

## Census 2010: New Orleans has to get it right the first time

*Population data is more valuable than ever*

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Challenging Census Bureau estimates is a crucial step in ensuring New Orleanians get our fair share of federal funding. But we can't "challenge" the Census 2010 head count... and the stakes associated with an accurate count have never been higher.

The results of the Census 2010 population count will influence the federal funding that New Orleans receives for a full decade, and the federal money distributed based on these numbers will be greater than ever before. But many post-Katrina residents of New Orleans will be hard to count because of temporary living arrangements or distrust of government. The execution of the 2010 population count next April will be both the most difficult and the most important in the City's history.

The difficulties in achieving a full and accurate count in post-Katrina New Orleans will be multiple. Many New Orleanians are still doubled up with family members as they rebuild their homes. A large number of New Orleanians still live in FEMA trailers, and some live in hotels. Homeless service providers have found a shocking number of bed rolls in abandoned buildings throughout the City, indicating a large presence of this particularly hard-to-count population. African Americans and Latinos have historically been less willing to participate in Census counts, and recently moved, young professionals tend not to respond to Census surveys (Brookings 2009).

At the same time, federal funding distributed based on population counts is likely to be higher than ever following the Census 2010. Although the exact amounts won't be known until the President and Congress agree on spending levels for the year 2011 and beyond, current activities in Washington suggest that federal funding is going up. The economic stimulus bill has increased federal funding for several programs that distribute money based on population (see Exhibit 1 below), and President Obama's FY 2010 budget proposes increases in areas typically directed by population formulas (see Exhibit 2 below).

The Greater New Orleans Community Data Center has worked hard to ensure that the Census Bureau's population estimates for New Orleans and the region are as accurate as possible. Our research in support of the City's challenge of the Census' 2007 estimate resulted in a nearly 50,000 person increase and means New Orleans nonprofits will be eligible for an estimated \$45.6+ million in additional federal funding. Last week, the Census Bureau announced their 2008 population estimates, and we've already gathered the data necessary for the City to challenge the New Orleans estimate once again.

But we can't challenge the Census' once-every-ten-years head count. And the upcoming census in April 2010 is more important than ever to the health, education and welfare of New Orleans area residents. Preparations are already under way. The Census is hiring canvassers, and meeting with community groups to enlist their support in getting the word out.

It'll take every single one of us to get this massive undertaking done right. And, we've got to get it right the first time.

## Exhibit 1: ECONOMIC STIMULUS BILL

Louisiana will receive increased funding through many federal programs that use population estimates to distribute the funding. This money can be thought of as a kind of “lagniappe” to be spent between now and the end of September 2010-- a bit extra on top of the funding we got for FY 2009 (Oct 08-Sept 09) and FY 2010 (Oct 09-Sept 10).

Below are examples of some of the additional amounts of money Louisiana is estimated to receive from the stimulus package\*. To give you a sense of the size of the *lagniappe* we may receive, we show the amount of funding Louisiana received from that same program for FY 2008 (Oct 07 – Sept 08).

Category	Program name and description	Louisiana estimated stimulus amount (to be spent by Sept 2010)	Louisiana FY 2008 amount
Education	<i>Title I</i> provides extra support to help raise student achievement in high-poverty areas.	\$279 million	\$298 million
Child Care	<i>Child Care and Development Block Grants</i> subsidize child care for low-income working families, or families in which parents are engaged in education or training.	\$40 million	\$46 million
Housing	<i>Community Development Block Grants</i> create suitable living environments, provide decent affordable housing, and create economic opportunities -- primarily for persons of low and moderate income.	\$17.4 million	\$64 million
Food and Nutrition	<i>Emergency Food Assistance Program Commodities</i> is for emergency food supplies.	\$1,560,655	\$957,460

\*Federal agencies are rolling out specific state allocation plans ... from whence the money will make its way to parishes and cites ... but because these plans are still in progress -- due May 3, 2009 -- not all have been finalized as of this publication.

Sources: Federal Funds Information for States [www.ffis.org](http://www.ffis.org); Center for Budget and Policy Priorities <http://www.staterecovery.org/Websites/staterecovery/Images/1-22-09bud-ed.pdf>; Center for Law and Social Policy [http://clasp.org/publications/aara\\_childcarestatealloc.pdf](http://clasp.org/publications/aara_childcarestatealloc.pdf); U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development <http://www.hud.gov/offices/cpd/about/budget/budget08/>; Council of State Governments <http://www.staterecovery.org/Websites/staterecovery/Images/1-22-09bud-es.pdf>; U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development <http://www.hud.gov/recovery/cdblock.cfm>; U.S. Department of Agriculture [http://www.fns.usda.gov/fdd/programs/tefap/tefap\\_ARRA\\_030209.pdf](http://www.fns.usda.gov/fdd/programs/tefap/tefap_ARRA_030209.pdf).

## Exhibit 2: FY 2010 FEDERAL BUDGET

President Obama has proposed a budget for FY 2010 (beginning October 2009) with decreased spending in some areas and increased spending in others. Many of the details have not been worked out, but the President’s proposed budget suggests that the amount of money distributed based on population data may increase significantly in the years ahead. Here are some FY 2010 proposed increases and programs that, if approved, will likely be distributed based at least in part on population data:

- Department of Justice budget increases from \$23.6 billion to \$25.5 billion including funding for additional police officers, counseling, job training, drug treatment and prisoner reentry programs.
- Department of Labor budget increases from \$11.8 billion to \$12.7 billion including funding for job training programs such as YouthBuild.
- Department of Education budget increases from \$45.0 billion to \$46.2 billion including funding for programs to improve academic achievement and life outcomes in high poverty areas.
- Department of Health and Human Services budget increases from \$70.5 billion to \$78.4 billion including funding for a Nurse Home Visitation program, HIV/AIDS prevention and treatment, Early Head Start, and Head Start programs.
- Department of Housing and Urban Development budget includes increased funding for project-based rental assistance, housing choice vouchers, and a new initiative to support intervention in neighborhoods of concentrated poverty.

Source: Office of Management and Budget <http://www.budget.gov/>.