

## Census 2020 Speech - Draft

### Intro

- Hi, my name is \_\_\_\_\_. I work for \_\_\_\_\_ and I'm here to talk to you about the 2020 Census, which begins across the United States on March 12.
- The 2020 Census is a count of every person in the U.S. and its territories who sleeps in your home on April 1 - regardless of their citizenship, nationality or living situation. So even that foreign exchange student or uncle who's couch surfing at your house needs to be counted. Children under 5 are historically undercounted, so don't forget them either.
- This Census is a non-partisan effort that happens every 10 years. It is one of the cornerstones of American Democracy – in fact, it's mandated by the U.S. Constitution and has been going on since 1790.

### You are probably wondering why the Census matters.....

- The 2020 Census is an opportunity for you to create a better future for your children or grandchildren – it's also a way for you to stand up for yourself and your heritage.
- Your response shapes decisions about how public funds are spent for schools, fire and emergency services, and healthcare for your community, just to name a few.
- For each person counted in Oklahoma, the state receives about \$1,675 per year in federal funding.
- The bottom line is if you don't respond our community will be underserved.
- The more people that take the Census, the more funding residents living in Oklahoma City gets for things like
  - free breakfast lunch programs
  - SNAP, the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program
  - Businesses – like grocery stores – make decisions about where to invest based on Census data
  - Census numbers are used to fund your neighborhood's head start program
  - Medicare
  - Pell Grants for college students
  - Housing
  - Medicaid
  - Highways
  - Transit
  - Emergency disaster relief
- If being represented in Washington is important to you, the decennial count determines how the 435 members of the House of Representatives are allocated among the states and Census numbers determine how district lines are drawn for our state legislature, counties, city councils, and school boards.

### Your Census response is confidential and protected by law.

- All 2020 Census responses are kept confidential and private. Confidentiality is not a policy, it's the law. Your responses can't be shared and can't be used against you by any government agency or court in any way. Census records are kept sealed for 72 years and Census workers are sworn for life to protect your personal information.
- Under Title 13 of the US code, the Census Bureau can't release any identifiable information about individuals, households, or businesses, even to law enforcement agencies. The law states that the information collected may only be used for statistical purposes.
- The Census Bureau takes extraordinary steps to protect the confidentiality of your response and has safeguards to protect against cyberthreats. It won't be shared with immigration or law enforcement agencies.

#### Let's talk about what to expect when you fill out the Census...

- The Census is being offered online this year. You can respond online, by mail or by phone beginning March 12.
- A postcard will be sent to your house between March 12-20. It will include a code to give you access to the Census. Paper copies will be sent April 8-16.
- And if you still don't fill it out, you will get to respond in-person when a Census worker, called an enumerator, comes to your home to help you fill it out.
- Census workers will go door to door starting at the end of April. If you respond online, nobody will knock on your door.
- I'm asking you to please take the Census online and as soon as you get your postcard.
- The Census takes about 10 minutes to fill out for every person in your household.
- Questions include the name, sex, age, birthday, \*race of each person staying in your home, your relationship to them, and if they also stay somewhere else.
- Other questions are your telephone number, if you rent or own your home and who if anyone is of Hispanic, Latino or Spanish origin (to create statistics about this group).
- If you skip a question you will still be counted. But if you skip too many, you might get a visit from an enumerator.
- If more than one family lives in your house, each 'head of household' needs to fill out the Census for their family.
- If your children are split between two households, the person who keeps them the most should count them. If their time is split equally, they should be counted in the home they sleep in on April 1.
- If you are pregnant, you only need to count yourself as one. But if you have a newborn, that child should be counted.
- College students should be counted where they live most of the time.
- It is being offered in 13 languages including:
  - English, Spanish, Chinese, Vietnamese, Korean, Russian, Arabic, Tagalog, Polish, French, Japanese, Portuguese, Haitian Creole

Conclusion: In conclusion, please tell everyone you know what you heard today. Most people have no clue about how much the 2020 Census will impact their lives.

*\*The data collected in this question is needed by federal agencies to monitor compliance with anti-discrimination provisions, such as the Voting Rights Act and the Civil Rights Act.*