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## **\$1 MILLION WILL BOLSTER LOCAL 2010 CENSUS PARTICIPATION**

### **Largest Effort in the Nation by Philanthropic Community to Target Hard-to-Count, Low-Income Populations**

(Chicago, Ill.) Ten of Illinois' leading foundations announced today they are jointly investing \$1 million to improve participation in hard-to-count, poor, minority, rural and high-rise communities in the 2010 Census. Known as the *Count Me In* campaign, this endeavor marks the nation's largest investment to date in 2010 Census efforts in any one state by a group of philanthropic funders.

The foundations will release a Request for Proposals on April 8, 2009 to more than 200 civic, social service and community-based organizations, inviting them to apply for funding for projects that will increase the mail-back of Census forms from households in select Illinois communities. Activities such as public education campaigns, communications, community outreach, trainings, special events and organizing will be funded.

The 2010 Census will help determine the distribution of roughly \$400 billion a year in federal funds to state and local governments, and for every person *not* counted, Illinois will lose \$12,000 over the next 10 years.

Low-income, immigrant, minority and rural communities have historically been undercounted in the once-a-decade survey, which is mandated by the U.S. Constitution. With the sagging economy and billions of federal dollars at stake, not only are these underserved populations disproportionately affected, but residents throughout the state will be harmed if the count is not accurate.

Census data is critical when government officials make decisions about where to build new roads, schools and hospitals and where to locate job training centers and services for the elderly. Census data is also used for drawing congressional and state legislative districts and monitoring and enforcing civil rights laws in employment, housing, voting, lending and education.

“The 2010 Census will profoundly impact the lives of all Illinois residents because it will determine spending on education, employment, public safety, the environment and a host of other issues, not to mention bedrock democracy issues like the size of the state’s congressional delegation,” stated Ellen S. Alberding, president of the Joyce Foundation. “The Census truly has the potential to advance or delay progress in a number of areas all across the state.”

Achieving an accurate count is complicated this year by the ailing economy, which will make it hard to find funding for Census awareness efforts in the strapped federal budget. And there are other challenges to achieving a full and accurate count, including:

- Declining public participation in surveys of all kinds.
- Americans’ reluctance to share personal information in a post 9-11 environment.
- Immigrants’ reticence to participate due to anti-immigrant laws, work-place raids and other government-sponsored dragnets.
- More families living in temporary quarters due to the foreclosure crisis.
- Large increases in hard-to-count populations in the Chicago metropolitan area since 2000—Latino population by 24%, immigrant population by 15% and Asian population by 29%.

“Our goal is not only to boost participation in these under-counted populations,” said Terry Mazany, president and chief executive officer of The Chicago Community Trust, “but to leverage our collective network of nonprofits to raise public awareness about the Census in general and its critical importance.”

Nonprofits interested in learning more about the Request for Proposal can visit [www.joycefdn.org](http://www.joycefdn.org) and [www.cct.org](http://www.cct.org) for an application or more information. Grant decisions will be made in July.

*Count Me In* is funded by the Boeing Company, the Chicago Bar Foundation, The Chicago Community Trust, the Lloyd A. Fry Foundation, Grand Victoria Foundation, the Joyce Foundation, John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, Polk Bros. Foundation, Steans Family Foundation and Woods Fund of Chicago. In addition, the Joyce Foundation has awarded separate grants to the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights Education Fund and the Illinois League of Women Voters for Census related work in Illinois and the Midwest.

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