

An important message about the 2020 Census from St. Louis-area CEOs:

Dear St. Louis Community Partners,

The 2020 Census is an opportunity for all Missourians to stand up and be counted. Although the upcoming census may seem like a future undertaking since it doesn't kick off until April 1, 2020, the education and coordination needed for an accurate count depends on adequate planning and needs to begin now. All sectors of Missouri's economy will have the opportunity to do their part in making sure our tally is correct.

The census is carried out every 10 years as required by the U.S. Constitution. It provides an official count of the nation's population. The data collected is the most accurate source of information for strategic decision-making. It helps to determine the distribution of federal funding to states for numerous programs aimed at helping underserved communities across our region and state. Missouri receives approximately \$16.5 billion annually in federal funds directly calculated from census data (programs such as the Highway Planning and Construction Program, Medicaid, the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP), and the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)). Census data are also used to ensure states are being fairly represented by congressional and state legislative districts to account for population changes.

Approximately 9 percent of our state's population lived in hard-to-count communities during the census in 2010. Households most at risk of being undercounted include those who are low income, renters, people of color, families with children under five, rural, and immigrants. For every person undercounted in 2010, Missouri forfeited an estimated \$1,200 in federal dollars. The upcoming 2020 Census presents new challenges that could prevent an accurate and complete count.

We hope leaders and decision-makers across our state and region will commit to promoting census participation. You can help the 2020 Census count by educating your employees, clients, and networks of its importance, coordinating with groups working to get out the count, and by signing on to this letter. We all must work together to generate a complete and accurate count, because our region depends on it! Join us!

Sincerely,

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