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Testimony

Of

Arturo Vargas Executive Director

National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials (NALEO) Educational Fund

Information Policy, Census, and National Archives Subcommittee Oversight and Government Reform Committee

2154 Rayburn House Office Building Wednesday, February 24, 2010 2:00 p.m.

"The 2010 Census Communication Contract: The Media Plan in Hard to Count Areas."

Chairman Clay, Ranking member Representative McHenry and members of the Subcommittee: I am Arturo Vargas, Executive Director of the National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials (NALEO) Educational Fund. Thank you for the invitation to appear before you today on behalf of the NALEO Educational Fund to discuss the 2010 Census media plan in hard to count areas.¹

The NALEO Educational Fund is a non-profit, non-partisan organization that facilitates full Latino participation in the American political process, from citizenship to public service. Our constituency includes the more than 6,000 Latino elected and appointed officials nationwide. We are one of the nation's leading organizations in the area of Census policy development and public education, and we are deeply committed to ensuring that the Census Bureau provides our nation with the most accurate count of its population.

The NALEO Educational Fund was actively involved in outreach to the Latino community for the decennial enumerations in 1990 and 2000. In 2007, we launched the “*ya es hora*” (It’s Time) campaign, a comprehensive, multi-year effort to integrate Latinos into American civic life. When we launched the campaign, our Spanish-language media partners included Univision Communications Inc., Entravision Communications Corporation, and ImpreMedia, and our national partners were the National Council of La Raza, the Service Employees International Union on citizenship promotion and Mi Familia Vota Educational Fund on voter engagement. The *ya es hora* network also includes the collaborative efforts of more than 400 local partners, including community and civic organizations, private businesses, and government agencies. The first two phases of this effort involved mobilizing eligible Latino legal permanent residents to apply for U.S. citizenship, and then mobilizing Latino U.S. citizens to vote.

We have now launched the third phase of the *ya es hora* campaign, *¡HAGASE CONTAR!* (Make Yourself Count!), which focuses on promoting the importance of the Census, educating individuals about filling out their Census forms and encouraging households to mail back their responses once they complete their forms. This campaign is working to inform and motivate the

¹ “Hard to count” is a term developed by the Census Bureau to characterize geographic areas with populations that are the most difficult to enumerate in the decennial Census. The Bureau has developed a scoring system to determine “hard to count” areas, based on several relevant demographic characteristics.

nearly 50 million U.S. Latinos to fully participate in the 2010 Census. The national organizations and Spanish-language media leaders for this effort are the same as those for the previous two phases of the *ya es hora* campaign. Currently, there are also nearly 140 other national and local partners for *¡HAGASE CONTAR!*, and we anticipate that number increasing as the campaign proceeds. Core components of the campaign's outreach strategy already in place include mobilization of local leaders to spread the message of Census participation, a national and local media campaign to inform and encourage the Latino community to participate, a comprehensive bilingual website and toll-free hotline for information on the Census, the launch of local census information centers, and community events to assist Latinos with the Census. We have also distributed more than 30,000 motivational posters targeted to the Latino community across the nation so far, and engaged hundreds of community leaders through "train the trainer" workshops and other briefings.

In addition, since 2000, we have served on the Secretary of Commerce's 2010 Census Advisory Committee, or its predecessor, the Decennial Census Advisory Committee, and we have participated in the Committee's discussions surrounding the planning for the 2010 enumeration. We also served on the Joint Advisory Advertising Review Panel (JAARP), which the Census Bureau created to review its advertising and communications efforts. In addition, through our strong relationship with our Latino leadership constituency, we have also become very familiar with the types of challenges that public officials face as a result of the undercount of the Latino population.

Mr. Chairman, we need the 2010 Census to produce the most accurate count of our nation's population as possible. Census data are the fundamental building blocks of our representative democracy; Census data are the basis for reapportionment and redistricting. Policymakers at all levels of government also rely on Census data to make important decisions that affect the lives of all Americans. These data help make such determinations as the number of teachers that are needed in classrooms, the best places to build roads and highways, and the best way to provide health and public safety services to our neighborhoods and communities. The accuracy of Census data is also critical for the effective allocation of government funding for schools, hospitals and other vital social programs. In addition, Census data are used to monitor

compliance with civil rights laws and to document incidents of illegal discrimination based on race or gender. The first immediate use of the 2010 Census data for this purpose will be determining whether the 2011 redistricting of Congressional, state legislative and other single-member electoral districts comply with the Voting Rights Act of 1965.

To secure an accurate count of our nation's population, it is imperative to have an accurate count of the estimated 46.9 million Latinos who are now the nation's second-largest and fastest-growing population. An undercount of such a large segment of the U.S. population means a failed Census. An accurate count of the Latino community is necessary if we are to make sound policies for the economic, social and political well-being of the entire country.

We believe that there is strong consensus among the Bureau, its contractors, and stakeholders who work closely with the Latino population that an effective Spanish-language media plan is critical to achieving a full count of our nation's Latinos. We also acknowledge that the Bureau has taken several positive steps to develop and implement such a plan, including investing a significant amount of resources in paid Spanish-language media advertising. However, after careful analysis, we believe that there are weaknesses in several aspects of the Bureau's plan for its Spanish-language media buys. In order to ensure the success of the Bureau's overall media plan and its targeting strategy, each of its components must reinforce each other. If there are inadequacies in any individual components, other components must be able to compensate for them. We are deeply concerned that the weaknesses we have identified will in fact have the combined effect of significantly impairing the Bureau's ability to secure the full participation of the Latino population in the 2010 enumeration.

In our testimony, we will first address the need for both an effective Spanish-language and English-language media plan to reach Latinos during Census 2010. We will then discuss our concerns about the inadequacy of the Bureau's overall investment in paid Spanish-language media advertising. We will also examine the key role played by both national and local Spanish-language media buys in reaching the Latino community, and we will highlight several problems with the methodology used by the Bureau to determine the markets for its local Spanish-language media buys. Finally, we will present our policy recommendations on improvements for

the Bureau’s Spanish-language media advertising plan that will help ensure a complete and accurate count of the Latino community in Census 2010.

I. The Need for Effective Media Outreach to Latinos in Census 2010

In order to ensure a full count of the Latino population, it is critical that the Census Bureau implement both an effective Spanish-language and English-language media outreach campaign to Latino residents throughout the nation. Broadcast and print media serve as extremely effective vehicles for reaching the Latino community. Latinos obtain a significant amount of information from media in general – they spend more time watching television, listening to the radio, and reading newspapers than non-Latinos.² From 1996 to 2003, Latinos spent an average of 28.9 hours watching television per week, 19 hours listening to the radio, and 3.2 hours reading newspapers. In contrast, non-Latinos spent an average of 17 hours watching television per week, 13 hours listening to radio, and 2.6 hours reading newspapers.

Figure 1
Average Number of Hours on Media Consumption

Medium	Latino	Non-Latino
Television	28.9	17.0
Radio	19.0	13.0
Magazine	3.3	4.3
Newspaper	3.2	2.6

Reaching Latinos through Spanish-language media is a particularly important component of an overall Census 2010 communications campaign because of the language preferences of many U.S. Latinos. According to 2008 American Community Survey data, about 31.6 million Latinos – or 76% of Latinos age five and older – speak Spanish at home. Of those Latinos, about one-half (49%) are not yet fully proficient in English. In many regions of the country, particularly those with significant Latino newcomer populations, the percentage of “Spanish-dominant” Latinos is far higher.

² Market Segment Research & Consulting, Inc., *The MSR&C Ethnic Market Report 1996 to 2003*.

Spanish-language media is a valuable and trusted source of information in the Latino community. Not only has it seen continued growth when English-language media outlets have faced declining consumption, but in many places, it has surpassed English-language media in popularity. On a national level, among Latino adults age 18-49, Spanish-language television has seen a rapidly growing audience regardless of the audience's Spanish or English language preference. According to data from Nielsen Media Research, in 1996, 6.7 million Spanish-dominant Latinos, and 2.8 million English-dominant Latinos watched Spanish-language television. Ten years later, 9.9 million Spanish-dominant Latinos and 4 million English-dominant Latinos were watching Spanish-language television.³

The same trend has occurred in some local regions of the nation. According to Nielsen Media Research, in 1995, New York City Latinos primarily watched English-language television (62%) over Spanish-language stations (38%). In contrast, in 2008, viewers favored the Spanish-language stations 71% to 29%.⁴

Latinos are also consuming larger quantities of Spanish-language print and radio media. According to the Latino Print Network, since 1970, the combined circulation of Spanish-language daily newspapers has grown from 140,000 to over 1.7 million in 2002.⁵

More critically, research shows that Spanish-language media is a particularly effective tool in engaging Latinos and mobilizing them for civic action. For example, empirical analysis presented in a 2006 paper from the National Bureau of Economic Research found that in markets where local Spanish-language news became available, Latino voter turnout increased up to 10 percentage points.⁶ Preliminary research suggests that Spanish-language media has had a similar impact on the rise in Latino naturalizations in 2007. The first phase of the *ya es hora* campaign, *ya es hora ¡Ciudadanía!*, involved a significant public-service push by the coalition's

³ Nielsen Media Research Universe Estimates, Percentage of Hispanic Adults (18-49) in TV Households where Spanish is Spoken. Prior to 2003 based on 18+

⁴ Bauder, David. *Rapid Growth for Spanish-Speaking News*. Associated Press. August 4, 2008.

⁵ Nealy, Michelle J. *Spanish-language Media Market in Growth Phase*. *Diverse – Issues in Higher Education*. July 24, 2008.

⁶ Obholz-Gee, Felix; Waldfogel, Joel. *Media Markets and Localism: Does Local News En Español Boost Hispanic Voter Turnout?* National Bureau of Economic Research Working Paper Series. June, 2006.

Spanish-language media partners – including public service announcements and earned media – on the importance and opportunities of U.S. citizenship. The campaign contributed to the near-record number of naturalization applications in Fiscal Year 2007, and a marked increase in the Latino share of total naturalizations. Between 2003 and 2006, there were only five metropolitan areas where Latinos constituted the majority of those who naturalized – post 2006, after the launch of the *ya es hora* campaign, there were eleven metropolitan areas where Latinos constituted a majority of successful naturalizations.⁷

While Spanish-language media is an effective vehicle for reaching a significant portion of the Latino community, there are also many Latinos who rely primarily on English-language media for information. For example, according to 2008 American Community Survey data, about 9.1 million Latinos speak only English at home, or about 23% of the Latino population age 5 and older. We believe that the Bureau should be investing in paid advertising that specifically targets English-dominant Latinos, because they have demographic characteristics that are different from those of Spanish-dominant Latinos or non-Latinos. However, we understand that the Bureau is investing an insignificant amount of resources in its paid advertising plan for media buys targeted at English-dominant Latinos – three television stations and six magazines, according to the Bureau’s media buy schedule as of January 14, 2010 – and we are deeply concerned that the Bureau will not engage English-dominant Latinos and secure their participation in the 2010 enumeration.

II. The Census Bureau’s Overall Investment in Paid Spanish-Language Media

The Bureau has taken many positive steps to recognize the importance of paid Spanish-language media in its communications plans, and we commend it for these efforts. For example, the Bureau and its Spanish-language media consultants – Global Hue Latino Inc. and D’Exposito and Partners LLC – should be commended for their planning for the 2010 paid media strategy. Bolstered by messaging research and innovative means for reaching the Latino community, the plan acknowledges some of the unique characteristics of the Latino community that contribute to historically lower Census participation rates, which create the need for unique outreach

⁷ Ramirez, Ricardo. Working Paper. University of Southern California, December 2009.

strategies. We commend the Bureau in the breadth of its paid media strategy, and the significant time it invested into creating it.

However, while the Bureau has made a significant investment in Spanish-language paid media for 2010, the investment has not kept pace with inflation and the growth of the Spanish-speaking Latino population during the last decade. In 2000, the Census Bureau spent a total of \$110 million on paid media, of which \$18.9 million was spent on Latino outreach – 17.2% of the total expenditure. For the 2010 Census, the official budget as of January 14, 2010 has increased to \$140 million overall, with \$25.5 million allocated to Latino outreach, which is 18.2% of the total. If the Bureau had merely increased its 2000 Census spending for paid media Latino outreach to account for inflation, the Bureau would have allocated \$23.4 million for its Census 2010 spending. However, the number of Latinos who speak Spanish at home (an approximate indicator of likelihood for Spanish-language media consumption) grew from 24.6 million in 2000 to 31.6 million in 2008, an increase of 28%. Thus, had the Bureau increased its spending from 2000 to account for both inflation, and the growth of the Spanish-speaking population, the Bureau would have allocated at a minimum \$30.0 million for Census 2010 paid advertising, which is about \$5 million more than the actual amount allocated.

We are particularly concerned about the relatively small size of the Bureau's investment in Spanish-language media because several of our media partners have informed us that it is inadequate to effectively reach all of the nation's Latino residents. There is not enough funding available to permit outlets to air Census 2010 advertising frequently enough to ensure optimal market penetration in many regions of the country. This is a particularly critical problem for the areas which are not the traditional centers of Latino population concentration, such as regions in the Deep South, Mid-Atlantic, and Midwest. In many of these "emerging" Latino communities, only Spanish-language national network outlets will broadcast Census advertising, so it is critical that those outlets can air the advertising throughout their programming rotation with enough frequency to effectively reach the Latinos in their market. Emerging Latino communities tend to lack the social and civic infrastructure that exists in traditional Latino population centers, such as Latino community-based organizations, advocacy groups and civic leadership. Thus, these emerging communities are not likely to have many Latino Census Partners, and Latinos in these

communities will need to rely primarily on Spanish-language media to obtain Census information. A robust investment in paid Spanish-language advertising for Census 2010 is crucial to ensure an accurate count of the Latino population in these areas.

III. The Roles of National and Local Media Buys

The Bureau’s national media buy strategy is reaching a significant share of the Latino population with 2010 Census messaging, through television, radio, newspapers and magazines. Under the Bureau’s strategy, only 34 of the 210 standard media markets nationwide are not covered by a national Spanish-language television buy, because there are no major network Spanish-language television affiliates in those markets.

**Figure 2
Ten Largest Latino Media Markets without National Spanish-Language Media Affiliate**

Market	Rank	
	Hispanic	Overall
Mobile-Pensacola (Ft Walt)	100	60
Pittsburgh	109	23
Myrtle Beach-Florence	120	104
Dayton	132	64
Sherman-Ada	134	161
Lafayette, IN	146	189
Portland-Auburn	148	77
Harrisonburg	150	178
Tri-Cities, TN-VA	154	92
Biloxi-Gulfport	159	163

Of the above markets, two are covered under the Census Bureau’s national network radio buys (Myrtle Beach – Florence and Sherman – Ada), and two are covered by newspaper buys (Pittsburgh and Harrisonburg).

Beyond the national media buy strategy – through which all markets with an affiliate of a national Spanish-language television network or radio station will air in-language advertisements – the

Bureau and its media consultants also arranged for additional local (or “spot”) advertisements in broadcast media. These spot advertisements are complemented by other inherently local media including newspapers and “out-of-household” (OOH) media (such as billboards). Such local television, radio, and print buys allow for better message targeting; a critical factor given the heterogeneity of the Latino population and cultural differences from region to region. In addition, local media buys for television and radio can in cases provide significantly deeper market penetration because media outlets will air both the advertising placed by the national network as well as the local advertising. The Census Bureau has also asked media outlets to provide “added-value” to their paid advertising by conducting in-kind promotion. Thus, the investment of paid advertising in local media outlets may result in greater in-kind promotion in a given market.

In the Bureau’s initial media plan, the Bureau and its media consultants appear to acknowledge that local media purchases have an additional value over national buys, and the plan allocates a significant share of funding to local media purchases - 53% national compared to 47% local.⁸ In terms of actual dollars spent for Latino media in all formats, according to data available to the NALEO Educational Fund, the national versus local split is in fact in favor of the local – 65% local to 35% national (or approximately \$14.8 million to \$8.1 million).

IV. Inadequacies in Local Television Allocation Criteria

All of the documentation for the Census Bureau’s paid media plan places significant attention and emphasis on the importance of targeting areas with populations that are hardest to count, particularly in regards to the allocation of local media buys:

- According to the 2010 Census Integrated Communications Campaign Plan, “...TV purchases will always be focused on delivering the HTC (hard to count) target in program selection.”
- “Budget allocations across the entire Paid Media Plan were completed based on hard-to-count scores, with harder-to-count audiences receiving a larger allocation relative to population size.”⁹

⁸ 2010 Census Paid Media Plan, 1-12-10

⁹ *Ibid.*

The Bureau assesses the extent to which an area is HTC by assigning it an HTC score. The Bureau uses that score in one of the six criteria it developed to help determine which markets would receive additional local Spanish-language television spots. Those markets meeting at least four of the following six criteria would be selected:

1. The media market includes at least 100,000 Hispanic Households.
2. Hispanic Households comprise 11.1 % or more of the total households in the media market.
3. The market's average HTC score was above the national average of 32.9.
4. The market's average 2000 Census Mail Return Rate (MRR) is below the national average of 67.3%.
5. The market's Hispanic eight-year growth rate is above the national average of 146%.
6. The "hyper-growth" rate of the market is 25% or above.

An independent analysis by the NALEO Educational Fund as to which media markets should receive local Spanish-language television buys confirms that the actual local Spanish-language television media buys of the Bureau meet at least four out of six of the foregoing criteria.

We commend the Census Bureau and its media partners for including the HTC score in one of the criteria, given the effectiveness of that HTC score in determining the risk of not being counted. However, we have concerns with the methodology by which two of these criteria are formulated, including the criterion which uses the HTC score. Specifically, the Bureau averages certain data at the market level without first isolating the Latino population within the relevant markets. In markets where the Latino population is concentrated in the most HTC areas, the use of an average allows the presence of lower HTC areas (which may not be the home to many Latinos) to mask the presence of Latinos who share HTC characteristics. Thus, the "easier to count" areas in a market may bring up the overall HTC average of the market. By finding the mean HTC score for an entire market without first accounting for those areas in a market heavily populated by non-Latinos, this measurement fails to accurately capture the HTC score as it pertains to the Latino community in that market. Thus, the average may become a misleading indicator of the need for Spanish-language local media buys in the area.

Similarly, the Bureau's fourth criterion, which uses the average 2000 Census form mail return rate (MRR) for a whole market, provides a skewed measure of the return rate among Latinos. Again, by using the average for an entire market, the fourth criteria may mask the prevalence of a low MRR among Latino residents. Ideally, the Bureau would have provided its media consultants with mail response rate figures for Latinos only, as long as Latino population size in a given tract were not so small so as to impinge on privacy issues.

The NALEO Educational Fund conducted an analysis of several major media markets that did not receive local television media purchases, based on the Bureau's criteria. In our analysis, we revised the Bureau's methodology by making some simple alterations to their criteria. For example, we analyzed markets by isolating specific tracts with significant Latino populations, and determined both the average HTC score and MRR for those tracts. In addition, we examined the percentage of Latinos within tracts with HTC scores above the national average or MRR's below the national average. This analysis presents a very different picture of the potential need for local Spanish-language television buys in those markets.

Our analysis uses publicly available data to examine nine media markets with significant Latino populations (more than 100,000 Latino households – one of the six local television buy criteria) that did not receive local Spanish-language television buys. By calculating the average HTC score and average MRR for tracts within those markets in which Latinos comprise 60% or more of the total population, we found that all of those markets have an average HTC score of at least 45, which is 12.1 points higher than the national average threshold used by the Bureau. In the case of Boston, the average HTC score of those tracts reached 94. Additionally, under our Latino tract analysis, five of those nine markets also have an average MRR less than the 67.3% national average.

Figure 3
Census Tracts in which Latinos Comprise 60% or more of Total Population,
by Media Market

Market	Hispanic Household Share of Market	Total Hispanic Households	Average HTC Score (Market-wide)	Average HTC Score (in isolated tracts)	Average MRR (in isolated tracts)
Denver	15.1%	229,960	26.9	69.1	67.6
Orlando-Daytona Beach-Melbourne	13.7%	201,400	31.2	45.0	76.7
Tampa-St. Petersburg (Sarasota)	10.3%	188,090	33.3	54.0	70.9
Philadelphia	6.2%	183,390	25.6	93.1	60.3
Atlanta	6.7%	158,540	32.8	84.0	50.8
Austin	22.7%	151,690	36.2	69.3	59.4
Boston (Manchester)	5.3%	128,310	26.4	94.1	56.7
Tucson (Sierra Vista)	26.5%	120,880	39.1	62.7	68.1
Corpus Christi	52.7%	103,910	50.2	63.6	65.8

Thus, our analysis suggests that the Bureau did not make local Spanish-language media buys in areas where its averaging methodology may mask the presence of tracts with significant numbers of Latino residents which share the demographic and housing characteristics of high HTC areas. The Bureau’s market-wide averaging methodology may also fail to provide an accurate portrait of the relatively low MRR’s of Latinos in those markets.

Although our revised methodology may more accurately capture the HTC score and MRR for Latinos specifically in a given market, it does not account for population distribution – in markets where the Latino population is more widely distributed among various tracts, it is difficult to measure average HTC scores and MRRs for Latinos exclusively. Thus, in an effort to more accurately account for Latino population distribution, we also assessed each market by measuring the percentage of Latinos who live in census tracts with an HTC score above 32.9 or a MRR below 67.3%. With respect to our HTC score analysis, in some markets, we found that despite low average HTC scores, a significant share of Latinos live in tracts with an HTC score above the national average of 32.9. For example, although the average HTC score for the Boston market is a low 26.4, more than three out of four Latinos in that market (76%) live in tracts with an HTC score above 32.9.

Figure 4
Media Markets without Local Television Media Buys, and Share of Latinos Living in Census Tracts with HTC Score Above 32.9

Market	Average HTC Score for Market Overall	Share of Latinos in Tracts w/above average HTC (32.9)
Yuma-El Centro	61.1	94%
Laredo	70.1	89%
Monterey-Salinas	39.3	89%
Bakersfield	49.5	87%
Lubbock	44.6	85%
Odessa-Midland	48.2	84%
Corpus Christi	50.2	84%
Springfield-Holyoke	32.6	81%
Tucson (Sierra Vista)	39.1	78%
Boston (Manchester)	26.4	76%

Similarly, several markets enjoy an above-average MRR, yet the majority of Latinos in those markets live in tracts where the MRR is lower than the national average of 67.3%. These markets include Boston, Austin, and Hartford- New Haven, where more than half of all Latinos live in with an MRR below the national MRR average of 67.3%.

Figure 5
Media Markets without Local Television Media Buys, and Share of Latinos Living in Census Tracts with MRR Below 67.3%

Market	Average MRR for Market Overall	Share of Latinos in below average MRR Tracts
Laredo	64.6	75%
Boston (Manchester)	74.7	61%
Austin	72.0	58%
Hartford & New Haven	76.2	52%
Yuma-El Centro	68.4	48%
Philadelphia	76.5	46%
Corpus Christi	69.6	46%
Springfield-Holyoke	77.1	37%
Tucson (Sierra Vista)	76.5	32%
Lubbock	72.5	31%

Our revised methodologies may not paint a complete portrait of the need for increased local Spanish-language media in a given market – in some cases, the foregoing markets do not meet household or population thresholds to meet the other criteria for local media buys. However, we believe our methodologies more accurately capture the disparities between Latinos and non-Latinos in a given market with respect to the actual challenges of enumerating those populations.

The inaccuracy of the HTC and MRR criteria used by the Census Bureau in determining need for additional media investment are also compounded by the population size criteria (100,000 Latino Household threshold and 11.1% Latino Household Share of market Households). This may disproportionately affect those markets with emerging Latino communities or communities which are relatively small. These markets cover areas in the South, Mid-Atlantic, and Midwest, and the Mexico-border region, which are some of the most critical communities to a successful and accurate 2010 Census. For example, the Laredo market – which covers several communities in the Rio Grande Valley of Texas – is by all measures a hard-to-count Latino market, yet does not meet the criterion for the number of Latino households (63,190 according to the 2000 Census). Similarly, the Atlanta market – one of fastest growing Latino communities in the nation – has a large share of Latinos living in hard-to-count Census tracts and over 158,000 Latino households, yet fails to meet the criterion of Latino households comprising 11.1% or more of all households (6.7%).

While it is difficult to definitively ascertain whether one individual weakness in the Bureau's criteria for targeting local Spanish-language media buys will in and of itself significantly impair the overall effectiveness of the Bureau's targeting, we are deeply concerned that the combined effect of all of the weaknesses will jeopardize the ability of the Bureau's local media buys to secure optimal participation of Latinos in the 2010 Census. We also believe that the inadequate level of the Bureau's overall investment in the Spanish-language media buys will exacerbate the combined detrimental effect of the weaknesses in its targeting criteria. Because of these weaknesses and inadequacies, the Bureau's paid media plan falls short of what is required to address the challenge of reaching and accurately counting the nation's Latino population.

V. The Dissemination of Inaccurate or Misleading Information about the 2010 Enumeration

While we understand that the focus of the Subcommittee's hearing is the Census Bureau's 2010 media plan, we would like to take this opportunity to raise a pressing concern about the dissemination of inaccurate or misleading information that could seriously affect the public's participation in the 2010 enumeration. For example, there are several misleading e-mails circulating through the Internet that claim that individuals posing as Census workers are attempting to obtain personal information over the telephone, by e-mail or in person.¹⁰ One version of this e-mail claims to be providing advice from the Better Business Bureau (BBB) about how individuals can avoid identity theft when dealing with Census inquiries, but the BBB has disavowed the e-mail, and is providing accurate information about the enumeration on its website.¹¹ These e-mails contain inaccuracies that could raise unwarranted fears in the public about completing the Census questionnaire or providing information to Census workers.

In addition, some organizations are circulating mailers purporting to be "Census" questionnaires or materials, for fund-raising purposes, or to illegally obtain credit card information and donations. According to the *Daily Herald*, a newspaper serving the Chicago suburban area, some senior citizens in Congressman Bill Foster's (D-IL) district have received what appears to be a scam mailer from a fictitious advocacy group that solicits credit card information and donations while falsely appearing to be authored by the U.S. Census Bureau. The mailer starts with a header identifying the letter as being sent by the "National Census of Senior Citizens" and the "Council for Retirement Security."¹² The Republican National Committee (RNC) has also circulated a fund-raising mailer that solicits the opinions of GOP voters in the form of materials that appear to mimic some aspects of the Census questionnaire mailing. The letter is labeled "2010 Congressional District Census," and the mailer comes in a plain white envelope marked "Do Not Destroy, Official Document."¹³ On February 10, the *Washington Post* reported that the National Republican Congressional Committee sent a mailer with a fundraising solicitation with

¹⁰ See for example, <http://www.snopes.com/fraud/identity/census.asp>, and <http://www.snopes.com/inboxer/scams/census.asp>.

¹¹ <http://www.bbb.org/us/article/phony-bbb-e-mail-spreads-fiction-about-2010-census;-get-the-facts-14542>.

¹² <http://www.dailyherald.com/story/?id=291816>.

¹³ <http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/35067802/>.

the word “Census” featured prominently throughout the document. The mailer included a “Census Document” which solicits opinions about public issues.¹⁴

We understand that the Chair of this Subcommittee, and U.S. Rep. Carolyn Maloney (D-NY) contacted the Postmaster General of the United States and requested an investigation to determine whether the RNC mailing violates federal prohibitions against donation solicitations that purport to be official government mailings. We also understand that the Postmaster General determined the mailer does not violate these prohibitions, because the mailer does not clearly reference any official U.S. government agency, and because it clearly indicates it was commissioned by the Republican Party.¹⁵ Notwithstanding this determination, we believe that such mailings confuse and mislead members of the public, and could make them distrust the real Census questionnaire when it arrives next month. Media reports indicate that political leaders from both sides of the aisle share these concerns, including the Ranking Member of this Subcommittee.¹⁶ We strongly condemn the use of confusing mailers that appear to mimic officials U.S. Census materials to solicit information or funds from the public, particularly when the Census enumeration is underway. We also understand that at least one Regional Census Center – in Denver – has disseminated flyers informing residents that the Senior Citizens and RNC mailers are not official Census documents, and providing accurate information to combat “Census scams.” We urge the Census Bureau to vigorously combat the circulation of misleading mailers and inaccurate information nationwide and throughout the regions where these materials are circulated.

VI. Policy Recommendations

Based on our research and analysis of the needs of the Latino community and the Census Bureau’s Spanish-language paid advertising media plan, we offer the following policy recommendations:

A. The Census Bureau must make some investment in Census 2010 paid advertising to reach English-dominant Latinos, and it must significantly increase its spending for Spanish-language paid advertising. As noted earlier, the Bureau has made virtually no investment for paid

¹⁴ Ed O’Keefe, “Republicans Mail Another ‘Census’ Form,” *Washington Post*, February 10, 2010, <http://voices.washingtonpost.com/federal-eye/2010/02/republicans-mail-another-censu.html#more>.

¹⁵ <http://www.politico.com/news/stories/0110/31956.html#ixzz0deDD2WM5>.

¹⁶ <http://www.politico.com/news/stories/0110/31956.html#ixzz0deDD2WM5>.

advertising to reach English-dominant Latinos. With respect to Spanish-language advertising, the \$25.5 million allocated by the Bureau for this purpose does not adequately take into account both inflation and the growth of the Spanish-speaking Latino population since 2000. Moreover, the Bureau's Spanish-language advertising investment is not large enough to ensure that there will be sufficient market penetration for the Latino population, particularly for Latinos in emerging communities. Given the importance of both targeted English-language and Spanish-language media outreach for ensuring an accurate Latino count, the inadequacy of the Bureau's spending could jeopardize the overall effectiveness of its communications plan.

B. The Census Bureau must provide greater transparency with respect to the criteria it uses for targeting local Spanish-language media buys and improve its communication with stakeholders regarding the criteria. We believe that the Bureau provided overly-vague information to stakeholders about its strategy for targeting local media buys during the course of its development and implementation of its communications plan, and that such information made it difficult for stakeholders to clearly understand the criteria used by the Bureau. The Bureau's stakeholders include many organizations that are very familiar with the needs of the Latino community, and the Bureau's lack of clarity prevented those stakeholders from providing the Bureau with effective guidance on the targeting of local media buys.

The Bureau's local Spanish-language media buys are in place for its outreach to encourage residents to mail back their Census questionnaires. However, we understand that the Bureau will be making its media buys for its Non-Response Follow-Up (NRFU) plan in April (the NRFU plan will alert the public of the activities of enumerators who follow-up with households which have not mailed back their questionnaires). We urge the Bureau to provide greater transparency and clarity to stakeholders about its criteria for local media buys and targeting in its NRFU plan.

C. The Census Bureau should report to Congress and stakeholders the details of the outreach plan they will implement in the local markets that are difficult to count, but did not receive local television buys. As noted earlier, several of these markets include emerging Latino populations that have seen rapid growth since the previous decennial census, dramatically low Census form return rates, and high HTC scores. These markets require additional attention beyond the

standard elements that are being provided by the Partnership Program and other elements of the Bureau's outreach program. Thus, we recommend that the Bureau develop, implement and report about its plans unique to these markets that details the outreach efforts that will be employed to compensate for the lack of a local "spot" media buys and will ensure that these emerging populations will have as much awareness of the Census as those who reside in markets that are receiving national and local media buys.

D. The Census Bureau should carefully examine the inadequacies in its existing Spanish-language local media buy criteria and make improvements to ensure effective targeting when implementing its NRFU plan. As noted above, we believe that there are weaknesses in the methodology used by the Bureau to determine its allocation of local Spanish-language media buys, and that those combined weaknesses could contribute to faulty targeting which will fail to secure optimal Latino participation in the Census 2010 enumeration. The Bureau's NRFU follow-up plan acknowledges the value of local media buys as part of the overall strategy for providing effective support for the NRFU activities of enumerators. However, we are deeply concerned that the combined weaknesses in the Bureau's existing criteria for local Spanish-language media buys could jeopardize the Bureau's NRFU plan. Thus, the Bureau should remedy those weaknesses by appropriately adjusting the methodologies used in those criteria, particularly with respect to the HTC score and the MRR thresholds. In addition, given the critical need to count Latinos in emerging communities or areas without relatively high Latino populations, we recommend that the Bureau place a higher priority on the HTC score and MRR, and a lower priority on the population size criteria when determining its local media buys. This prioritization should replace the Bureau's current methodology, which simply requires that a market meet four of the six criteria. In our testimony, we have offered some recommendations on simple alterations that could be used to improve those methodologies, and we urge the Bureau to consider them seriously when developing its NRFU local Spanish-language media buy criteria.

The NALEO Educational Fund remains committed to being an active and thoughtful partner to this Subcommittee, Congress, the White House and the Census Bureau, in ensuring the success of the 2010 Census, so that our nation can rely on the most accurate data possible. I thank the Chairman, the Ranking Member, and the Subcommittee once again for providing us with the opportunity to share our views today on the 2010 Census media plan in hard to count areas.