEF examined three aspects: Partnership Specialist Staff, Quality of Outreach, and Partnership Support Program. AALDEF found that while most Regional Offices had hired specialists with necessary Asian language skills and community ties that corresponded to their local areas, some had not done so. The most significant problems were in Chicago, Charlotte, and Detroit, where specific Asian American communities may be overlooked, such as Korean Americans.

The quality of partnership outreach and support varied among the regions. Most CBOs indicated that their specialists were receptive to their needs. However, others, particularly those in the Silicon Valley and Chicago, encountered many challenges when working with their specialists. Those CBOs reported that after the initial "partnerships" were formed, their specialists were unresponsive and difficult to reach. Across the country, while some CBOs described the Partnership Support Program (PSP) as helpful, others were unable to secure in-kind funding for their census outreach work. Obstacles, such as lack of information about the PSP application process, undermined the goals of the program.

## **Language Assistance**

Although the Bureau provided helpful multilingual education materials about the importance of the census in eleven Asian languages on its website, CBOs had difficulty obtaining these materials from their Regional Offices. Improving the system of distribution is critical, especially as Census Day approaches.

In addition, many suggested that future education materials should also offer technical answers to basic operational questions about the census, such as “If I don’t receive a form, where can I go to get one?” Community leaders indicated that current materials only provide minimal details about census programs.

Knowledgeable members of the community should have been able to review translated census materials. Errors were discovered in the Vietnamese-language materials, including the sample Vietnamese Census Form. The Bureau had been inconsistent in their word choice for “census,” using both “điều tra” and “thống kê” interchangeably. For the Vietnamese community, “điều tra” or “government investigation” carries a negative connotation because it is associated with the communist regime. While the Bureau recently fixed the online form, it is uncertain whether the corrections will appear in the printed census forms.

Other avenues of language assistance include Telephone Questionnaire Assistance (TQA) and the Advance Letter. However, these only accommodate Chinese, Korean, and Vietnamese speakers. AALDEF’s request to expand the languages offered by TQA was denied.

## **Other Operations**

The Bureau has embarked on an ambitious \$340 million advertising campaign. There has been a lack of transparency with regard to the content of the in-language advertisements. As a result, many CBOs are concerned that the final ads may not resonate with their communities.

The Questionnaire Assistance Center (QAC)/Be Counted Programs are meant to accommodate individuals who do not receive a census form by mail or need assistance in completing a form. However, many were unaware of these programs, their goals, or how to sign up.

Despite the Bureau’s several statements about confidentiality, many CBOs are still seeking further governmental assurances, such as more details on privacy protections and a legal opinion from the Attorney General that the USA Patriot Act does not compromise the confidentiality protections. For those who wish to report a problem or potential violation of law, beginning in late February, AALDEF will have a multilingual telephone hotline and online form.

## I. INTRODUCTION

Administered once every 10 years, the census collects data that is used to implement policies that affect the Asian American community, including: the allocation of more than \$400 billion in federal funds for social services; the enforcement of civil rights laws; the requirement for bilingual ballots; the apportionment of Congressional seats among states; and the political representation of racial and ethnic minorities through redistricting.

The Asian American Legal Defense and Education Fund (AALDEF) has more than three decades of experience in advocating for the Asian American community on census issues. For Census 2000, AALDEF's activities included litigation, policy advocacy, extensive community outreach and education, and organizational networking. It focused primarily on New York, New Jersey, and Massachusetts. AALDEF collaborated with national groups and won a number of key policy issues, including a legal opinion ensuring the confidentiality of census information and a moratorium on immigration raids during the enumeration period.

At the conclusion of its efforts, AALDEF produced a special report, "Counting Asian Americans: An Evaluation of Census 2000 Programs and Policies" ([http://aaldef.org/docs/AALDEF\\_Census\\_2000\\_Report.pdf](http://aaldef.org/docs/AALDEF_Census_2000_Report.pdf)). The report provided recommendations, some of which were implemented by the Census Bureau, for improving outreach to Asian Americans in the next census.

For the 2010 Census, AALDEF is continuing its efforts to promote a fair and accurate count of the Asian American community, the fastest growing minority group in the nation. Many are immigrants, limited English proficient, and unfamiliar with the census. AALDEF's census program includes:

- **Advocacy** – Working with Census Bureau officials to encourage the hiring of bilingual Asian partnership specialists in particular regions; another suspension of immigrant enforcement operations during the census enumeration; consultation with community organizations in developing the paid media campaign; and the expansion of language assistance programs.
- **Public Education** – Promoting culturally sensitive and language-specific community education efforts to ensure Asian Americans understand the importance of the census and its benefits. Fact sheets focus on confidentiality, language assistance, and the relationships of the Census to bilingual ballots, political representation and redistricting. AALDEF's materials have been translated in 13 Asian languages – Chinese, Korean, Hindi, Gujarati, Punjabi, Bengali, Urdu, Vietnamese, Khmer, Lao, Tagalog, Japanese, and Arabic.

- **Legal Support** – Conducting legal trainings, which include a legal analysis about the strength of the confidentiality protections, the rights and responsibilities of community-based organizations in advising their clients to participate in the census, and the individual benefits for undocumented immigrants to get counted.
- **Monitoring** – Establishing a Census Monitoring Project to survey and categorize problems that may occur during the census enumeration. Individuals can report problems and potential violations of law to volunteer attorneys through a multilingual telephone hotline and online form.

## II. METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this report is to provide an interim assessment of the successes and problems in the Census Bureau's outreach plans and activities as they affect the Asian American community. By providing our concerns and recommendations well in advance of Census Day, we hope that the Census Bureau will address these important issues.

AALDEF's 2010 Census Project began in early 2008. Our focused monitoring efforts started in March 2009. Periodically, we received reports of problems from community groups. AALDEF and other members of the National Asian American Census Task Force – OCA National, South Asian Americans Leading Together, National Korean American Service & Education Consortium, Chinese for Affirmative Action, Asian Law Caucus, and Asian American Federation of New York – agreed that a thorough assessment was needed to identify, categorize, and address deficiencies in the Census Bureau's outreach to Asian Americans.

This report includes findings taken from a six-month period, June to December 2009. We worked with community-based organizations (CBOs) in areas with the largest concentrations of Asian Americans in fifteen states: New York, New Jersey, Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, Maryland, Virginia, Georgia, Florida, Ohio, Michigan, Illinois, Texas, Louisiana, Washington, and California. Groups provided feedback on their experiences with the Census Bureau's partnership program, language assistance, paid media campaign, and other relevant operations. (See [Attachment A](#) for a complete listing of CBOs.)

In evaluating the 2010 Census, AALDEF took several approaches, such as:

- conducting personal interviews with 50 community leaders throughout the country, including New York, Philadelphia, Northern California, Chicago, Detroit, Atlanta, Houston, and Boston;
- convening monthly Asian American Census Task Force conference call meetings with national organizations;
- hosting two national conference calls in December 2009 that provided a forum for 74 Asian CBOs to give feedback on census activities in their communities;
- circulating an online National Asian American Census Task Force monitoring survey (see [Attachment B](#)), over 105 CBOs participated in the survey; and
- interviewing regional and national census staff.

### III. FINDINGS/RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 1. Partnership Program

Following the success of the Census Bureau's education campaign in 2000, the Bureau revitalized the Partnership Program for the 2010 Census. Congress appropriated an initial \$130 million for the program, which provided for the hiring of Partnership Specialists and Assistants to reach out to hard-to-count communities, faith-based groups, businesses, media, schools, and elected/appointed officials. The Bureau received an additional \$120 million from the economic stimulus package to expand the program.

In 2009, the Bureau began recruiting CBOs to sign up as "partners" of the 2010 Census. By signing up as partners, CBOs "formally pledged their commitment to share the 2010 Census message and mobilize their constituents in support of the Census Bureau's goal of achieving a complete count." There are currently more than 150,000 partner organizations nationwide. Of the 105 CBOs that completed the National Asian American Census Task Force's monitoring survey, 75 indicated that they are partners with the Census.

The Partnership Program helps raise public awareness about the census, even in the most difficult to reach segments of the Asian American population. Partnership Specialists, in particular, play critical roles in disseminating important information to traditionally undercounted communities. Resources like in-kind funding, educational materials, and varied promotional items also help bolster participation in the census.

#### *Partnership Specialist Hiring:*

Partnership Specialists, particularly those with Asian language skills and a keen understanding of their communities, are vital in ensuring a full and accurate count. Their responsibilities include promoting the census in public venues, canvassing neighborhoods and CBOs to sign up as partners, and identifying potential Questionnaire Assistance Centers (QACs) and Be Counted Sites. Their activities enable the Bureau to build and maintain networks within many ethnic communities. Partnership Specialists are assisted by Partnership Assistants, administrative staff who are paid by the hour and typically receive less training.

AALDEF's advocacy efforts around Partnership Specialist hires began in May 2009, when we canvassed eight Regional Offices – Atlanta, Boston, Charlotte, Chicago, Dallas, Detroit, New York, and Philadelphia – and found that many were still in the process of hiring bilingual specialists. Some regions, like New York and Boston, had already filled several positions.

In June 2009, we sent letters to those Regional Offices, advocating for the hiring of bilingual specialists who could effectively outreach to local Asian American and immigrant populations, especially in the following states: New York, New Jersey, Massachusetts, Rhode Island,

Pennsylvania, Maryland, Virginia, Georgia, Florida, Ohio, Michigan, Illinois, Texas, Louisiana, Washington, and California. We were concerned that the specialist hires at the time did not reflect the demographics of the local communities.

In November 2009, we re-canvassed the eight Regional Offices to determine whether our concerns were taken into consideration. We also reached out to four additional Regional Offices – Denver, Kansas City, Los Angeles, and Seattle – to gain a more complete picture of Asian Partnership Specialist hires throughout the country. In December 2009, we reported our findings to the Regional Directors, as well as Bureau officials in Washington, DC. While some Regional Offices responded well to our recommendations, others have yet to consider them.

Regional Offices with specific gaps in coverage include:

- Boston – lack of coverage for the Southeast Asian community in Rhode Island.
- Chicago – lack of coverage for the Asian community in the Greater Chicago area.
- Charlotte – lack of coverage for the Korean community in Northern Virginia.
- Detroit – lack of coverage for the Bangladeshi community in Detroit, MI.
- Philadelphia – lack of coverage for the South Asian and Cambodian communities of Greater Philadelphia, PA; the Vietnamese community in Montgomery County, MD.

Although the Regional Offices are aware of our concerns, these problems continue to persist. We remain particularly concerned with the gaps in Chicago, Charlotte, and Detroit. As the following examples illustrate, there are significant Asian American communities in those areas that require outreach and assistance from Partnership Specialists who speak their languages.

***Chicago Regional Office***

The Chicago Regional Office has yet to hire any Partnership Specialists with Asian language skills. We twice complained about this gap – once in June and again in December. The Greater Chicago area has the nation’s third largest Korean American population, and the community has a high rate of limited English proficiency. AALDEF, along with local Asian CBOs, made numerous requests to Regional Director Stanley Moore, asking for at least one Asian Partnership Specialist, preferably one who had Korean language skills. In late December 2009, the Regional Office posted a job opening for a Chinese Partnership Specialist. While it is a step forward, criteria for the position must be broadened to serve other large Asian American communities.

***Charlotte Regional Office***

In the early summer when we reviewed the Charlotte Regional Office's Partnership Division, we found that no Asian Partnership Specialists had been hired to reach out to Asian American communities in Northern Virginia. We expressed our concerns that this oversight could result in a potential undercount of Koreans and Vietnamese. In July 2009, Regional Director William Hatcher responded to our suggestions by posting a vacancy announcement for a bilingual Asian Partnership Specialist. Six months later, we learned that the Regional Office hired a specialist who speaks Mandarin, Cantonese and Taiwanese. While we commend the hiring of a specialist who speaks multiple Chinese dialects, more diverse staff is still needed for census outreach in Northern Virginia. None of the specialists speak Korean or Vietnamese, which poses a significant problem to ensuring an accurate count.

***Detroit Regional Office***

In May 2009, we were told that Detroit's Partnership Division hired two Asian Partnership Specialists – Vietnamese and Asian Indian – to reach out to communities in Michigan, Ohio and Wisconsin. We found that the Vietnamese specialist was very eager, but highly overworked. His responsibilities required him to cover many populations and a substantial geographic area. Local Asian groups said they never met with any Asian Indian specialist. We asked the Regional Office to hire additional bilingual specialists to reach out to Bangladeshis in Michigan, Chinese in Ohio, and Asian Indians in both states. In November 2009, we learned that only Partnership Assistants had been hired. Without the appropriate Partnership Specialists, the Asian American community in Michigan runs the risk of being undercounted.

As our examples demonstrate, problems persist in a few regions. Partnership Specialists play a critical role in promoting the census, but they must be able to work with hard-to-count communities. Language skills and cultural competency are important characteristics to consider in the hiring process. We continue to strongly urge for the hiring of additional Asian Partnership Specialists in Chicago, Northern Virginia, and Detroit.

Notwithstanding these region-specific issues, we found that most Regional Directors understood the importance of hiring specialists who reflect the cultural and linguistic diversity of their regions. In fact, some Regional Offices, such as New York and Dallas, took action on our recommendations, and subsequently hired appropriate specialists to fill particular gaps in coverage. We spoke with many specialists and coordinators who were eager to provide the necessary information to us. We commend the various Regional Offices for staffing their Partnership Divisions with diverse specialists.

***Partnership Specialist Outreach and Communication:***

Although most Regional Offices had well-staffed Partnership Divisions, the level of outreach and support to CBOs varied throughout the regions. Of the 105 CBOs that responded to the census monitoring survey, only 57% reported that they met with outreach staff. One quarter felt that the staff had not been receptive to their needs.

Most Partnership Specialists maintained ongoing relations with CBOs and provided regular updates about census operations and promotional items (i.e. in-language posters, pens, mugs, etc.). Due to the efforts of dynamic specialists, the 2010 Census has been highly visible in outdoor festivals, community fairs, workshops, and other public venues.

In some cases, however, there were problems. After the initial “partnerships” were formed, a number of Asian CBOs in the West Coast reported having to “hound” Census staff in order to obtain basic information, such as an updated listing of local Partnership Specialists and their area(s) of coverage for distribution among CBOs. Some specialists in the Seattle, Chicago, New York and Dallas regions have also been described as disorganized and difficult to reach. For example, specialists often took as long as two or three weeks to respond to inquiries, even with consistent follow-up. Other CBOs reported that their requests for resources, such as in-language flyers, posters, fact sheets and other promotional materials, were not always granted.

Below are “snapshots” of the different experiences that CBOs across the country have had with their Partnership Specialists.

***Silicon Valley / Seattle Region***

Many organizations in San Jose described their initial experiences with the Census Bureau as “frustrating” and unproductive. Groups had been invited in August 2009 to attend “briefings,” but found that Census staff could not answer basic operational questions, such as how groups can become Questionnaire Assistance Centers.

According to one CBO staff member, a Chinese specialist said dismissively, “It is the job of organizations like yours to get people counted. If individuals are not counted, it is not the fault of the Census Bureau.” Even the [San Jose Mercury News](#) ran an editorial, “Census Bureau Still Not Meeting Santa Clara County Concerns”, which criticized the Bureau for ignoring CBOs and their requests for information and support (November 22, 2009).

One CBO had asked the Bureau for assistance in obtaining detailed information about hard-to-count census tracts, but never received a response. The information would have been helpful in census outreach efforts. After a series of complaints, these CBOs have been meeting periodically with the Regional Director since December 2009 to resolve the problems.

***Chicago / Chicago Region***

Groups in Chicago have experienced some challenges in working with Partnership Specialists in their area. Not only are specialists non-representative of the community, they are also often unresponsive to requests for information and even promotional giveaways. One CBO remarked that their specialist has provided about only 75 giveaway items like water bottles, notepads, and tote bags, even though they have outreached to over 1,200 Asian Americans.

***New York (Queens) / New York Region***

Some South Asian CBOs in Queens said that they have “great working relationships” with their specialists, but the accuracy of information provided to them was often questionable. Important details, such as deadlines for in-kind support programs and key census dates, were often left out of their updates. CBOs had to press specialists to obtain the relevant information. We found that it took several follow-up e-mail messages and phone calls to get specialists to respond to particular questions.

***New York (Chinatown) / New York Region***

CBOs in Chinatown described their Partnership Specialist as “receptive, active, and knowledgeable about the dynamics of the community.” It has made coordinating efforts with the Census Bureau easier for many CBOs in this neighborhood. Specialists have kept this community in the loop about various partnership opportunities, in addition to offering them materials for events, speakers for activities, and advice on outreach strategies.

Although most Partnership Specialists have been able to cultivate positive relations with CBOs, the quality of work varies greatly from person to person. Some have been active and reliable, as we noted in New York’s Chinatown. Others have not been as supportive, as demonstrated in the Silicon Valley and Chicago. All Partnership Divisions should encourage their specialists to work with CBOs in a professional and more supportive manner. The Bureau clearly recognizes that CBOs are valuable partners, but more oversight may be needed to ensure that specialists reach out to CBOs in effective ways.

***Partnership Support Program:***

Funding for census work (or the lack thereof) continues to be, one of the many obstacles preventing some CBOs from working on the census. The amount of work required for census outreach, as described by one CBO, requires the time of at least one full-time staff person. Many CBOs are struggling to maintain their programs in the current economic downturn. The Census Bureau acknowledged some of those barriers by reinstating the Partnership Support Program (PSP), which had been available during Census 2000 for groups that needed small amounts of in-kind funding.

In 2009, organizations were given the opportunity to apply for up to \$2,999, which would help pay for outreach materials, supplies, and space rentals. Forty-two percent (42%) of CBOs indicated that they applied for support, but 68% stated that they either did not apply or did not know about the program. Some Asian CBOs in New York, Boston, Los Angeles, San Francisco, and Atlanta, successfully applied for and received in-kind support.

In general, Partnership Specialists informed partners about the program. However, more transparency about the application process would have been helpful. Many CBOs reported that they were unable to obtain the PSP application, even after repeated requests. It could not be downloaded from the Census website. Some indicated that they did not even know about the PSP until they read a description on the National Asian American Census Task Force's monitoring survey. By this time, most of the funds were already depleted.

In the Silicon Valley, many CBOs applied for in-kind support, received approval, but never received the funding to pay for their events. Some CBOs started to believe that "the grant does not exist" because they did not know of any other groups that had received the support.

Similarly, in New York, CBOs were told about "relevant programs" to obtain "product funding," but they had to follow up with different specialists in order to piece together the details. Some specialists even provided inaccurate information. For example, one CBO was initially informed that the PSP would not pay for translation services.

In the Detroit Region, which includes Ohio and Michigan, we received complaints that PSP funds were not being distributed equitably among all groups. Some CBOs serving one population were able to obtain approvals quickly for several projects, while proposals submitted by Asian Americans took longer to process.

Notwithstanding these widespread problems, some regions did take proactive measures to ensure that their partners received information about the PSP opportunities. The Boston Regional Office, for example, mailed applications to CBOs that had actually executed some form of census outreach.

## **2. Language Assistance**

### ***Multilingual Materials:***

In October 2009, the Census Bureau provided its first major set of translated education materials – posters, fact sheets, brochures, and language assistance guides – on their website. The materials included information about the importance of the census. This was a marked improvement from 2000, when materials were not available until much later in the year.

In general, CBOs were pleased to find that materials were translated into many Asian languages, including Chinese, Korean, Vietnamese, Bengali, Hindi, Urdu, Hmong, Khmer, Laotian, Tagalog, and Thai. Over half (51%) of CBOs surveyed indicated that they knew that the Bureau had materials in the language of their communities.

Although the materials were helpful in conducting basic outreach, CBOs found it difficult to obtain hard copies from their Regional Office. Most CBOs were only able to receive translated materials at events where Partnership Specialists were present.

Some groups complained that they received materials that did not correspond to their language needs. For example, in Chicago, one CBO requested materials in Vietnamese and other Asian languages, but was only given posters and fact sheets in English. A better system of distribution is necessary.

Groups also commented on the need for answers (in-language) to common questions:

- (1) If I don't receive a form, where can I go to get one?
- (2) I can't read English. Where can I go to get help in filling out the form?
- (3) I need a form in Chinese/Korean/Vietnamese. How can I get one?
- (4) How do I know that the person at my door is a census-taker?
- (5) What happens if a census worker breaks confidentiality and shares my information?

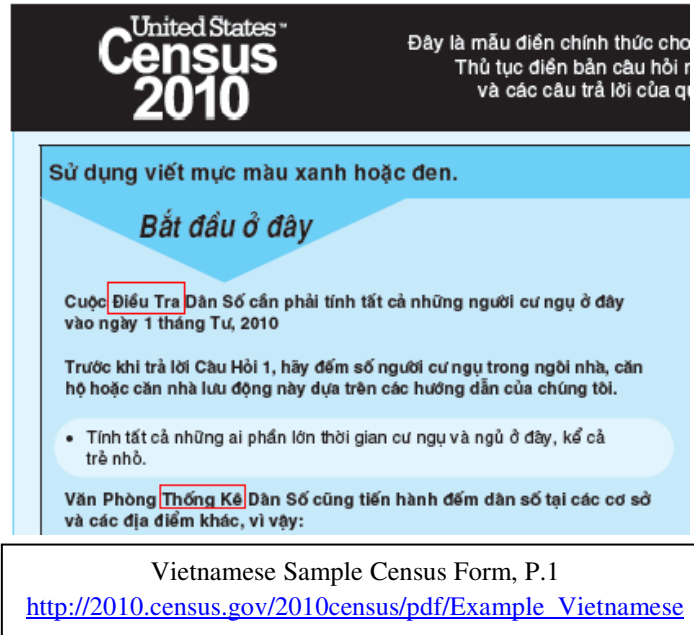
We recommend that the Bureau's next set of education materials include information that would help address these real concerns. The current pieces do not offer technical answers to basic operational questions about the census.

***Mistranslations:***

According to community leaders, the translations in certain languages, such as Vietnamese, should have been reviewed by knowledgeable members of the community. This would have prevented the production of mistranslated forms.

Groups in California complained about the poor translation of “census” in Vietnamese.

Specifically, they noted that the Census Bureau’s website and other materials (i.e., language assistance guide, sample census form) have been inconsistent in their choice of words, using both “điều tra” and “thống kê” interchangeably. For the Vietnamese community, “điều tra” or “government investigation” carries a negative connotation because it is associated with the communist regime. We understand that as of January 14, 2010, the corrections have been made to the materials available online. However, groups are concerned that the forms have already been mass produced, and that further corrections cannot be made to the hard copies.



The Census Bureau’s Language Reference Dictionary for Vietnamese, while helpful, also could have been improved. Groups found several poor translations for important terms, such as “enumerator.”

These inconsistencies demonstrate that the Census Bureau must institute more quality controls in its translations. Translated materials should be evaluated by native speakers, preferably partners of the census.

***Telephone Questionnaire Assistance (TQA):***

In August 2009, AALDEF asked that the Census Bureau expand its Telephone Questionnaire Assistance (TQA) program to include additional Asian languages. The TQA program only assists callers in English, Chinese, Korean, Vietnamese, Spanish and Russian.

The Bureau envisions that Questionnaire Assistance Centers (QACs) will be the main resource for respondents who speak other languages, and require assistance in filling out the census form.

QACs are important and work very well in certain areas. However, the program will not accommodate emerging populations that may not have sufficient community infrastructures in place to establish QACs. Unfortunately, the Bureau denied AALDEF's request to expand the languages offered by the TQA.

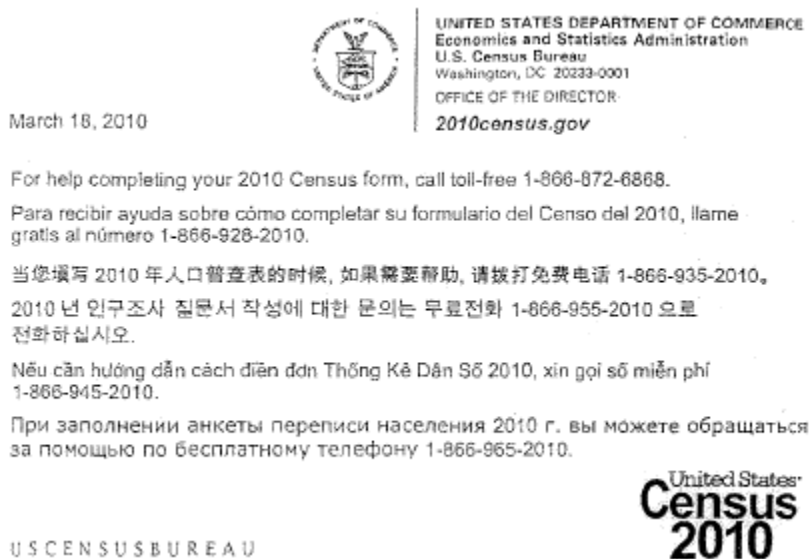
***The Advance Letter:***

In 2000, at the urging of Asian CBOs, the Census Bureau sent out advance letters with instructions in Chinese, Korean, and Vietnamese. For many households, these letters were the only direct correspondence from the Bureau with in-language instructions on how to get language assistance.

For the 2010 Census, however, the Bureau initially reversed its policy on providing multilingual instructions. Officials stated that only bilingual letters (English/Spanish) would be sent to households in early March.

CBOs and elected officials in San Francisco expressed their concerns over this regressive change, and successfully persuaded the Bureau to include three Asian languages – Chinese, Korean, and Vietnamese – in the advance letter.

Despite this positive policy decision, very little has been done to inform the public about the advance letter, whether through public service announcements, or advertisements.



Sample Advance Letter

### **3. Other Operations**

#### ***Paid Media Campaign:***

In 2000, the Census Bureau launched an unprecedented \$166 million advertising campaign for the census. The campaign was highly effective in stimulating broad awareness about the census. However, CBOs were not given opportunities to preview and offer feedback on draft advertisements. We had suggested in 2000 that the Census Bureau try to incorporate broader community feedback for the next census.

For 2010, the Census Bureau's estimated \$340 million paid media campaign will occur in three phases: one beginning in January 2010 to build awareness around the Census; another in March 2010 to motivate people to complete and return the census questionnaire by April 1; and a final effort during the months of May, June, and July to encourage cooperation with the census takers who will be following up with households that did not return the form.

We remain highly concerned about the lack of transparency with regard to the in-language advertisements. We found that only two CBOs, of the hundreds that responded, were able to preview the creative work. Another CBO in California had asked to see early drafts of the advertisements, but their requests were denied. Many CBOs fear that the final advertisements may not necessarily resonate with particular hard-to-count communities. By the time that the advertisements come out, it will be too late to make any changes or adjustments.

We observed this problem in Census 2000, when advertisements aired on the East Coast were deemed more appropriate for suburban West Coast Asian American audiences. Those images failed to connect with residents in urban cities. Other issues included vague messaging on important issues, such as confidentiality and key dates.

Groups also expressed concern over the Census Bureau's outreach to local, ethnic media. According to one CBO, some reputable local outlets with a broad reach to hard-to-count communities may nevertheless have limited capacity to competitively bid in the process. Some emerging communities may be overlooked in the advertising campaign. In 2000, for example, there were too few advertising spots for the non-English speaking Indian, Bangladeshi, Pakistani, and Indo-Caribbean populations in New York.

#### ***Questionnaire Assistance Centers (QAC) / Be Counted Programs:***

Similar to its efforts in 2000, the Census Bureau will launch the Questionnaire Assistance Center (QAC) and Be Counted programs in mid-March. QACs are typically spaces, donated by community partners, where individuals can receive personal assistance in filling out their census forms. Be Counted sites are public locations – community centers, health clinics, grocery stores, churches – where blank Census questionnaires can be picked up and dropped off. For this

decennial census, all QACs will also be designated as Be Counted sites, meaning that questionnaires will be available at those locations. This was a direct recommendation that AALDEF made after Census 2000, because it had been very difficult to obtain a blank Census form.

Of the CBOs surveyed, 41% indicated that they plan to be QACs or/and Be Counted sites. Yet only 30% knew how to sign up. There is a lack of consistency, communication, and clarity among the local and regional offices regarding the QAC/Be Counted programs. Groups do not have a clear understanding about the selection process or the importance of the programs.

For example, organizations did not know that they could not receive blank questionnaires to distribute, unless they signed up to be a QAC or Be Counted site. Based on our observations from Complete Count Committee meetings in New York, the Bureau does not go over the program with partners, unless prompted by questions. The QAC/Be Counted program is essential to ensuring that the hard-to-count communities will be reached.

We have found that the QAC program works best when those centers are CBOs staffed by the organization's existing staff. According to one CBO in San Jose, California, "Groups need funding to retain staff to do more outreach after the Census form is sent out so that [they] can help answer questions and get people to submit their forms. Raising awareness is important, but filling out the form is another process altogether."

Some Regional Directors have said that they will allow the staff of CBOs to take the Census Employee exam and potentially serve as QAC representatives. However, not all Regional Offices have informed partners of this possibility. CBOs serving immigrants and other vulnerable groups have existing staff who are considered trusted voices. Some CBOs expressed discomfort with the idea of integrating "outside" Census employees into their office, when they are perfectly able to assist their clients with the census forms.

In 2000, we witnessed firsthand the problems of the QAC/Be Counted programs, particularly as a result of poor planning, execution, and administration. Some CBOs that had signed up to be a QAC were never officially selected. Few people knew where to get assistance, because QAC lists were not available or widely advertised. The hours of operation at some QACs were also inconvenient for community residents who could only take time off in the evenings. Finally, the blank Be Counted forms provided to QACs did not always correspond to the community's language needs.

The QAC/Be Counted programs have the potential to reach many individuals who will not receive the form by mail. However, more information must be provided to CBOs in order to ensure that this program is effective. We hope that more advance planning has been

implemented for this decennial, so that all individuals can fully access the program as envisioned by the Bureau.

***Confidentiality:***

Census Bureau officials often tout that all information provided to the census is confidential by law (Title 13), and those who commit violations are subject to “severe penalties.” Although CBOs generally understood the Bureau’s message about confidentiality, they needed further and more detailed assurances. Trusted community leaders are being asked to relay assurances of confidentiality to their constituents, but they in turn must also feel comfortable in making such statements. Of those surveyed who assessed the most effective assurances, we found:

- 89% preferred assurances from CBOs;
- 83% preferred the ability to report people who violate confidentiality;
- 82% preferred procedures to prosecute those who violate confidentiality;
- 76% preferred the advice of lawyers stating that information is confidential; and
- 71% preferred public statements by elected officials.

AALDEF submitted numerous Freedom of Information Act Requests to address these concerns, but we have not yet received information from the Census Bureau. We seek details of any enforcement and specific policies and procedures to safeguard confidentiality. We have yet to receive a legal opinion on the USA Patriot Act and its relation to confidentiality protections. In the next two months, AALDEF will be launching a series of legal trainings about the confidentiality of census information. In order to provide a mechanism for individuals who wish to report problems and potential violations of law, AALDEF will have a multilingual telephone hotline and online form beginning in late February.

According to many service providers and advocacy organizations that serve immigrants, a moratorium on immigration raids would be one way to ease concerns about the confidentiality of the census. However, as of October 2009, the Commerce Department has stated that it will not ask the Department of Homeland Security to temporarily halt Immigration and Customs Enforcement raids against undocumented immigrants. The Bureau needs to take additional steps if it expects undocumented immigrants and other vulnerable communities to cooperate with census-takers during the enumeration period.

#### **IV. CONCLUSION**

The Asian American population has grown significantly since Census 2000. The Bureau's outreach to Asian Americans, while generally positive, is deficient in certain areas.

The support for partnering community-based organizations, whether through the hiring of bilingual Partnership Specialists or the Partnership Support Program, has varied. For example, in order to reach out to the hard-to-count communities in areas like Chicago, Detroit, and Northern Virginia, additional Partnership Specialists with particular Asian language skills must be hired. On the other hand, Regional Offices in New York, California, and Texas staffed their Partnership Divisions with the appropriate specialists who have been able to work with CBOs.

Basic information about upcoming Census operations, such as the Questionnaire Assistance Center (QAC)/Be Counted programs, has been hard to obtain, despite the importance of such programs. CBOs had very limited knowledge about why the programs were needed. We also found that many leaders did not understand that blank census forms would only be available for CBOs that opted into the QAC/Be Counted programs.

The Bureau recently launched its ambitious paid media campaign, but very few Asian CBOs were able to preview and provide feedback. Given the lack of transparency, we are concerned that the final advertisements may not resonate with particular hard-to-count communities, as the Bureau discovered during Census 2000.

Concerns about the confidentiality protections for Census information still exist, even though the Bureau has repeatedly stated that all information is private. More detailed educational materials that address these issues are needed.

It is clear from AALDEF's assessment that some changes – regionally and nationally – are needed. Our recommendations are intended to improve operations prior to Census Day.

## **Attachment A**

### **Community-Based Organizations that Provided Feedback on Census Outreach**

*\* Members of the National Asian American Census Task Force*

#### **National**

APIA Vote!

Asian American Justice Center

National Korean American Service & Education Consortium\*

OCA National\*

South Asian Americans Leading Together\*

#### **California**

2010 US Census Committee for the People of Burma

Asian & Pacific Islander Older Adults Task Force

Asian American Center of Santa Clara County

Asian Law Alliance

Asian Law Caucus\*

Asian Pacific American Legal Center

Asian Pacific Policy & Planning Council

Chinese for Affirmative Action\*

East Bay Asian Local Development Corporation

International Children Assistance Network

Korean Resource Center

Laotian American National Alliance

National Asian Pacific American Families Against Substance Abuse

North American South Asian Bar Association

OCA Orange County

OCA San Francisco

Office of the County Executive - Santa Clara

Orange County Asian and Pacific Islander Community Alliance

Southeast Asia Resource Action Center

Taiwanese American Citizens League

United Cambodian Community

#### **Washington, DC**

Asian Pacific American Bar Association of DC

Asian Pacific American Institute for Congressional Studies

OCA Greater Washington DC

South Asian Bar Association of DC

## **Florida**

National Alliance to Nurture the Aged and the Youth  
OCA South Florida Chapter

## **Georgia**

Center for Pan Asian Community Services, Inc.  
OCA Georgia

## **Illinois**

Asian American Institute  
Chinese American Service League  
Korean American Resource and Cultural Center

## **Massachusetts**

Asian Community Development Corporation  
Chinese Progressive Association  
Greater Boston Legal Services

## **Michigan**

APIA Vote-Michigan  
Multicultural Community Center

## **New Jersey**

OCA New Jersey

## **Nevada**

Southern Nevada Asian Pacific Coalition for Census 2010

## **New York**

Adhikaar  
Asian American Federation of New York\*  
Asian Americans for Equality  
Chhaya CDC  
Chinatown Partnership  
Filipino American Human Services, Inc.  
MinKwon Center for Community Action  
OCA New York  
OCA Westchester & Hudson Valley Chapter  
SEVA  
South Asian Council for Social Services

**Ohio**

Asian American Council

**Pennsylvania**

Asian Pacific American Bar Association of PA  
Cambodian Association of Greater Philadelphia  
Philadelphia Chinatown Development Corporation

**Texas**

Asian American Bar Association of Houston  
Asian Pacific Interest Section of the State Bar of Texas  
Austin Asian American Bar Association  
OCA Dallas Fort Worth  
OCA Greater Houston

**Virginia**

Virginia Complete Count Committee

**Washington**

Asian Pacific Islander Community Leadership Foundation  
National Asian Pacific Center on Aging

## Attachment B

### National Asian American Census Task Force Monitoring Survey

#### I. About this Survey

AALDEF, OCA, SAALT, NAKASEC, CAA, AAF, and ALC are working to help the US Census Bureau effectively reach out to Asian Americans. Please take 10-15 minutes to share your experiences in working with the Census Bureau so we can make concrete recommendations for improvement.

About the organizations:

The Asian American Legal Defense and Education Fund (AALDEF) is a 35-year old national organization that protects and promotes the civil rights of Asian Americans. By combining litigation, advocacy, education, and organizing, AALDEF works with Asian American communities across the country to secure human rights for all.

Founded in 1973, OCA is a national organization dedicated to advancing the social, political, and economic well-being of Asian Pacific Americans (APAs). OCA embraces the hopes and aspirations of all APAs.

South Asian Americans Leading Together (SAALT) is a national non-profit organization dedicated to fostering an environment in which all South Asians in America can participate fully in civic and political life, and have influence over policies that affect them. Approximately 2.7 million South Asians live in the United States, tracing their backgrounds to Bhutan, Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, the Maldives, and the diaspora, including Trinidad/Tobago, Guyana, and Africa.

The National Korean American Service & Education Consortium (NAKASEC) was founded in 1994 by a group of local grassroots community based organizations. NAKASEC is dedicated to projecting a national progressive voice on major civil rights and immigrant rights issues and promoting the full participation of Korean Americans with the greater goal of building a national movement for social change.

Chinese for Affirmative Action (CAA) was founded in 1969 to protect the civil and political rights of Chinese Americans and advance multiracial democracy in the United States. Today, CAA is a progressive voice in and on behalf of the broader Asian and Pacific American (APA) community. CAA advocates for systemic change that remedies racial injustice, ensures equal opportunities, and reduces the language barriers and nativist hostilities facing immigrants.

The Asian American Federation's mission is to advance the civic voice and well-being of Asian Americans. We collaboratively foster philanthropy in the community, undertake research to inform policies, and provide support to community service organizations.

The mission of the Asian Law Caucus is to promote, advance and represent the legal and civil rights of the Asian and Pacific Islander communities. Recognizing that social, economic, political and racial inequalities continue to exist in the United States, the ALC is committed to the pursuit of equality and justice for all sectors of our society with a specific focus directed toward addressing the needs of low-income Asian and Pacific Islanders.

## II. Partnering with the Census

2010 Census Partners are government, non-profit, corporate or community organizations that have formally pledged their commitment to help the Census Bureau achieve a complete count.

**\* 1. Has your organization signed up to be a Census Partner?**

Yes

No

**\* 2. Have you met with Census Partnership outreach staff?**

Yes

No

If you answered "no" to Question #2, please skip to Question #6.

**3. Are they bilingual in the language/dialect that your community speaks?**

Yes

No

**4. If "yes" please select all language(s) and dialect(s) that apply:**

Arabic

Indonesian

Nepali

Bangla

Japanese

Punjabi

Cantonese

Khmer

Tagalog

Gujarati

Korean

Tamil

Hindi

Lao

Thai

Hmong

Malayalam

Urdu

Ilocano

Mandarin

Vietnamese

Other Language(s)/Dialect(s):

**5. Did Census Bureau staff describe the types of outreach efforts available for your community?**

Yes

No

Give Examples:

**\* 6. Do you feel Census Partnership outreach staff are receptive to your community's needs and concerns?**

Yes

No

Explain:

### III. In-Kind Funding ("Partner Support Program")

The Partner Support Program supports the outreach efforts of partner organizations by providing in-kind support, through paying for materials, supplies, space rentals, etc.

**\* 7. Did you apply for support from the Partner Support Program?**

- Yes
- No
- Did not know about it

If you answered "no" to Question #7, please skip to the next page.

**8. Did you receive the support after you applied?**

- Yes
- No

How much was paid for towards your outreach efforts (merchandise, event, etc)?

**9. If you received support, for what did it pay for?**

- Imprinted T-shirts
- Bags
- Flyers (Material Reproduction)
- Translation Services

Other (please specify):

**10. What other kinds of support do you need?**

## IV. Language Assistance

**\* 11. Have you seen the Census Bureau's materials translated into the language of your community?**

Yes

No

**12. If "yes" please select all languages that apply:**

Arabic

Japanese

Tagalog

Bangla

Khmer

Urdu

Chinese

Korean

Vietnamese

Gujarati

Lao

Hindi

Punjabi

Other Language(s):

**13. What translated materials have you seen/received from the Census Bureau?**

Brochures

Fact Sheets

Posters

Toolkits

Other Material(s):

**\* 14. Do you think the translated census materials are effective in encouraging people to participate in the census?**

Yes

No

Not Sure

## V. Questionnaire Assistance Centers (QACs) and Be Counted Sites

Questionnaire Assistance Centers (QACs) are spaces, donated by community partners, where staff from the Census Bureau or the partner organization are able to help people complete the questionnaire, provide special language assistance and answer general questions. These centers are open for four weeks when Census questionnaires are mailed out, approximately mid-March to mid-April 2010.

A Be Counted site is a location where Census questionnaires can be picked up and dropped off.

### \* 15. Does your organization plan to sign up to be a Questionnaire Assistance Center (QAC) and/or Be Counted Site?

- Yes - both
- Yes - only QAC
- Yes - only Be Counted
- No
- Do not know about them

If you answered "no" to Question #15, please skip to the next page.

### 16. Do you know how to sign up?

- Yes
- No
- Do not know

**17. For what community/population/area will you be providing assistance?**

	State
Arab	<input type="text"/>
Asian Indian	<input type="text"/>
Bangladeshi	<input type="text"/>
Cambodian	<input type="text"/>
Chinese	<input type="text"/>
Filipino	<input type="text"/>
Hmong	<input type="text"/>
Indo-Caribbean	<input type="text"/>
Indonesian	<input type="text"/>
Japanese	<input type="text"/>
Korean	<input type="text"/>
Pakistani	<input type="text"/>
Thai	<input type="text"/>
Vietnamese	<input type="text"/>

Other Ethnic Group(s)/State(s):

**18. What specific neighborhood/community will you be covering?**

**19. In which language(s)/dialect(s) will you be providing assistance?**

- |                                    |                                     |                                     |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Arabic    | <input type="checkbox"/> Indonesian | <input type="checkbox"/> Nepali     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bangla    | <input type="checkbox"/> Japanese   | <input type="checkbox"/> Punjabi    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cantonese | <input type="checkbox"/> Khmer      | <input type="checkbox"/> Tagalog    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Gujarati  | <input type="checkbox"/> Korean     | <input type="checkbox"/> Tamil      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hindi     | <input type="checkbox"/> Lao        | <input type="checkbox"/> Thai       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hmong     | <input type="checkbox"/> Malayalam  | <input type="checkbox"/> Urdu       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ilocano   | <input type="checkbox"/> Mandarin   | <input type="checkbox"/> Vietnamese |

Other Language(s)/Dialect(s):

**20. Will you have the Census Bureau pay for your staff to assist respondents?**

Yes

No

Do not know

## VI. Confidentiality

The information you provide in the census is completely confidential. By law (Title 13 of the US Code), your private information cannot be shared with the USCIS, ICE, IRS, police, building landlords, or neighbors.

**\* 21. Do you have any concerns about the confidentiality of census information?**

Yes

No

Explain:

**22. What would make your community more trusting to give the census personal information?**

**\* 23. Please rate how each item below will make you feel in answering the Census.**

	More Assured	Assured	Less Assured	No Opinion
Advice of lawyers stating that information is confidential	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Public statements by elected officials	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Assurances from community-based organizations	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Procedures to prosecute those who violate confidentiality	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
The ability to report people who violate confidentiality	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

## VII. Census Bureau Regional Director

### \* 24. Please select your U.S. Census Bureau region(s):

- Atlanta, GA - Alabama, Florida, Georgia
- Boston, MA - Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New York (all counties except those listed in NY Region), Puerto Rico, Rhode Island, Vermont
- Charlotte, NC - Kentucky, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia
- Chicago, IL - Illinois, Indiana, Wisconsin
- Dallas, TX - Louisiana, Mississippi, Texas
- Denver, CO - Arizona, Colorado, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, New Mexico, North Dakota, South Dakota, Utah, Wyoming
- Detroit, MI - Michigan, Ohio, West Virginia
- Kansas City, KS - Arkansas, Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, Oklahoma
- Los Angeles, CA - Hawaii, Southern California (Fresno, Imperial, Inyo, Kern, Kings, Los Angeles, Madera, Mariposa, Merced, Monterey, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, San Diego, San Benito, San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, Tulare, and Ventura counties)
- New York, NY - New York: Bronx, Kings, Nassau, Queens, Richmond, Rockland, Suffolk and Westchester counties; Northern New Jersey: Bergen, Essex, Hudson, Morris, Middlesex, Passaic, Somerset, Sussex, Union, and Warren counties
- Philadelphia, PA - Delaware, District of Columbia, Maryland, New Jersey (all counties except those listed in NY Region), Pennsylvania
- Seattle, WA - Alaska, Idaho, Northern California (all counties except those listed in LA region), Oregon, Washington

### \* 25. Have you met with or heard from the Regional Director(s) of the Census Bureau for your area(s)?

- Yes
- No
- Do not know who s/he is

If you answered "no" to Question #25, please skip to the next page.

**26. Do you feel s/he is receptive to your needs and concerns?**

Yes

No

Explain:

## VIII. Overall Assessment

**27. What are your general concerns about the census and its outreach to your community?**

**\* 28. Where are you from?**

City/Town:

State:

**\* 29. Does your organization serve the following communities?**

	Yes	No
Limited English proficient	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Immigrants	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Low-Income	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Non-Citizens	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Seniors	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

## IX. Join the National Asian American Census Task Force

**30. Would you like to join the National Asian American Census Task Force? If so, please provide the following:**

Name:	<input type="text"/>
Organization:	<input type="text"/>
Mailing Address:	<input type="text"/>
City/State:	<input type="text"/>
Zip Code:	<input type="text"/>
Phone:	<input type="text"/>
E-mail address:	<input type="text"/>

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AALDEF focuses on critical issues affecting Asian Americans, including immigrant rights, economic justice for workers, voting rights and civic participation, affirmative action, language access to services, youth rights and educational equality, housing and environmental justice, Census policy, and the elimination of hate violence, police misconduct and human trafficking.

This report was written by Julia Yang, AALDEF Census Coordinator, with the assistance of Margaret Fung, Glenn D. Magpantay, and Bryan Lee.

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