

## Census Update: Importance of Participation

Written by Mike Honda

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The Census is conducted every ten years as mandated by the U.S. Constitution, and it collects critical information used by local, state, and national governments to determine the distribution of over \$400 billion in federal funding, as well as boundaries for state and local legislative and congressional districts. The 2010 Census is especially critical for our district, as an accurate count will bring federal funding for our schools, hospitals, roads, job training centers and more.

Beginning May 1 through July 10, the Census Bureau will follow up with households in our district who have not yet mailed their Census forms back, to make sure that they too are counted.

Opening your door to census takers and answering their questions is easy, important and safe. All of the information they collect will be kept confidential. Census takers are your neighbors—people hired from your community to make sure your local area gets an accurate count.

By answering 10 simple questions, you'll affect your voice in Congress and help our community get its share of more than \$400 billion per year in federal funds to help increase job training, improve schools, and more.

Given our district's diversity on income, language, home ownership and other urban criteria, Santa Clara County ranks as California's 7th Hardest to Count population, and with a large population of recent immigrants and a high percentage of Limited English Proficient residents, we face unique challenges in ensuring a complete and accurate count. As of now, 75% of residents in Santa Clara County have been counted—matching our county's 2000 participation rate, but far from the 100% we need.

As a member of the House Appropriations Committee, I have fought hard over the past years to protect and provide a robust Census budget that will benefit our district, knowing that every dollar is critical to ensuring an accurate count. The Census Bureau has increased outreach in our district significantly, but there is much work to be done through July 10.

The 2010 Census must count everyone, citizens and non-citizens, I will continue to work closely

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with the Census Bureau and community organizations in our district to make sure that this is achieved. Our district has much to gain through access to federal funding with an accurate count, and I encourage my constituents to take an active role by being counted if they have not already done so.