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Educational Fund

# The Last Chance to Get It Right:

## Implications of the 2018 Test of the Census for Latinos and the General Public

*by*

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# Executive Summary

The 2020 U.S. Census is already the most controversial in decades. Many policymakers, community and civic leaders, advocates and Census experts believe that the accuracy of the 2020 Census is at serious risk, and that there are significant obstacles that will thwart a precise count.

Each decennial Census is a one-time effort, and therefore the Census Bureau undertakes extensive testing to identify potential challenges in advance. From March to July 2018, it conducted major components of its “dry run,” the End-to-End (E-T-E) Test, in Providence County, Rhode Island. The public’s experience with the E-T-E has serious implications for the success of the 2020 Census, and this report is an independent assessment of the E-T-E test. It has a three-part design: a survey of 918 residents who took the test, interviews with local civic leaders, and interviews with elected officials.

Key themes ran through all three groups. Among them were concerns about the government’s intentions in asking for and using information, challenges with online questionnaire response, and concern about effective communication about the importance and purpose of the enumeration. In detail:

## RESIDENTS

- Overwhelmingly, residents agreed that a Census citizenship question will decrease participation in the 2020 Census.
- Spanish-language outreach and accessibility is imperative. Nearly half (42%) of Latino<sup>1</sup> households that participated in the E-T-E did so in Spanish.
- Personal networks and community-based organizations are the best means to spread information.
- Most Latinos preferred to take part in the E-T-E by mail and in-person, rather than online.

## CIVIC LEADERS

- The public is uncertain about the importance of the Census, especially for members of hard to reach communities.
- Many fear and mistrust the federal government’s plans for the data.
- Civic leaders face challenges in conveying Census information to residents.

## ELECTED OFFICIALS

- Residents overall mistrust and fear the federal government and Census workers.
- A great many residents tell elected officials that they fear abuse of the citizenship question and the targeting of undocumented households.
- A variety of challenges exists to community outreach and engagement.
- Support for completing the E-T-E test online was often absent.
- Local residents face barriers in working for the U.S. Census Bureau.

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<sup>1</sup> For the purposes of this report we use the term “Latino” instead of “Hispanic” acknowledging the community’s use of the term “Latino” for self-identification. See Mora, G. C. (2014). *Making Hispanics: How activists, bureaucrats, and media constructed a new American*. University of Chicago Press.

## **This report recommends:**

- The Administration or Congress must eliminate the citizenship question.
- The Census Bureau's outreach and enumeration strategies must take into account Latinos' preferences for responding to the questionnaire.
- The Bureau must have effective strategies to reach Spanish-dominant residents and support them in completing the questionnaire.
- The Bureau must provide clear, consistent communication early on with civic and community partners and elected officials about its plans for an accurate count.
- The Bureau's outreach and partnership strategies should include community education and training for the staff members and volunteers at local community based organizations that have regular and trusted contact with residents, especially in hard to reach communities. Outreach by the Bureau, community organizations, and other partners should involve the "trusted messengers" and personal networks that will most effectively reach Latinos and other hard-to-count populations.
- Congress must appropriate enough funding to ensure an accurate Census. State and local governments, philanthropic institutions and businesses should also provide resources for community education and assistance efforts.

# The Last Chance to Get It Right

The decennial Census is a once-in-a-decade undertaking and therefore over the past few cycles the Census Bureau has tested it extensively in advance to make sure it will work smoothly. This report focuses on the implications of the final field test before Census 2020 with particular attention to members of “difficult to reach communities,” including racial/ethnic minorities, non-English speakers, and immigrant community members. Along with our data, we present policy recommendations to help ensure members of these communities are accurately counted in Census 2020.

## Background: The Dress Rehearsal and the 2018 End-to-End Test

The final test run for the Census has typically taken place two years before Census Day itself and involved the complete range of activities planned for the subsequent actual decennial, including:

- Office and field address canvassing operations to update the address list the Bureau uses to reach households.
- The Bureau’s Integrated Partnerships and Communications program, in which the Bureau conducts outreach and education activities with community partners and the public.
- Deployment of the operational and technological systems needed to obtain responses from residents through the Census questionnaire.
- Testing of Nonresponse Followup (NRFU) activities, through which the Bureau contacts households that do not initially respond to the questionnaire.
- Evaluation of the extent to which the test accurately counted the residents in the test area.

The test has also allowed the Bureau to assess the integration and coordination of these components. Because it has long been the last, most comprehensive assessment of the Bureau’s readiness for the decennial enumeration, it has been referred to as the Bureau’s “Dress Rehearsal.”

In past decades, the Bureau has conducted the Dress Rehearsal at several sites, to gain information from diverse regions and populations. For 2018 it had initially planned to conduct the full test in three sites: Pierce County, Washington; the Bluefield-Beckley-Oak Hill area in West Virginia; and Providence County, Rhode Island. However, because of insufficient funding by Congress, in 2017, the Bureau decided to significantly reduce the scope of its 2018 testing.<sup>2</sup> It conducted only address canvassing operations at all three sites, and in Providence County itself the Bureau significantly reduced the scope of or eliminated components that it had tested for previous decennial enumerations.

In particular, the Bureau did not implement an Integrated Partnerships and Communications program and post-test evaluation activities. It did conduct some outreach about its testing in Providence County, but the program was extremely limited because it generally only involved operations and staff being deployed as part of Census 2020 preparations, as opposed to a comprehensive campaign specifically devoted to the 2018 testing.

Thus, the Bureau refers to its 2018 assessment as the “End-to-End” (E-T-E) test rather than the Dress Rehearsal and the E-T-E test focused primarily on assessing the readiness of the Bureau’s information technology and infrastructure for the 2020 enumeration.

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<sup>2</sup> In past decennial Census cycles, Congress has typically appropriated a significant “ramp-up” in funding in the years leading up to the enumeration to provide the Bureau with the resources needed for the extensive testing and preparations that help ensure an accurate count. However, Congress underfunded Census activities in FY 2016, and the amount ultimately appropriated in FY 2017—\$1.47 million—was a mere 7.3 percent increase over the FY 2017 level. For FY 2018, the Trump Administration requested only a \$27 million increase in the Bureau’s budget over the FY 2017 level. These funding inadequacies and uncertainties resulted in the Bureau’s decision to reduce the scope of the E-T-E.

# The 2018 E-T-E Test

The 2018 E-T-E allowed the Bureau to assess one of the most critical components of Census 2020: an online Census questionnaire, offered for the first time. In the past decades, the Bureau first mailed questionnaires to households and conducted NRFU among those that did not respond. Because Congress mandated that the Bureau conduct Census 2020 at a lower per-household cost than Census 2010, and because the Bureau hopes to use modern technology for the 2020 enumeration, the Bureau will heavily promote the Internet as the primary means of response for most households. This could create challenges for residents without Internet connectivity or other access to the technology needed to answer online. Residents can also respond by mail or telephone, and hence the E-T-E test gave the Bureau a chance to gauge the popularity of all the options and the differences among population groups regarding them.

The Census Bureau selected Providence County as “an ideal community” for the test based on these characteristics:<sup>3</sup>

- Its mix of urban and suburban neighborhoods.
- Its high level of racial and linguistic diversity, roughly resembling national demographics: 62% non-Latino White, 22% Latino, 12% Non-Latino Black, 5% Non-Latino Asian American.<sup>3</sup>

The E-T-E test of residents’ experience with the initial response options ran from March to May 2018. Follow-up operations to improve response, such as NRFU, took place from May through July 2018.

The Bureau sent the E-T-E to all the housing units in the County – around 277,000 – and received a 52.3% response rate. The Bureau had not designed the E-T-E to count all of the County’s population, and we have very little information about the 47.7% of households that did not respond.

The E-T-E offered two different self-response approaches. One approach involved mailing materials inviting households to respond online as the first contact with the household, without including a paper questionnaire. The other approach involved mailing invitation materials and a paper questionnaire on first contact. For the first approach, 70% of households filled out the survey online, 8% over the phone, and 22% on paper returned through the mail. For the second approach, 34% completed the survey online, 5% over the phone, and 61% on paper returned through the mail.

In our research survey, which included a sample of 918 respondents from Providence County, of those who participated in the E-T-E test, 34% completed the test online, 42% by mail, 6% by phone, 16% in-person, and 2% did not recall the mode of completion. There were significant differences among the three racial and ethnic groups. We provide a more detailed analysis of mode of response from our survey respondents in our discussion of key findings below.

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<sup>3</sup> Potyondy. 2018. “The One And Only End-To-End 2020 Census Test.” *National Conference of State Legislatures*. <http://www.ncsl.org/blog/2017/11/28/the-one-and-only-end-to-end-2020-census-test.aspx>

<sup>4</sup> Mora, G. C. (2014). *Making Hispanics: How activists, bureaucrats, and media constructed a new American*. University of Chicago Press. For the purposes of this report we use the term “Latino” instead of “Hispanic” acknowledging the community’s use of the term “Latino” for self-identification.

# Key Findings of Survey

## KEY FINDING #1:

### **Overwhelmingly, Residents Agree That the Citizenship Question Will Decrease Participation in the 2020 Census.**

In March 2018, the Secretary of Commerce directed the Census Bureau to add a question about the citizenship of respondents to Census 2020. Although the American Community Survey, which is sent to a sample of the population every year, has a citizenship question, the decennial Census has not asked about citizenship since 1950. The Bureau has not conducted any testing on this question in a survey sent to 100% of households, as it has done with other questions.

The Bureau's decision came too late to include the question in the E-T-E test, but we examined respondents' perspectives toward it. Our survey asked two questions about its impact, and for both the results were consistent across different population groups.

First, the survey asked respondents whether they agreed with this statement: "Many people in Providence County will be afraid to participate in the 2020 Census because it will ask whether each person in the household is a citizen."

Overall, the great majority of respondents in Providence County agreed. There were small differences among population groups. About four-fifths of Non-Latino Whites (82%), and Latinos (78%) agreed, as did 70% of Non-Latino Black residents. (Hereinafter, this report will refer to Non-Latino White survey respondents as "White," and Non-Latino Black respondents as "Black.")

## LATINO RESPONDENTS: GENDER AND BIRTHPLACE

The survey also assessed Latino responses, and they generally paralleled those of the overall population. For instance, 81% of Latina women and 76% of Latino men believe that the citizenship question would have an intimidating effect, compared to 83% and 75% overall (Table 1). Regarding U.S.- and foreign-born Latino respondents, 80% of U.S.-born and 71% of foreign-born agreed with the statement (Table 2).

These results demonstrate that foreign-born and U.S.-born individuals, regardless of Latino ethnicity, believe the citizenship question will raise anxiety about participating in the 2020 Census. The survey reveals minimal differences in response between the full sample and Latino sample on this issue.

**TABLE 1: Overall and Latino Response to First Statement by Gender**

*First Statement: “Many people in Providence County will be afraid to participate in the 2020 Census because it will ask whether each person in the household is a citizen.”*

By Gender	Total		Latino	
First Statement	Men	Women	Men	Women
Agree	75%	83%	76%	81%
Disagree	25%	17%	24%	19%
n=457				

**TABLE 2: Overall and Latino Response to First Statement by Birthplace**

By Birthplace	Total		Latino	
First Statement	U.S.-Born	Foreign-Born	U.S.-Born	Foreign-Born
Agree	82%	73%	80%	71%
Disagree	18%	27%	12%	29%
n=457				

Second, the survey asked respondents whether they agreed with this second statement: “Fewer immigrants will want to participate in the 2020 Census because it will ask people to say whether or not everyone in their household is a citizen.”

### TOTAL POPULATION: GENDER AND BIRTHPLACE

Men and women showed virtually the same levels of agreement with this statement (80% and 81%) (Table 3). With regard to birthplace, a clear difference appeared: 83% of U.S.-born and 74% of foreign-born respondents agreed (Table 4). Since one might expect the foreign-born figure to be higher, it is an interesting finding.

### LATINO RESPONDENTS: GENDER AND BIRTHPLACE

Near-identical percentages of Latino men and women (75% and 76%) believe that the citizenship question would reduce participation (Table 3). Birthplace did not distinguish these respondents (77% U.S.-born, 75% foreign-born), though in the total population the U.S.-born agreed more (Table 4).

**TABLE 3: Overall and Latino Response to Second Statement by Gender**

*Second Statement: "Fewer immigrants will want to participate in the 2020 Census because it will ask people to say whether or not everyone in their household is a citizen."*

By Gender	Total		Latino	
	Men	Women	Men	Women
Second Statement				
Agree	80%	81%	75%	76%
Disagree	20%	19%	25%	24%
n=461				

**TABLE 4: Overall and Latino Response to Second Statement by Birthplace**

By Birthplace	Total		Latino	
	U.S.-Born	Foreign-Born	U.S.-Born	Foreign-Born
Second Statement				
Agree	83%	74%	77%	75%
Disagree	7%	26%	23%	25%
n=461				

These results suggest that generally, Latinos respondents in Providence County overall are just as likely as their non-Latino counterparts to believe that fewer immigrants will not participate in the 2020 Census because of the citizenship question. The finding is counterintuitive, since one would expect more Latinos to believe it, and as of this writing, no explanation suggests itself. The foregoing findings need further examination to understand if this difference is particular to Providence County or reflects the Latino perspective across the nation.

Overall, these results show that overwhelming majorities believe that the citizenship question will lead many people to fear participating in the Census and cause fewer immigrants to take part in it.

## KEY FINDING #2:

### Most Latinos Preferred to Take Part in the E-T-E by Mail and In-Person, Rather Than Online.

Latino respondents showed significant differences by age group in mode of completing the survey. As Table 5 shows, in every age group fewer Latino respondents completed the form online than either by mail or in-person. Most of them age 50 and beyond used mail, but rather surprisingly, so did most of the youngest Latinos, those from 18 to 29. Among Latinos age 30 to 39 and Latinos age 40 to 49, most completed the E-T-E in person. Across all Latino age groups, mail and in-person were the top two modes of E-T-E completion.

These results suggest several implications for how the Bureau conducts outreach to Latinos about the modes of participation in Census 2020. Most importantly, the Bureau must prepare for a higher response rate via paper than it is currently anticipating. Our findings indicate that only 20% of Latinos participated online, compared to 43% of Blacks, and 36% of Whites. However, their response by mail far outstripped their online participation. This fact suggests that the Bureau will miss many Latinos if it relies too heavily on promoting the online format, or if there is widespread misunderstanding that people can only complete the questionnaire online. The Bureau must employ several strategies to reach Latinos, and while it intends to promote the online option as the primary response mode, it must also emphasize the availability of the paper option. Moreover, in light of our findings below about the preference many Latinos have for completing the Census in Spanish and on paper, and our findings about the effectiveness of trusted community messengers for in-person response, the Bureau must ensure that its enumerators have the bilingual skills and cultural competency to reach and engage Latinos.

**TABLE 5: Latino Mode of E-T-E Completion by Age Group**

Age Groups	Online	Mail	Phone	In Person	Don't Know
18 to 29	15%	44%	5%	36%	0%
30 to 39	21%	26%	3%	44%	6%
40 to 49	22%	34%	2%	37%	5%
50 to 59	23%	40%	2%	29%	6%
60 +	16%	55%	0%	29%	0%
All Latinos*	20%	40%	3%	35%	4%

n=194

\* Totals may not add to 100% because of rounding.

## Perceptions about the E-T-E Experience and the Census Questionnaire

There was widespread agreement that the experience of participating in the E-T-E was easy. Over 90% of Latino, Black, and White participants agreed that the form was simple to fill out, and “would recommend others in my community participate.” Over 90% of all groups that completed it online said they had no technical problems with the website and that it was a streamlined process. Those who completed it in-person had positive experiences with Census workers, with 80% or more of all groups agreeing that “the Census worker who helped me fill out the Census gave me clear information and made the process very easy.”

**TABLE 6: Latinos Who Said E-T-E Was Easy to Fill Out by Mode of Completion**

	Online	Mail	Phone	In Person	Don't Know
<b>Agree</b>	97%	97%	100%	93%	100%
<b>Disagree</b>	3%	3%	0%	7%	0%
n=194					

At the same time, a large percentage of people—50% of the total and 56% of Latinos—found the questionnaire confusing and hard to understand (Table 7). Easy processes are not often confusing and the explanation of this apparent contradiction is uncertain. However, it may involve not just the design of the website and the helpfulness of the Census workers, but the friendliness of the E-T-E form. The form uses conversational statements like: “Before we get started, we want to make sure we have a good mix of people of all backgrounds. Let’s start with a few basic demographic questions. What is the name of the city or town where you live?” Such language may have made the overall questionnaire “easy” in the sense that it was companionable and humanly engaging. However, participants may have felt unclear about the questions themselves.

**TABLE 7: Total and Latinos Who Said ETE Was Confusing**

	Total	Latinos
<b>Agree</b>	50%	56%
<b>Disagree</b>	50%	44%
n=448		

The means of taking the E-T-E affected Latinos’ judgment of its clarity. For instance, though few Latinos took it by phone, all of them found it confusing. The other means were more effective, but none was especially clear. In-person was the next most confusing, followed by mail and online (Table 8). While the reasons for these variations are uncertain, the finding that all Latinos who took the survey by phone found it confusing raises concerns about the effectiveness of this mode of response for Latino households.

**TABLE 8: Latinos Who Said E-T-E was Confusing by Mode of Completion**

	Online	Mail	Phone	In Person	Don't Know
Agree	40%	55%	100%	61%	40%
Disagree	60%	45%	0%	39%	60%
n=98					

Latinos participated in-person at much higher rates than other groups. Over a third of Latinos (35%) did so, compared to 16% of Blacks and 8% of Whites. Segments within the Latino population completed it in-person at even higher rates: 39% of Spanish-dominant Latinos, 41% of those age 39 or younger, 42% of foreign-born, and 48% of Latinos with children in the household. These findings suggest bilingual Census workers are imperative to ensure all Latinos are counted.

**KEY FINDING #3:**

**Spanish-Language Outreach and Accessibility Is Imperative.**

Nearly half (42%) of Latino households that participated in the E-T-E Test did so in Spanish. For some segments of the Latino population the rate was even higher: 60% of foreign-born Latinos, 54% of those age 40 and above, and 50% of those who had lived in Providence County less than ten years. These findings suggest the Bureau cannot conduct an accurate Census without effective outreach to and support for Spanish-language dominant residents.

***LATINO RESPONDENTS: GENDER, BIRTHPLACE, AND AGE***

Among both men and women, Spanish was clearly the preferred language for completing the E-T-E test, as 69% of Latino men and 63% of Latinas took it in that language (Table 9). However, as expected, differences emerged between U.S.-born and foreign-born Latinos. Among the U.S.-born, 85% completed the E-T-E test in English, compared to 40% of foreign-born (Table 10). The difference almost certainly stems from the greater fluency with English among U.S.-born.

In corroboration, the younger the age cohort, the more often Latinos used English. Among those from 18 to 29, 68% used it, while only 8% of those 60 and over did (Table 11). This stark difference likely reflects two facts: most of the U.S.-born use English from birth, and immigrants are older and often experience challenges mastering a second language.

**TABLE 9: Latino Respondents and E-T-E Language by Gender**

Language	Men	Women
Spanish	69%	63%
English	31%	37%
n=361		

**TABLE 10: Latino Respondents and E-T-E Language by Birthplace**

Language	U.S.-Born	Foreign-Born
Spanish	15%	60%
English	85%	40%
n=361		

**TABLE 11: : Latino Respondents and E-T-E Language by Age**

Age Groups	Language	
	English	Spanish
18 to 29	68%	32%
30 to 39	42%	58%
40 to 49	26%	74%
50 to 59	27%	73%
60 +	8%	92%
n=361		

Our survey results show that a significant proportion of Latinos—especially Latino foreign-born, Latinos over 40, and overwhelmingly those 60 and older—will need Spanish-language support to ensure everyone is counted.

## **KEY FINDING #4:**

### **Personal Networks and Community-Based Organizations Are the Best Means to Spread Information.**

Personal networks played a clear and fundamental role in communications among every population group. For instance, more Latinos and Blacks heard about the E-T-E test from friends and family than from any government source. This finding was expected since the Bureau's design of the E-T-E did not include an Integrated Partnerships and Communications campaign, and there was minimal federal government outreach to communities regarding the test. However, personal networks were especially important for Latinos: 47% heard about the E-T-E Test from friends, family, and others through personal conversations, and 41% heard about it from friends and family on social media. Yet only 30% of Latinos heard or saw ads or other information about the test from government sources.

Community organizations are also trusted sources of Census information. Respondents rated personal networks and local resources highest in terms of trustworthy and reliable information about the Census. Latinos most often cited local teachers and educators (86%), followed by local health care providers (79%), and Latino community organizations (77%). Among Blacks, the most mentioned sources were Black community organizations (89%), local news (84%), and friends and families (83%). Whites cited friends and family (83%), followed by local community organizations (82%) and local teachers and educators (80%). To ensure that the public learns about the importance of being counted in the Census, it will be important to leverage these relationships to spread information and encourage participation.

Our survey findings also suggest that people who have completed the E-T-E test would be good messengers for those in their community or personal network. Across all three racial/ethnic groups, 80% or more who completed the test came away with a positive impression of their experience. They would be trusted sources, and since only half of Providence County residents took part in the test, it is imperative to identify such individuals to convey the importance of participation. Our findings also suggest that overall during the 2020 Census, neighbor-to-neighbor and family-member-to-family-member outreach will be vitally important to ensure full participation.

# Civic and Community Partner Leaders

We complemented our survey research with extensive interviews and conversations with community and civic leaders and community groups to obtain their perspectives on the E-T-E test. These interviews focused on themes similar to those in the survey.

## KEY FINDING #1:

### **The Public Is Uncertain About the Importance of the Census, Especially for Members of Hard to Reach Communities.**

Immigrant and refugee communities were a key constituency and civic and community leaders frequently described their needs. This concern stemmed primarily from the unfamiliarity of many immigrants with Census practices and the role of the federal government in collecting potentially sensitive information about all residents in a household. It also related to the citizenship question, especially given the sporadic and uneven outreach and the lack of clarity regarding whether the question would in fact be added.

The Census form can be daunting to newcomers. Kathleen Cloutier, Executive Director of Dorcas International of Rhode Island, a local nonprofit organization that works closely with immigrant and refugee communities said the residents “were concerned about why the government wanted to know information about them. So there was some fear as well as a complete non-understanding of what this government form was and the reason that they got it in the mail. There was not a clear understanding of what the government was going to do with this information about them.”

Such barriers to immigrant and refugee participation were exacerbated by the uncertainty and lack of clarity regarding whether the citizenship question would be added and if so, in what form. John Marion, Executive Director of Common Cause Rhode Island, described the situation: “The first mailing from the Bureau landed in people’s mailboxes on a Friday. And then the citizenship question was announced on the following Monday, and there was a hastily-convened meeting of elected and appointed officials, and at that meeting there was confusion as to whether or not the citizenship question was going to be on the test, and then I think it showed up in the news media that there was confusion in the general population about whether the citizenship question was going to be on the test. So when we were leafleting for an event, there were people who were confused and said they wouldn’t participate in a Census outreach event if it were on the test because they didn’t want to encourage people to participate in something they thought was illegitimate.”

As Ms. Cloutier and Mr. Marion explained, immigrants, refugees, and people simply unfamiliar with Census data collection processes may face greater problems responding to the Census. These difficulties underscore the importance of civic and community partner organizations in Census outreach, in better informing these community members about the Census and its role in shaping everyday Americans’ lives, and in the critical need to capture all residents’ experiences.

## **KEY FINDING #2:**

### **Many Fear and Mistrust the Federal Government's Plans for the Data.**

Leaders of local agencies and nonprofit organizations relayed instances of residents' mistrust of the federal government and its intentions, especially about the citizenship question. Ms. Cloutier stated, "Just really not having an understanding of why someone was knocking on their door asking for information. It did create a little bit of confusion and the official nature of all it made residents nervous. I think there's a lack of trust about what's gonna happen with that information. And so I think that just made folks much more distrusting of why would the government wants know these details about them and it had them asking, 'What difference does it make? What are you gonna do with this information? I'm giving you everything. I'm giving you all my identifying information and then you're wanting to know if I'm a citizen.' The refugees we work with are not all citizens, though some are, but they really don't trust the government and how they're treating people like them, legal or not. Folks with legal status or not, they all feel the same."

## **KEY FINDING #3:**

### **Civic Leaders Face Challenges in Communicating Census Information to Residents.**

In their interviews, civic leaders identified multiple challenges to conveying information to residents, especially with limited outreach by the Census Bureau about the E-T-E test and a lack of clarity among residents as to why participation in the Census is so important.

Brian Daniels, Executive Director of the Rhode Island League of Cities and Towns, noted that the federal government had not devoted enough resources to the Census and added, "I think the lack of resources and attention that the Census has gotten indicates to residents that it doesn't feel like a priority. Unless that changes I think we're gonna be in for a really, really rough time, because if this test is any indication of how it's going to be going forward, I think we're going to be in a lot of trouble."

Rachel Flum, Executive Director of the Economic Progress Institute, highlighted the uncertainty about the effectiveness of the federal government's outreach for the E-T-E, and she also stressed the lack of clarity about how community based organizations would pick up the slack. "It's not clear so far that localities and philanthropy, et cetera, are willing or able to step up and fill in the vacuum of federal funding to fully support the Census," she said. "So that's very concerning. If there's not enough federal funding for it and there's no interest in localities filling in the blanks, what will happen?"

This sentiment echoed a broader sense of uncertainty around Census funding and the role of local partner organizations for the E-T-E test and the 2020 Census. They point to the need for the Census Bureau to provide additional funding for robust outreach and partnership activities that coordinate with and support those of community organizations. In addition, state and local governments and philanthropic organizations have a key role to play in supporting the staff of community organizations as they work alongside Census officials to ensure a complete, accurate count.

Describing the challenges that local leaders face even when seeking to partner with the Census Bureau, Mr. Marion said, “We held an event around the test, and I asked the Bureau for brochures and they said, ‘We can’t. We don’t have any brochures describing the test. Why don’t you go to the website and print some of the stuff?’ So the extent of the help seemed to be some emails sent by the partnership specialist to the groups participating in the Providence Complete Count Committee saying, ‘Why don’t you share some of this on social media?’ And it was essentially the toolbox they had on their website about the test.”

Mr. Daniels added, “When the Census came and met with us in September of 2017 a lot of our organization’s members said, ‘Oh, we can help you.’ You know, they’re out in their communities, and they know a lot of the churches and festivals and organizations that could help get that information out. So we were expecting to at least be asked about what some of those community groups are that would be effective and we never heard anything.”

Thus, even when organizations reached out to the Census Bureau to offer help in promoting the count and completing the forms, they met a lack of responsiveness and support.

# Elected Officials: Mayors, Council Presidents and State-Wide Leaders

Elected officials—mayors, council presidents and statewide leaders working in Providence County—echoed many of the comments of civic and community leaders. They gave us their views on challenges to community outreach and engagement, the importance of hiring a diverse workforce of Census enumerators to ensure an accurate count of residents, residents’ concerns about the individuals collecting the data, and widespread uncertainty about the proposed citizenship question. After independently completing these two lines of research—the survey and the interviews—we found that the views of interviewees echoed many of those in the survey.

## KEY FINDING #1:

### Residents Overall Mistrust and Fear the Federal Government and Census Workers.

Rhode Island Governor Gina Raimondo observed that residents’ mistrust of federal workers, in particular enumerators, may relate to lack of knowledge about the purpose and process of the Census. In Providence, she said, she had heard that people were making mostly negative remarks about the E-T-E. “I hear that [residents] aren’t opening the door,” she said. “Some constituents are saying to me, ‘Should I fill out the form? Is there a risk if I fill it out?’ I think that we have to show people why it matters. Right? There’s federal money at stake. There’s a congressional seat that’s at stake. That will make it very real for people.”

Linking the Census with the presidential administration and concerns about its targeting of immigrant communities, Mayor Jorge Elorza of Providence stated, “The Census was politically charged in a way that it didn’t have to be. And so even though the Census people were trying hard from on high, they were really limited. They were trying to do this work with their hands tied behind their back. So it just led to a confusing and ineffective outreach to the community, where the more they communicated about the Census, the more anxiety people felt about how this information would be used.”

The distrust of local residents largely arose from concerns about the Trump Administration and the potential repercussions of disclosing information about their lives, despite extensive efforts by community leaders to inform the public about the importance of the Census. Some folks worried that the person knocking at the door might not really be a Census worker but rather an immigration agent. State Senator Sandra Cano noted that they were afraid because “they were trying to avoid being picked up by ICE (Immigration and Customs Enforcement). And they were thinking that the police were collaborating with these Census people. So I had to get the chief of police involved, the mayor, to make sure that that wasn’t the case. So it was very interesting for me to hear that that was the rumor, related to people knocking on the doors.”

## **KEY FINDING #2:**

### **Many Fear the Citizenship Question Will Lead to Targeting of Undocumented Households.**

Elected officials and statewide leaders repeatedly faced issues regarding the citizenship question. Many respondents, especially the undocumented and other non-citizens, worried that the question could increase the number of individuals either not responding to the Census or not revealing information that might jeopardize them or their relatives. Gonzalo Cuervo, Chief of Staff for Rhode Island Secretary of State Nellie Gorbea, remarked, “The most common conversations that I participated in were with people—everyone from opinion leaders to policy makers to just regular folks—who were concerned about the combination of detailed Census questions with a citizenship question, in the context of a Trump Administration, where there is clearly xenophobia and anti-immigrant bias. It was very troubling to people.”

The connection between the citizenship question and the Trump Administration’s treatment of immigrant community members manifested itself in the very real fears for residents. Pawtucket Mayor Donald R. Grebien noted, “There were concerns about constituents being afraid to fill out the form. With everything I see happening on the national level there was concern that there could be deportation. There was a fear that they would be identified. Even though we all tried individually to make everybody aware, there was that fear.”

## **KEY FINDING #3:**

### **A Variety of Challenges Exist to Community Outreach and Engagement.**

According to local elected officials, outreach efforts did take place to highlight the importance of the Census to residents. However, these efforts were not very conspicuous and involved little to no actual engagement with actual community members. As Central Falls City Councilmember Jonathan Acosta recounted, “We do some almost carnival-style things in our city, and the Census Bureau had a table there, and they were both recruiting people to work and letting people know that they were gonna be there. The City of Central Falls, through the mayor, also partnered with—I think it was Common Cause and the Census Bureau folks—to host an event, like a one-mile race.”

These one-time outreach events do help raise the visibility of the Census workers and clarify their intentions among members of the broader community. However, the Bureau needs more extensive engagement to gain community trust and develop communication networks between its officials and local civic and elected leadership.

Especially for residents who identify as members of a minority population—racial, ethnic, or otherwise—these leaders are a key conduit both for sending information to residents and answering questions about the questionnaire. State Senator Cano said that residents had “absolutely” reached out to her. “I’m the only Latina elected in my city,” she said, and hence many people had her contact information and trusted her. When they received the E-T-E questionnaire in the mail, she got a huge number of calls. “And even though some of them think that it is important to be counted, they were really, really afraid that the government would use that information against them because of their immigration status. I had a person from Mexico who called me in Pawtucket. He is a business owner, and in his household only two family members are documented and the other four are still going through the process. And he wanted to know if it was appropriate to say that only he and the other documented family member lived in the household, because he didn’t want them to come in and pick up the other four. And some of the words that he used when he called me! Mind you, he is a business owner in the city and he is of Mexican descent, and he was really upset about this.”

The fact that these elected officials in a mid-sized county were among the first people that residents turned to highlights their importance, but it is also a reminder not to forget the other civic leaders who equip them and their staff members with the tools for effective community engagement.

#### **KEY FINDING #4:**

### **Support for Completing the E-T-E Test Online Was Often Absent.**

Community leaders and elected officials alike cited mistrust of E-T-E test enumerators as a key barrier, and elected officials also said that constituents had complained about problems completing the online test form. Central Falls Mayor James Diossa said, “They wanted folks to fill the Census trial via computers. Not a lot of folks have computers, have access to the Internet. They said that they would have a computer at the local post office; there was none there. There was really no coordinated effort.”

Central Falls Councilmember Acosta added that when a Census Bureau representative came to meet with him and fellow councilmembers, he said that “the residents could go to the public library and fill out the form online there. But there wasn’t a direct, ‘Hey, we’re gonna host a Census filling-out session or something at the library.’ The onus was very much put on the residents, which is the opposite of what the Census is supposed to be.”

As these remarks illustrate, though the Census Bureau encouraged community members to fill out the E-T-E test online, it did not work with government officials or community partners to support the online mode. Such support is especially important for community members who are not fully computer literate or lack access to Internet and/or a computer at home. For these community members to complete the form online, there must at least be a trusted public site, such as a library or community center which provides computer access to the questionnaire.

## **KEY FINDING #5:**

### **Local Residents Face Barriers in Working for the U.S. Census Bureau.**

Central Falls Councilmember Acosta described how he himself had previously worked for the Bureau. Yet when asked if he would recommend other local residents do the same, he replied, “No, because of the addition of the citizenship question.”

Doubts about the citizenship question came up in multiple forms. Civic leaders expressed concerns about its impact on the validity of the Census and potential personal harms such as ICE raids. These concerns also suggest that there is connection between the presence of the citizenship question and the willingness of elected officials, civic leaders and other individuals to cooperate with or work for the Census Bureau. These stakeholders may be reluctant to promote participation in Census 2020, or reluctant to work in the community, using a form which requests detailed personal information from fellow community members that could be used to harm them or their families.

Councilmember Acosta also observed that the technology creates barriers to hiring a diverse workforce of Census Bureau workers, since computers are harder for older people to navigate. “We would have to sit in these four- or five-hour-long trainings,” he said, “where there were people, mostly younger people, who had more experience with tablets and smartphones and things like that, and they’d kind of breeze through. And then there were folks who really struggled to learn how to use their equipment.”

# Policy Recommendations in Preparation for the 2020 Census

- 1. The Administration or Congress must eliminate the citizenship question.** Our findings indicate that members of the public, community leaders, and elected officials agree that the question will make many households fearful of participating in Census 2020. These results are consistent with Census Bureau research, which finds that the question will lower response rates. If the Administration fails to eliminate the question, Congress should take action to do so.
- 2. The Census Bureau's outreach and enumeration strategies must take into account Latinos' preferences for responding to the questionnaire.** The Bureau must employ several strategies to reach Latinos, and while it intends to promote the online option as the primary response mode, it must also emphasize the availability of the paper option and ensure that it has sufficient paper forms, especially bilingual paper forms. To reach those Latinos who will respond in-person, the Bureau must ensure that it has a large field staff with the linguistic skills and cultural competency to reach and engage Latinos. In this connection, the Bureau should eliminate the requirement that Census employees be U.S. citizens, and permit lawful resident non-citizens to serve. In past decennial enumerations, the Bureau hired these lawful residents through an exemption in the laws which generally restrict federal jobs to U.S. citizens, and it should use this exemption for Census 2020.
- 3. The Bureau must have effective strategies to reach Spanish-dominant residents and support them in completing the questionnaire.** These include a robust Spanish-language communications plan, strong partnerships with leaders and organizations that are trusted messengers for Spanish-dominant Latinos, and effective Spanish-language support and assistance, particularly for older Latinos.
- 4. The Bureau must provide clear, consistent communication early on with civic and community partners and elected officials about its plans for an accurate count.** Many elected officials said that while the Bureau notified them of E-T-E test early, they did not really began to grapple with the multiple issues that emerged until their constituents approached them with questions and concerns, and at that time they themselves were uncertain about how to obtain further information.
- 5. The Bureau's outreach and partnership strategies should include community education and training for the staff members and volunteers at local community based organizations that have regular and trusted contact with residents, especially in hard to reach communities.** In addition, outreach by the Bureau, community organizations, and other partners should take advantage of the personal networks of community members, and leverage relationships with the different trusted messengers within those communities. This should also involve strategies which engage those community members who complete the Census form in outreach to other residents.
- 6. Congress must appropriate the funding to ensure an accurate count.** The funds must be enough to support robust partnership and communications activities, as well as the staff and other resources required for a strong and effective field presence and sound community support and assistance operations. In addition, state and local governments, philanthropic organizations, and businesses should provide resources to community organizations for outreach, education, and assistance efforts to the Latino community and other hard to reach residents. These resources will be particularly important if the Bureau does not obtain the funding it needs for these purposes.

# Appendices

## **APPENDIX A.** **Methodological Approach**

This project employed a mixed methods research approach. It involved a survey of Providence County, Rhode Island residents, both of those who did and who did not complete the End-to-End test, and a set of community conversations and interviews with leaders of community organizations and county elected officials.

Researchers surveyed 918 residents using their landline, cell phone, and online devices to parallel the approach of the Census Bureau in the 2020 Census. Survey questions focused on residents' receipt of information and outreach, the information sources they trusted, their views about the citizenship question, their preferred format, and their experience with the process. The survey results have a margin of error of +/- 3.2%.

Researchers also conducted conversations and interviews with leaders of local community-based organizations and elected officials. They identified these organizations based on the people they served and sought to include the broadest set of stakeholders possible, including many difficult to reach communities such as homeless individuals, racial/ethnic minority communities, and working-class residents. Elected officials included mayors and mayoral council members across the county as well as two statewide elected officials: the governor and secretary of state.

Of the 18 community-based organizations invited to participate, nine agreed. These nine served members of the African American, Haitian, Latina/o, and low-income communities across the county. The county has 16 mayors or mayoral council representatives. Researchers invited all of them to participate and five did. Outreach to respondents took place in four waves, with each person receiving an initial email, a second email, a follow-up phone call to his or her office, and a final offer to participate via phone. Given the focus of the National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials (NALEO) Educational Fund, researchers conducted further personal outreach drawing on personal networks and contacts, and obtained the participation of seven of the 16 Latina/o elected officials in the county.

Researchers conducted community conversations, or modified focus groups, when possible, but the majority of respondents could take part in the project only via an individual interview. These interviews took place over the phone and, at times, in person if needed.

# APPENDIX B.

## Survey Instrument

### Providence County Census ETE Survey – August 2018

#### SCREENS

Hello, may I please speak with Mr./Ms. [RESPONDENT]?

Do you prefer that we speak in English or Spanish?

##### S1. Record survey language

English	1
Spanish	2

Hello, my name is \_\_\_\_\_. This is not a sales call. I am calling on behalf of [IF SAMPLE=LATINO, LATINO DECISIONS; IF SAMPLE=OTHER, AMERICAN DECISIONS] an independent survey research firm. We are conducting a short survey about local community we'd like to include your opinions in our research.

##### S2. Are you a resident of Providence County and at least 18 years of age?

Yes [CONTINUE TO S4]	1
No [CONTINUE TO S3]	2

##### S3. Is there anyone else in your household who is a resident of Providence County and is at least 18 years of age?

Yes [ASK TO SPEAK WITH PERSON REINTRODUCE]	1
No [THANK AND TERMINATE]	2

##### S4. Before we get started, we want to make sure we have a good mix of people of all backgrounds. Let's start with a few basic demographic questions. What is the name of the city or town where you live?

###### [Code to list]

Providence	1
Central Falls	2
Cranston	3
East Providence	4
Pawtucket	5
Woonsocket	6
Cumberland	7
North Providence	8
Johnston	9
Lincoln	10
Smithfield	11
Other [specify]	88

# APPENDIX B.

## Survey Instrument (cont.)

### Providence County Census ETE Survey - August 2018

S5. In your home, are you the person who usually fills out forms like medical forms, taxes, or other kinds of paperwork?

Yes	1
Sometimes (vol don't ask)	2
No	3

S6. Which of the following racial or ethnic group best describes you? **[RANDOMIZE]**

Hispanic or Latino	1
Asian American or Pacific Islander [TERM]	2
African-American or Black	3
White, not-Hispanic	4
Native American or American Indian [TERM]	5
Something else/Other[TERM]	6

S7A. **[If S6=1]** The most frequently used terms to describe persons of Latin American descent living in the United States are 'Hispanic' and 'Latino.' Of the two, which do you prefer, Hispanic or Latino?

Hispanic (Use Hispanic for rest of survey)	1
Latino (Use Latino for rest of survey)	2
Either is acceptable (Use Hispanic)	3
Don't care (Use Hispanic)	4
DK/NA (Use Hispanic)	5

S7B. **[If S6=3]** People use different terms within the black and African American community, do you generally prefer to use the term black or African American?

Black (Use Black for rest of survey)	1
African American (Use African American for rest of survey)	2
Either is acceptable (Use Black)	3
Don't care (Use Black)	4
DK/NA (Use Black)	5

S8. **[DO NOT ASK]** Sex

Male	1
Female	2

S9. Which age group describes you best? Just stop me when I've read the right category for you.

Age 18 to 29	1
Age 30 to 39	2
Age 40 to 49	3
Age 50 to 59	4
Age 60 or above	5
Ref/DK	99

# APPENDIX B.

## Survey Instrument (cont.)

### Providence County Census ETE Survey - August 2018

S10. What is the highest level of education you completed? Again, just let me know when I've read the right one for you.

Grades 1 - 8	1
Some High School	2
High School graduate	3
Some College/Technical School	4
College graduate	5
Post-graduate education	6
Don't know	88
Refused	99

## MAIN QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Okay let's get started. As you may know, the United States Census is the official population count, taken every ten years, of everyone living in the United States. To prepare for the next one, the U.S. Census Bureau recently conducted a test in Providence County.

Do you remember receiving anything in the mail about that test? And, just a reminder that your opinions and experience are what matter the most here. I am not affiliated in any way with any government agency. Did you happen to get mail about the Providence County Census Test?

Yes	1
No	2
Don't recall/know (vol don't ask)	3

I'm going to read a list of different places people get information. For each one, please tell me whether you heard about the Providence Census Test from that source. Okay, did you hear about it on/from **[RANDOMIZE]**:

### SPLIT 2a,2b,2c

- 2a. Local television news or the news channel's website
- 2b. Local radio stations or the radio station's website
- 2c. Local newspapers or the newspaper's website

Yes	1
No	2

2d. **[IF S6=2]** Did you see any kind of news about the Census Test in Spanish?

Yes	1
No	2

# APPENDIX B.

## Survey Instrument (cont.)

### Providence County Census ETE Survey - August 2018

What about word-of-mouth, or conversations with people you know? Did you hear anything about the Census Test from [RANDOMIZE]:

#### SPLIT 3a and 3b

3a. Neighbors, co-workers, friends, or family

3b. Local community organizations

#### SPLIT 3c and 3d

3c. Local schools or education-related groups

3d. Churches or other religious organizations

Yes	1
No	2

What about government sources? Do you recall getting information about the Census, or hearing government officials talk about it, such as [RANDOMIZE]:

#### SPLIT 4a,4b

4a. Your town's officials or offices

4b. The State of Rhode Island officials or agencies

4c. The Census Bureau, or other federal agencies or officials

Yes	1
No	2

4d. [IF S6=2] Did you see any government agency information about the Census in Spanish?

Yes	1
No	2

[IF Q1=YES] And, what about ads? Did you see or hear about the Census from advertisements you saw or heard [RANDOMIZE]:

#### SPLIT 5a,5b,5c

5a. Online

5b. On TV

5c. On radio

Yes	1
No	2

5d. [IF S6=2] Did you see any kind of Census ads in Spanish?

Yes	1
No	2

# APPENDIX B.

## Survey Instrument (cont.)

### Providence County Census ETE Survey - August 2018

[IF Q1=YES] Did you see anything about the Census on social media such as [RANDOMIZE]

#### SPLIT 6a and 6b

6a. Facebook, Twitter or Instagram posts from your friends, co-workers, and people you know

6b. Facebook, Twitter or Instagram posts from local tv news or other shows

#### SPLIT 6c and 6d

6c. Facebook, Twitter or Instagram posts from local community organizations

6d. Facebook, Twitter or Instagram posts from any government officials or agencies

Yes	1
No	2
Do not use social media (vol don't ask)	3

Next, I'd like to get your opinion about information sources. I will read a list of sources of information about the Providence Census Test. For each one, please tell me whether you think you can trust it for accurate and useful information about the test. It does not matter if you used that source or not, just whether you would trust it for correct and helpful information.

For information about the Census test, do you think [RANDOMIZE] is a trustworthy and reliable source, or unreliable and not trustworthy? [FOLLOW UP], and is that very [reliable/unreliable] or just somewhat?

#### SPLIT 7a and 7b

7a. Teachers and educators in the community

7b. Local television news and their websites

#### SPLIT 7c and 7d

7c. Nurses, doctors, or other health care providers

7d. Elected officials from your community

#### SPLIT 7e and 7f

7e. Family, friends, and co-workers

7f. Local [IF S6=1 Hispanic/Latino] [IF S6=3 African American/Black] [IF S6=4 NO GROUP PROMPTS] community organizations.

#### SPLIT 7g and 7h

7g. Religious leaders or people you know through church or religious organizations

7h. Local newspapers and their websites

#### SPLIT 7i and 7j

7i. The Census Bureau website

7j. Your city or town's website

Very trustworthy/reliable	1
Somewhat trustworthy/reliable	2
Somewhat trustworthy/reliable	3
Very trustworthy/reliable	4

# APPENDIX B.

## Survey Instrument (cont.)

### Providence County Census ETE Survey - August 2018

I'd like to hear more about you, and your household's experience with the Census. I will read a list of different ways they may have contacted you. For each, please tell me how often you, or someone else in your household was contacted by the Census.

8. How many pieces of mail about the Census Test did you get?

None, zero	1
One	2
Two	3
Three or more	4
More than one, but not sure how many	5

9. And, how many times were flyers, information cards, or papers with information about the Census left at your home's front door?

None, zero	1
One	2
Two	3
Three or more	4
More than one, but not sure how many	5

10. How many times did you and others in your household receive phone calls or voice messages from the Census?

None, zero	1
One	2
Two	3
Three or more	4
More than one, but not sure how many	5

11. What about in-person, how many times did a Census worker come to your door at home to try and talk with you or another person in the household about it?

None, zero	1
One	2
Two	3
Three or more	4
More than one, but not sure how many	5

12. At any point in the last year did you, or someone in your household go to the Census website or call them to get more information?

Yes	1
No	2
Don't know/not sure/don't recall (vol don't ask)	3

# APPENDIX B.

## Survey Instrument (cont.)

### Providence County Census ETE Survey - August 2018

13. Did you, or someone else in your household, participate and provide your household's information for the Census Test? **[IF YES, follow up]** And was that you, or someone else in the home who filled it out?

Respondent completed it	1
Someone else in household completed it	2
No one in the household completed it <b>[SKIP TO Q17]</b>	3
Don't know <b>[SKIP TO Q17]</b>	88

14a. How did [you/person in household] complete it, did you fill it out online, by mail, over the phone, or in-person with a worker at your home?

Online	1
By mail	2
By phone	3
In-person	4
Don't know/not sure/don't recall (vol don't ask)	5

14b. Did you know that you had the option to fill it out online, by mail, by phone, or in person?

Yes	1
No	2

14c. **[IF 14a=1]** And, did you use a computer, laptop, or a tablet such as an iPad, or smartphone?

Computer	1
Tablet	2
Phone	3
Don't know/not sure/don't recall (vol don't ask)	4

14c. **[IF S6=1]** Did you complete it in English or Spanish

English	1
Spanish	2

**[IF 14b=1]** How important were the following reasons in your decision to complete it **[online/by mail/in-person, Q14a ANSWER]**. **[READ 15a/b and 15c/d]**, was that important? **[FOLLOW UP]** And was that just somewhat **[or very important]** **[unimportant or not at all important]** to you?

#### SPLIT 15a and 15b

15a. It was the most convenient option.

15b. It was the most safe and secure option.

# APPENDIX B.

## Survey Instrument (cont.)

### Providence County Census ETE Survey - August 2018

#### SPLIT 15c and 15d

15c. That is how you have done it in the past.

15d. The Census kind of pressured you to fill it out that way, [by phone/online/by mail FORMAT Q14a]

Very important	1
Somewhat important	2
Somewhat unimportant	3
Not at all important	4

For each of the following, please tell me whether it was an important or unimportant reason that you decided to complete the Census test. Okay? **[RANDOMIZE]**. Was that an important or unimportant reason for you? **[FOLLOW UP]** And was that just somewhat **[or very important]** **[unimportant or totally unimportant]**?

#### SPLIT 16a and 16b

16a. It is required by law.

16b. I filled it out so they would stop contacting me.

#### SPLIT 16c and 16d

16c. It was my civic duty.

16d. It will help my community.

#### SPLIT 16e and 16f

16e. It was easy and safe.

16f. It was a way for me to stand up for the **IF S6=1 Hispanic/Latino** **[IF S6=3 African American/Black]** **[IF S6=4 NO GROUP PROMPT]** community, and make sure we are counted.

#### SPLIT 16g and 16h

16g. **[If Q14a=1,2,3, or 5]** I did not want a Census worker to come to my home.

16h. **[If Q14a=2,3, 4, or 5]** I did not want to give my information online or over the internet.

Very important	1
Somewhat important	2
Somewhat unimportant	3
Not at all important	4

# APPENDIX B.

## Survey Instrument (cont.)

### Providence County Census ETE Survey - August 2018

Please tell me whether you agree or disagree with the following statements. **[FOLLOW UP]** and is that strongly **[agree/disagree]** or just somewhat? **[RANDOMIZE]**

#### SPLIT 17a and 17b

17a. The Census let me know my options to complete online, by mail, by phone, or in person.

17b. The questions can be confusing, it is sometimes hard to understand what they are asking or want to know.

17c. **[ONLY IF 14a=1]** Filling it out online was easy and the website worked well.

17d. **[ONLY IF 14a=4]** The Census worker who helped me fill out the form gave me clear information and made the process easy.

17e. **[ONLY IF Q13=1 or 2]** Overall, the experience of filling out the Census was easy and I would recommend that others in my community participate.

Strongly agree	1
Somewhat agree	2
Somewhat disagree	3
Strongly disagree	4

People we talk to have a variety of concerns about participating in the Census. Please tell me if the following are reasons:

**[IF Q13= 1 or 2]** you are concerned or worried.

**[IF Q13=3 or 88]** you did not participate in the test.

**[RANDOMIZE]** FOLLOW UP, and is that **[just somewhat or very worried/concerned]** **[not too concerned, or not at all worried]**?

#### SPLIT 18a and 18b

18a. I am concerned about giving the government personal information about me and my family.

18b. I am concerned about online security and data hacks if I complete the Census online.

#### SPLIT 18c and 18d

18c. I am concerned about Census workers coming to my home.

18d. I am concerned about immigration enforcement or other government officials using my Census answers or personal information against me or my family.

Very concerned	1
Somewhat concerned	2
Not too concerned	3
Not at all concerned	4

# APPENDIX B.

## Survey Instrument (cont.)

### Providence County Census ETE Survey - August 2018

[IF Q13=3 or 88] I am now going to read some reasons people have told us they did not participate in the Census Test. For each, tell me whether it was an important or unimportant reason that you did not complete it. Okay, let's start. [RANDOMIZE]. Was that an important or unimportant reason for you? And was that just somewhat [or very important] [unimportant or totally unimportant] to you?

#### SPLIT 19a and 19b

- 19a. I did not want a Census worker to come to my home.
- 19b. I did not have time, I had a lot going on, or was too busy.
- 19c. I never received any information.

#### SPLIT 19d and 19e

- 19d. I do not want to give out my personal information for me or others in my household.
- 19e. I do not want to give my information out online.

#### SPLIT 19f and 19g

- 19f. I do not trust the Trump administration.
- 19g. I heard bad things in the news about the Census.

#### SPLIT 19h and 19i

- 19h. I forgot about it.
- 19i. It is just not that important to me.

Very important	1
Somewhat important	2
Somewhat unimportant	3
Not at all important	4

20. The 2020 Census, that will go to all households in the United States, will have a question about citizenship that was not on the Providence Test. To quickly describe it, what you will see on the form is, AFTER asking for each person's name, date of birth, address, and race—the LAST question about each adult and child who lives in the home, will be: "is this person a citizen of the United States?". Do you have any concerns or worries about that question that asks about citizenship for all adults and children in the household?

Yes	1
No	2

21. Does the question about citizenship make you [ROTATE] less likely or more likely to participate in the 2020 Census?

Less likely	1
More likely	2
No difference (vol don't ask)	3

# APPENDIX B.

## Survey Instrument (cont.)

### Providence County Census ETE Survey - August 2018

Please tell me whether you agree or disagree with the following statements. FOLLOW UP **[and is that strongly or just somewhat]?**

#### SPLIT 22a and 22b

22a. There are many people here in Providence County who will be afraid to participate in the 2020 Census because it will ask whether each adult and child in the home is a citizen.

22b. Overall, fewer immigrants will want to participate in the 2020 Census because it will ask people to say whether or not everyone in their household is a citizen.

Strongly agree	1
Somewhat agree	2
Somewhat disagree	3
Strongly disagree	4

## DEMOGRAPHICS

Now I have just a few questions for classification purposes only. Please be assured that your answers will be kept confidential and anonymous.

**[IF S6=1] D1A. [Hispanics/Latinos] have their roots in many different countries in Latin America. To what country do you or your family trace your ancestry? [OPEN-END CODE TO LIST]**

Argentina	1
Bolivia	2
Brazil	66
Chile	3
Colombia	4
Costa Rica	5
Cuba	6
Dominican Republic	7
Ecuador	8
El Salvador	9
Guatemala	10
Honduras	11
Mexico	12
Nicaragua	13
Panama	14
Paraguay	15
Peru	16
Portugal	77
Puerto Rico	17
Uruguay	18
Venezuela	19
Spain / Spanish	20
United States / America	21
Other country	22
Don't know	23

# APPENDIX B.

## Survey Instrument (cont.)

### Providence County Census ETE Survey - August 2018

[IF S6=3] D1B. [African Americans / Blacks in America] have their roots in many different countries. To what country do you or your family trace your ancestry? [CODE TO LIST]

Cape Verde	1
Liberia	2
Nigeria	3
Kenya	4
United States	5
Other country	6
Don't know	7

D2. Were you born in the United States, on the island of Puerto Rico, or in another country?

United States	1
Other country	2
Puerto Rico	3

D3. [IF D2=1]. How about your parents, were they born in the United States, in Puerto Rico, or in another country?

Both parents born in United States	1
Both parents born another country	2
Both parents born in Puerto Rico	3
One parent born in U.S. and one born abroad	4
Don't know	88

D4. How long have you lived in Rhode Island? [CODE TO LIST]

Less than 5 years	1
5-10 years	2
More than 10 years	3
Don't Know/Refused [DO NOT READ]	88

D5. Are you currently married?

Yes	1
No	2
Refused	99

D6. Do you have any children under the age of 18 currently living in your household?

Yes	1
No	2
Don't Know/No Answer [DO NOT READ]	88

# APPENDIX B.

## Survey Instrument (cont.)

### Providence County Census ETE Survey - August 2018

D7. Which one of these best describes your religious affiliation? I will read a list, just stop me when I've reached the right one for you.

Catholic	1
Protestant	2
Christian	3
Jewish	4
Atheist or agnostic	5
Buddhist	6
Other	7
None	8

D9. In what year were you born?

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D10. And lastly, what was your total combined household income in 2017 before taxes? This question is completely confidential and just used to help classify the responses, but it is very important for our research. Just let me know when I read to the right one.

Less than \$20,000	1
\$20,000 to \$39,999	2
\$40,000 to \$59,999	3
\$60,000 to \$79,999	4
\$80,000 to \$99,999	5
\$100,000 to \$150,000	6
More than \$150,000	7
Don't know	88

# APPENDIX C.

## Community Conversation/Interview Questions

### INTRODUCTION OF COMMUNITY CONVERSATION AND/OR INTERVIEW:

Thank you for participating. During this session we'd like to discuss the U.S. Census Bureau's Providence County Pilot which was not a full scale test run of the 2020 Census. As the only research being conducted on the Providence County Pilot, and given the pilot's focus on the functioning of the computer systems that will be used in 2020, we'd like to understand how you and the communities you serve interacted with the pilot. We would also like to understand how the announcement that the Census will ask respondents to indicate their citizenship status, impacted the communities you serve.

### PARTICIPANT INTRODUCTIONS

#### (GO AROUND THE GROUP IN A CIRCLE; OR INDIVIDUALLY IF APPROPRIATE):

Please describe your position and the responsibilities you oversee in that role.

### FOCUS GROUP QUESTIONS

1. Did you know that Providence County was the site of the only test run for the upcoming 2020 Census?
  - a. If yes, when did you first hear about the 2018 ETE test happening in Providence County and how?
  - b. If not, why do you think this might be?
2. From your knowledge, did your constituents know there was a test census happening? If so, how did you learn that your participants knew?
3. What issues, if any, came to your attention from your constituents about the test?
4. Where there any questions among your participants with regard to the:
  - a. Paper Census questionnaire received by mail?
  - b. Online survey?
  - c. Phone survey?
  - d. In-person survey with an enumerator?
5. In its administration of the E-T-E test the US Census Bureau maintains that they sought to test the roll out of a new online survey response process that will be utilized in the upcoming 2020 Census administration. Did you or your offices help participants fill out their questionnaires online? If yes, what issues did you/they encounter?
6. Do you have knowledge of any of your constituents applying for a Census job?
  - a. If so, did they encounter any difficulties doing so?
  - b. In your opinion, do you believe it would be beneficial to encourage additional residents to apply for these jobs? Why or why not?
7. Moving on to U.S. Census Bureau outreach surrounding the Providence County test: What did you know of the U.S. Census Bureau's efforts to engage in community outreach in Providence County?
  - a. In your opinion, was this outreach effective? Why or why not?

# **APPENDIX C.**

## **Community Conversation/Interview Questions (cont.)**

### **FOCUS GROUP QUESTIONS (CONT.)**

8. In your opinion, what could the Census Bureau do differently to ensure their next test reaches the maximum number of constituents and is as inclusive as possible?
9. Moving on to the addition of the citizenship question specifically: What impact did the addition of the citizenship question have on the questions or concerns you may have heard from your constituents?
10. Given your experience with the test run, what are your thoughts on the administration of the upcoming 2020 census nationally? Do you believe it will be successful? Why or why not?
11. Is there anything else you all would like to add?

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME!**