



Montcalm Human Services Coalition

"Working together, We Do More"

January 25, 2010

TO: Montcalm County Area Organizations and Leaders

FROM: Bob Clingenpeel, Montcalm Human Services Coalition Chairperson

RE: Become Active in Census 2010

We are pleased to announce that the Montcalm Human Services Coalition has just established a **"Complete Count Committee."** We are aligning with the U.S. Census Bureau to support the 2010 census and the effort to achieve a complete and accurate count of our population and we encourage **your** involvement.

The MHSC's **33 member organizations** strive daily to improve the lives and welfare of people in our community- many of whom are experiencing hardships related to economic status, language fluency, disabilities, or other challenges. The MHSC's support of the 2010 Census is another example of our collaborative commitment to **advocate for the quality of life** in our community and in our State.

Why is this important? We have enclosed a Fact Sheet that shows "50 Ways Census Data Are Used." As you review this list, you will see many examples of how census data locally impacts each of us. Every year, the federal government distributes more than \$400 Billion to state, local and tribal governments based on census data. In addition to determining political representation, the 2010 Census will help leaders:

- Identify where to build new roads, schools, hospitals, and more
- Indicate where funding is needed to enhance community initiatives and programs
- Provide more efficient local emergency services thanks to better maps and information
- Aid organizations with grant writing and help target services, ensuring maximum benefit.

In 2010, every person living in the United States must be counted. This includes people of all ages, races, ethnic groups, citizens and non-citizens. As a 2010 Census partner, our goal is relay the ease, importance, and safety of census participation to our community. Census forms will be delivered or mailed to households in March 2010; households should complete and mail back their forms upon receipt. As one of the shortest census forms in history, it **asks 10 questions and takes about 10 minutes to complete.**

Of special concern are people and communities that have been shown to be **most at risk of being missed** in the census, referred to as the **"hard to count."** Examples include children in poverty, racial and language minorities, recent immigrants, renters, low-income communities, those foreclosed on or living in a growing number of multi-family households, and persons with multiple residences.

A new section called "2010 Census" on our website's homepage (www.mhsc.info) is dedicated to assist MHSC members and other interested community partners in getting needed **2010 Census resource information-** such as fact sheets for specific community organization types and constituencies, websites, and a hyperlink to an actual Census survey questionnaire. While there, you can also learn more about the MHSC.

So, **"It's In Our Hands."** Supporting the Census initiative is well worth the **time-limited** investment, so that we can positively impact **the next decade** for our county partners and residents. We **cannot afford to miss this opportunity** to take action and **we hope you will take action too.** Please don't hesitate to contact me or Lisa Lund with questions about our effort. Thank you.

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APPENDIX A:

50 Ways Census Data Are Used

- Decision making at all levels of government.
- Drawing federal, state, and local legislative districts.
- Attracting new businesses to state and local areas.
- Distributing over \$300 billion in federal funds and even more in state funds.
- Forecasting future transportation needs for all segments of the population.
- Planning for hospitals, nursing homes, clinics, and the location of other health services.
- Forecasting future housing needs for all segments of the population.
- Directing funds for services for people in poverty.
- Designing public safety strategies.
- Development of rural areas.
- Analyzing local trends.
- Estimating the number of people displaced by natural disasters.
- Developing assistance programs for American Indians and Alaska Natives.
- Creating maps to speed emergency services to households in need of assistance.
- Delivering goods and services to local markets.
- Designing facilities for people with disabilities, the elderly, or children.
- Planning future government services.
- Planning investments and evaluating financial risk.
- Publishing economic and statistical reports about the United States and its people.
- Facilitating scientific research.
- Developing "intelligent" maps for government and business.
- Providing proof of age, relationship, or residence certificates provided by the Census Bureau.
- Distributing medical research.
- Reapportioning seats in the House of Representatives.
- Planning and researching for media as backup for news stories.
- Providing evidence in litigation involving land use, voting rights, and equal opportunity.
- Drawing school district boundaries.
- Planning budgets for government at all levels.
- Spotting trends in the economic well-being of the nation.
- Planning for public transportation services.
- Planning health and educational services for people with disabilities.
- Establishing fair market rents and enforcing fair lending practices.
- Directing services to children and adults with limited English language proficiency.
- Planning urban land use.
- Planning outreach strategies.
- Understanding labor supply.
- Assessing the potential for spread of communicable diseases.
- Analyzing military potential.
- Making business decisions.
- Understanding consumer needs.
- Planning for congregations.
- Locating factory sites and distribution centers.
- Distributing catalogs and developing direct mail pieces.
- Setting a standard for creating both public and private sector surveys.
- Evaluating programs in different geographic areas.
- Providing genealogical research.
- Planning for school projects.
- Developing adult education programs.
- Researching historical subject areas.
- Determining areas eligible for housing assistance and rehabilitation loans.