



**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE**  
**Economics and Statistics Administration**  
**U.S. Census Bureau**  
Washington, DC 20233-0001  
OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR

September 11, 2009

Ms. Maude Hurd  
President  
ACORN  
739 8<sup>th</sup> Street, S.E.  
Washington, D.C. 20003

Dear Ms. Hurd:

The goal of the U.S. Census Bureau's partnership program is to combine the strengths of state, local, and tribal governments, community-based organizations, faith-based organizations, schools, media, businesses and others to ensure an accurate 2010 Census. While not Census Bureau employees, partners are advocates for census cooperation and participation. They serve as trusted voices within their communities and are critical to our strategy to count everyone once, only once, and in the right place.

The Census Bureau has established criteria for partnerships, which are listed on our Web site at <[www.census.gov](http://www.census.gov)>, and reserves the right to decline partnership or to terminate an existing partnership agreement with any group that 1) may create a negative connotation for the Census Bureau; 2) could distract from the Census Bureau's mission; or, 3) may make people fearful of participating in the census.

To that end, and in keeping with the standards we shared with your organization and others who volunteered to partner with the Census Bureau to help promote the 2010 Census, we are today terminating our Partnership Agreement with ACORN.

Over the last several months, through ongoing communication with our regional offices, it is clear that ACORN's affiliation with 2010 Census promotion has caused sufficient concern in the general public, has indeed become a distraction from our mission, and may even become a discouragement to public cooperation, negatively impacting 2010 Census efforts.

While not decisive factors in this decision, recent events concerning several local offices of ACORN have added to the worsening negative perceptions of ACORN and its affiliation with our partnership efforts.

We do not come to this decision lightly. It was our original assessment that your organization could be helpful in encouraging cooperation with the 2010 Census among individuals who are historically hard to count, including renters, low-income residents, the linguistically isolated, and others. As of today, we have close to 80,000 partnership agreements with national and local groups – many of whom are trusted voices and serve these same populations – and we will be relying upon those groups to continue our

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outreach in the communities you serve. The full participation of those populations remains of utmost importance to us.

Unfortunately, we no longer have confidence that our national partnership agreement is being effectively managed through your many local offices. For the reasons stated, we therefore have decided to terminate the partnership.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Robert M. Groves". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Robert M. Groves  
Director