



NYS Complete Count Commission Public Hearing -- Wednesday, May 1st, 6:00 PM - Minkwon Center

I would like to thank the Commission for this opportunity to provide input. My name is Jonathan Chung from the Minkwon Center for Community Action, the lead of several coalitions including Asian Pacific Americans Voting and Organizing to Increase Civic Engagement (APA VOICE), and the co-lead of the APA Complete Count Committee with Chhaya CDC.

During the 2010 Census, the Minkwon Center was able to increase the response rate in a Census tract in Flushing by a third compared to the previous decennial Census, placing it in the 96th percentile in increased response. This taught us two things: First, that the Census Bureau's normal process was not adequate for reaching hard to count tracts with recent Asian American immigrants with limited English proficiency; and second, that trusted community organizations like the Minkwon Center make a substantial contribution in decreasing an undercount in these communities.

During the 2010 Census, the most frequent cited challenge among APA organizations in NYC was a mistrust in our communities around the sharing of information. Leading into the 2020 Census, this mistrust not only persists, but is at unprecedented levels. Many of you have already read the CBAM report published in January, but I would like to briefly highlight the findings as they relate to the Asian American community.

Among all major ethnic groups, Asian Americans were

1. The lowest percentage in being "extremely" or "very likely" to fill out the Census, at only 55%.
2. The largest percentage who were "not too familiar" or "not at all familiar" with the Census, at 38%
3. The largest percentage that expressed concern that the Census could be used against them, at 41%
4. Overall, are the least likely to participate in the Census

This data corroborates the feedback we have been hearing from the field including from our own community members, staff, and partners. We are facing a substantial challenge with Asian American participation in the Census.

Regardless of the outcome of the Supreme Court decision, the level of concern over the sharing of data already exists, and trusted community groups will have to do more outreach for the 2020 Census than previous cycles. Our recommendation is for funding to be provided directly to community organizations to do Census outreach, because we are trusted, we have the cultural and language capacity, and we simply know the neighborhoods and communities best.

Thank you for your time.