



WASHINGTON STATE COMPLETE COUNT COMMITTEE

Topic: Minutes of 7th Complete Count Committee Meeting
Date: March 10, 2020
Time: 10:30am-12:30pm
Location: Skype Call

1. Welcome and Introductions

Governor Gary Locke, Chair of the Complete Count Committee

The new challenges posed by the Coronavirus require everyone to rethink how to get the word out and how to ensure a full accurate count despite COVID-19.

2. General Discussion on Messaging

Sakara Remmu, Leggette ETI, Inc. The Demand to Be Counted/Black Lives Matter project plans to ramp up social media efforts and engage in mass mailings to low response zip codes. We recognize that people are listening more to their public health officials and other local government leaders at this time. We want to work with the public health and local government leaders to send the message that it is important to be counted despite the crisis.

Eric Johnson, Washington State Association of Counties WA Department of Health communications people are working now to coordinate messaging with county public health officials. There is a need to ensure that incorporation of census messaging does not dilute the public health message.

Marc Baldwin, Office of Financial Management Part of the messaging could emphasize that the online responses are secure and confidential. Self-responding ensures that no one will come to the door. Self-response helps everyone maintain social distancing, which is necessary at this time.

Mauri Ingram, Whatcom Community Development Foundation We should approach all media across the state with a clear message that the census supports public health and a clear “ask” that people go online now.

Louise Chernin, Greater Seattle Business Association (GSBA) We should all be integrating the message into ongoing services. It would be useful to have consistent messaging and to be provided with sample language.

Additional commentary included a debate over whether to use the word “safe” in messaging, a plea not to change the message too much, and a clear understanding that social media and ethnic media outlets could be important message delivery mechanisms. There is general agreement that, for the sake of public health and public safety, it more is important than ever to self-respond.

3. General Discussion on Tactics

Governor Gary Locke, Chair of Complete Count Committee asked for input on alternative strategies to continue to reach as many people as possible. He noted that we will have to keep our eyes on the first few weeks of self-response and adjust strategies based on the data.

Kamau Chege, Washington Census Alliance reported that the trusted messenger tactics remain in place although texting and phone calls will replace in-person contact. They are also creating automated texts that can be sent when people text Census or Censo to 332020. They will also be increasing their social media engagement.

Nancy Rocha Aguilar, Commission on Hispanic Affairs notes that small business owners are still willing to help and spread information.

Anna Shelton, Pierce County Rural Libraries plan to end calls with the option of transferring calls to one of the language phone numbers.

Discussion on technicalities of the count:

- How long will the online platform be operational? – until July 31
- How will the homeless count be conducted? Can the homeless go online? The plan is for a count on March 30, 31 and April 1. The homeless can also complete the form online.
- Hours of operation of the phone lines – 7 days a week from 4am-11pm PDT.
- In placing a call, do you reach a live person? Yes.
- How do you reach college students who are no longer on campus? The count of on-campus students will be handled by the Group Quarters Operation that does not begin until April.
- Can questions be skipped in the online form? Yes.

Morgan Feder, Washington Nonprofits announced a census cohort call for March 12 from 2-3pm in order to brainstorm new tactics in light of the changed circumstances. She will send Lisa McLean the invitation for sharing with the group.

4. Future Meeting Dates

Please make a note of the dates for future meetings to take place between 10:30 and 12:30.

1. April 15, 2020 – Tukwila Community Center
2. June 17, 2020 -- TBD

Meeting adjourned