

**Mayor's Talking Points  
City of Wilmington  
2010 U.S. Census**

Importance of Accurate Census Figures to the Local Jurisdiction:

- Federal and State funding levels are based on population for programs such as transportation improvements, business development projects, and housing assistance.
- Local governments use census figures to make investment decisions on areas such as transportation, utilities, deploying public safety resources, and providing housing resources.
- Businesses use census figures when considering locating or expanding their business and when making other investment decisions.
- Nonprofit agencies use census figures in applying for grants from foundations and government sources.

Wilmington Issues:

- The process of counting the entire United State is a huge and expensive task.
- This task is made more complicated by populations that have traditionally been undercounted due to numerous reasons.
- The Census Bureau has identified hard to count groups as ethnic enclaves, economically disadvantaged, and single unattached mobiles.
- Wilmington's population is made up of a large percentage of these groups. All of the factors shown below make an accurate count for the City difficult (Source 2000 U.S. Census):
  - 65% of the population is nonwhite
  - Over 20% of the population is below the poverty level
  - 26% of the population is 17 years of age and below
  - The City is composed of an Hispanic population of over 7,000 which increased by 41% between 1990 and 2000
- Illegal conversions of single-family housing units for multi-family use.
- A significant homeless and transient population.

- Analyses have shown that populations that are undercounted are more likely to be renters or part of nontraditional households. Wilmington is composed of large percentages of these population groups according to 2000 Census figures:
  - Rental units make up approximately 50% of the City's housing stock.
  - Nearly 25% of the households in the City are female-headed households.

#### Recommendations to Ensure an Accurate Count:

- The City has assisted the Census Bureau with updating its address file. It is important that new housing projects leading up to April 2010 be accounted for.
- A well funded media campaign is critical. Wilmington can help with local publicity and is prepared to work with local Census representatives, especially in targeting hard to count groups.
- It is imperative that a Commerce Department Secretary be appointed as soon as possible since it is less than one year until census day.
- Census studies have found that level of education is a key to census participation. Wilmington residents' educational attainment is lower than many surrounding communities (of population over 18, more than 27% do not have a high school diploma). Special focus needs to be given to a specialized media campaign.
- Census studies have also found that the assurance of confidentiality of the census is critical and that Hispanics score low on the confidentiality index. As a result, special focus needs to be given to education and media announcements in Wilmington. Local community organizations and churches need to be used to get out the census message.
- The President needs to take a lead role in promoting the importance of the census, particularly to those groups who have traditionally been undercounted.