

**Opening Statement  
Of  
Rep. Charles A Gonzalez  
Hearing 2010 Census: Using the Communications Campaign  
to Effectively Reduce the Undercount”  
Information Policy, Census, and National Archives Subcommittee  
Thursday, July 10, 2008  
2154 Rayburn  
2:00 p.m.**

Chairman Clay, Ranking Member Turner and members of the Subcommittee, good afternoon and thank you for the opportunity to participate in today’s hearing on the 2010 Census Integrated Communications Campaign. I am present today representing the Congressional Hispanic Caucus.

Welcome Dr. Murdock and the other witnesses here today as well.

When I first arrived to the U.S. House of Representatives in 1998, I was tasked with leading the Congressional Hispanic Caucus’ 2000 Census efforts. At the time, my colleagues and I were heavily involved in working with the Census Bureau, and stakeholders with the express goal of achieving as accurate a Census as possible.

The Partnership and Marketing Program, as it was known then, was the first of its kind. It achieved its main goal – engaging multiple community partners to get the word out about the Census and increase response rates. Though we still ended up with a minority undercount, it was less than it could have been. I think that should count as a success.

I still hold out hope that we can be successful now. However, all the commentary in the press recently telling us that the 2010 Census effort is in shambles and that dramatic changes are needed at the Department of Commerce and the Census Bureau management if we expect to execute a timely and accurate Census, certainly give us pause.

I expect today's hearing, focusing on the communications campaign for the upcoming 2010 Census, should help provide us some answers and a clearer picture of what is truly going on.

In anticipation of today's hearing, the Hispanic Caucus contacted the advertising firm responsible for the Hispanic portion of the 2010 Census communication plan. While they are still in the planning stages and state they possess the resources to perform their portion of the campaign, I am disturbed by reports noting that funding for the 2010 Census Communication Plan might be insufficient to carry it out on the scale that we saw in 2000.

We are pleased that the Bureau has seen fit to bring this team on board and we are certain they will do a good job, however, if these statements are true, I fail to see how the Bureau expects to achieve the same level of success this time as we had during the last Census. I would note that now is not the time for the Census to handicap its partners in such an important endeavor.

Additionally, I am concerned with the decision to scale back the Census-in Schools (CIS) program, fully eliminating any outreach to students in grades 7 to 12. I know I speak for my colleagues when I say that I would like to see what data the Bureau has to support the decision to curtail a program that *actually* worked in the past.

I hope the witnesses today will be able to explain whether we should expect to see an effort along the same scale as we had in the 2000 Census? The same breath, scope? Or should we expect to see a reduced effort by this Census Bureau to reach out to our communities represented here today?

I look forward to hearing from the witnesses this afternoon to answer these concerns and share their insights on how we credibly move forward despite some of the bumps the agency has experienced up to now.