



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

JUL 10 2009

The Honorable Patrick McHenry
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Information Policy,
Census, and National Archives
Committee on Oversight and Government Reform
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-6143

Dear Representative McHenry:

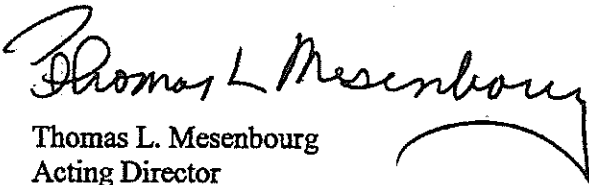
I appreciated the opportunity to talk with you after the hearing yesterday.

I would like to clarify that while we are not severing our relationship with ACORN, we are clearly defining their role in support of the Census. Their only task is to inform the members of their organization and the communities they serve about the importance of participating in the 2010 Census. They will not be involved in recruiting or hiring census employees, providing questionnaire assistance centers, or helping people fill out their census forms. Moreover, as with all of our census partners, they will not receive any payments or grants from the Census Bureau. ←

In addition, the Census Bureau conducts background investigations of all applicants for decennial census employment, including criminal history checks. Violent offenses, burglary, and similar convictions automatically disqualify an applicant. We have recently added to this list offenses such as identity theft, voter fraud, and voter registration crimes. Furthermore, if the Census Bureau has reason to believe its decennial employees have engaged in such criminal activities, it will terminate their employment immediately.

We appreciate your attention to this issue and your staunch support of the 2010 Census. Please do not hesitate to call me if you have additional concerns.

Sincerely,


Thomas L. Mesenbourg
Acting Director

cc: The Honorable Edolphus Towns
The Honorable William Lacy Clay
The Honorable Darrell E. Issa
The Honorable Lynn A. Westmoreland