



NEWS RELEASE

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NALEO Educational Fund Urges Census Bureau to Release More Data on State and Local Undercounts

Census estimates revealed a severe and devastating 4.99 percent undercount of Latinos in Census 2020; detailed state and local data are critical to understanding and ameliorating the undercount's impact on the community

"With several factors likely contributing to the Latino undercount in the 2020 Census, it is imperative that the U.S. Census Bureau rebuilds its trust with the public by releasing data that provides insight into the severe undercount of the Latino community."

– NALEO Educational Fund CEO Arturo Vargas

Washington, D.C. – The National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials (NALEO) Educational Fund today called for the U.S. Census Bureau to provide data that would better illuminate the just-released Census 2020 state Post-Enumeration Survey (PES) results. In March, the national-level PES results [confirmed](#) a severe 4.99 percent undercount of Latinos in Census 2020, a 3.3 percent undercount of Black residents, and a 2.79 percent undercount of very young children (ages 0–4). ***However, as the Bureau previously [announced](#), today's state estimates do not include demographic characteristics such as race and Hispanic origin and are not available for geographies below the state level.*** This lack of detail raises more questions than answers about the accuracy of the 2020 Census.

"With Latinos accounting for nearly one of every five U.S. residents, the PES estimates confirming the national undercount of Latinos is very alarming," said NALEO Educational Fund CEO Arturo Vargas. "We have urged the Bureau to conduct a comprehensive analysis of the impact of the undercount on the Latino community and the options to ameliorate it. The Bureau must move forward with this undertaking transparently and in partnership with the full range of public and private stakeholders, including data experts, state and local governments, and community and civic leaders. However, we cannot achieve this goal without relevant data on the undercount of Latinos by state and for different localities throughout the nation.

"For example, New York City has a population larger than 40 states and Washington, D.C., and [over one-fourth \(28.3 percent\)](#) of the city's 8.8 million residents are Latino. Without additional undercount data, we will not be able to fully gauge the total severity of the Latino undercount within each state and in different parts of the nation.

"The PES state estimates do not tell the whole story of the accuracy of the 2020 Census count for different population groups or areas in the states. For example, New York is the nation's fourth most populous state, and the national undercounts suggest that large numbers of

persons from population groups that make New York their home were missed in Census 2020. However, the PES estimates are net figures derived in part from both the 2020 Census omissions and persons overcounted in the enumeration. Thus, in the 3.44 percent net New York overcount, ***the persons overcounted in the state may mask the impact of the persons missed in enumeration*** and other significant problems with the overall accuracy of census data for New York.

“Based on our work with and research on historically undercounted communities, we believe it is likely that Census 2020’s accuracy varied in different regions of the states. For example, areas with large concentrations of Latinos, Black residents, and young children — such as the Boroughs of Brooklyn, the Bronx, and Queens — are likely to have had the highest undercounts, while places with large concentrations of non-Hispanic whites and wealthy residents — such as areas in Manhattan, Long Island, or upstate New York — likely had overcounts.

“However, without specific Latino undercount data and data on other New York population groups throughout the state, we cannot determine precisely where and to what extent these population groups were missed.

“Data from the 2020 Census have already been used to apportion the U.S. House of Representatives and for redistricting, despite the considerable flaws in the number of Latinos. In addition, unless the Bureau takes action to analyze and mitigate the impact of the undercount, these ***flawed data will now guide the distribution of more than \$1.5 trillion in annual federal funding to states and localities based on an incorrect snapshot of our population***. Without reliable state-by-state data on the undercount for different population groups and localities, stakeholders cannot be fully engaged partners in the much-needed efforts to mitigate the effect of the undercounts on funding formulas and the fair allocation of resources. These data will also enhance the ability of stakeholders to help the Bureau assess the impact of the undercounts on the enforcement of civil rights protections and other purposes for which census data are used. Additionally, these data would also be invaluable for Census 2030 planning efforts.

“We understand the Census Bureau’s position that the PES sample size is not adequate enough to produce data that meet the Bureau’s standards for every demographic group in each state or many localities in the nation. Thus, we urge the Bureau to research and make available data from other sources that could help illuminate the accuracy of Census 2020 data for localities. This research will also inform the Bureau’s work to ameliorate the impact of Census 2020 undercounts.

“Ultimately, with several factors likely contributing to the national Latino undercount in the 2020 Census, the release of more detailed state and local data will also provide a crucial opportunity for the Bureau to rebuild its trust with the public. The data would also enable stakeholders to work together with the Bureau on one of the toughest tasks it must undertake — making fundamental changes to how it counts the U.S. population in a manner that will significantly enhance the accuracy and fairness of the enumeration.

Key Findings of the PES Data:

- **PES Net Undercount Information – State**
 - The state net undercounts ranged from 1.92 percent in Texas to 5.04 percent in Arkansas.
 - The states with undercounts include:
 - Arkansas (5.04 percent)
 - Florida (3.48 percent)
 - Tennessee (4.78 percent)
 - Mississippi (4.11 percent)
 - Illinois (1.97 percent)
 - Texas (1.92 percent)
- **PES Net Undercount Information – National**
 - The national PES data were the Census Bureau’s first official estimate of the accuracy of Census 2020. It is a statistical analysis of a survey of the nation’s population. Comparing the PES and Census 2020 data determines who was missed or counted in error in Census 2020.
 - The PES data released in [March](#) revealed that Census 2020 undercounted 4.99 percent of the Latino population — 3.45 percentage points higher than the Census 2010 Latino undercount of 1.54 percent. Moreover, the increase in this undercount is more than threefold from Census 2010.
 - For the nation as a whole, the PES found a 1.64 percent overcount of those who identified exclusively as non-Hispanic white.
- **Youth Undercount Information**
 - The PES did not provide an estimate specifically for Latino children or any children at the state and local level, and further statistical analysis is needed to illuminate 1.) the undercount of Latino children and 2.) where these undercounts occurred.
 - At the national level, the PES revealed that Census 2020 undercounted 2.79 percent of very young children (ages 0–4), which is 2.07 percentage points higher than the Census 2010 undercount of this population group (0.72 percent). The increase in this undercount is more than threefold from Census 2010.
 - In 2016, research spearheaded by demographer Dr. William O’Hare found that the net undercount rate for very young Latino children ages 0–4 was 7.1 percent, compared to 4.3 percent for non-Latinos — with Census 2010 missing nearly 400,000 very young Latino children.
 - Given that more than one out of every four American children are Latino, these figures represent a severe undercount of very young Latino children once again.

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About NALEO Educational Fund

NALEO Educational Fund is the nation’s leading non-partisan, non-profit organization that facilitates the full participation of Latinos in the American political process, from citizenship to public service.