Good Data for Good Government in the 21st Century

John Thompson

Executive Director

Council of Professional Associations on Federal Statistics

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- COPAFS was founded in 1981 to coordinate activities of a number of Associations, Organizations, and Businesses that rely on federal statistics

- Our membership today both produces and consumes federal statistics in most government departments and scientific disciplines

- Our goal: Advancing Excellence in Federal Statistics

COPAFS Advancing Excellence in Federal Statistics

Overview Federal Statistics

Office of the Chief Statistician of the United States

- Established in the Paperwork Reduction Act 1994

- Coordinates the activities of the federal statistical system

- Chairs the Interagency Council on Statistical Policy

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Overview Federal Statistics Primary Statistical Agencies

- US Census Bureau
- Bureau of Economic Analysis
- Bureau of Labor Statistics
- National Center for Health Statistics
- National Center for Education Statistics
- Bureau of Transportation Statistics
- National Agricultural Statistics Service
- Economic Research Service

- IRS Statistics of Income Division
- Office of Research Evaluation and Statistics SSA
- Bureau of Justice Statistics
- National Center for Science and Engineering Statistics
- Energy Information Administration

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Overview Federal Statistics Essential Resource

- Reapportionment and Redistricting
- Principal Key Economic Indicators
- American Community Survey
- Unemployment and Labor Force Statistics
- GDP and CPI
- Economic Census
- Income and Poverty
- Health Insurance
- Health Standards
- Opioid Addiction

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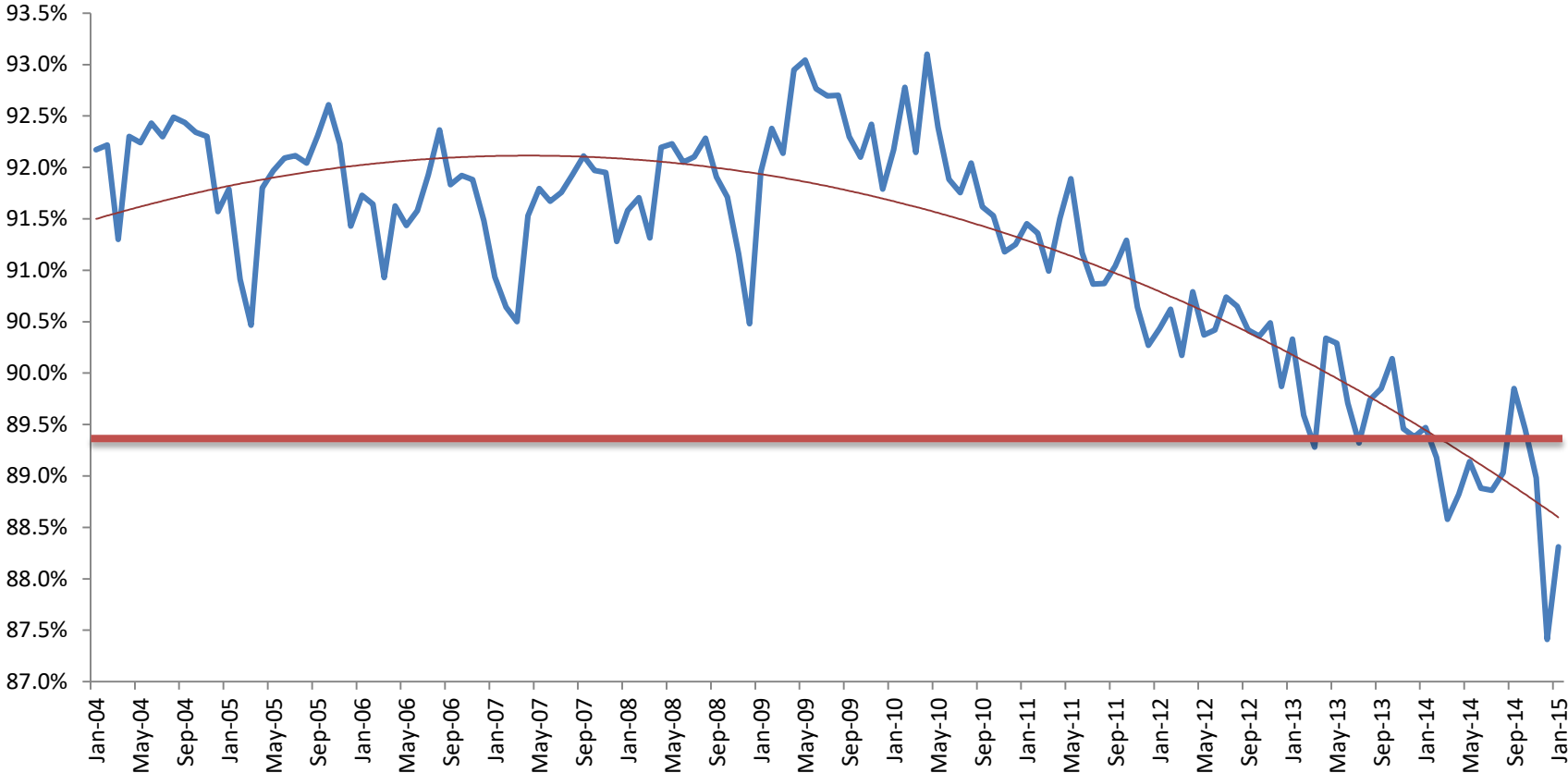
Overview Federal Statistics
Essential Resource

- Food Security
- Farm Productivity
- Obesity
- Crime Victimization
- Corrections and Recidivism
- Energy Usage and Fuel Reserves
- Education Progress
- Science and Engineering Workforce Statistics
- Veterans Statistics
- Highway Infrastructure

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Challenges for Federal Statistics

- Declining Survey Response Rates

- Funding Constraints – Do More With Less

- Expanding Demands for Data

- Protecting Privacy

- Concerns Regarding Federal Data Collection

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Response Rate Challenges
Current Population Survey

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Source US Census Bureau

2020 Census Readiness

Census Process 1970 through 2010

- Prepare address list
- Mail paper questionnaire
- Capture Information from mail returns
- Conduct in-person enumeration of non-responders using paper and pencil

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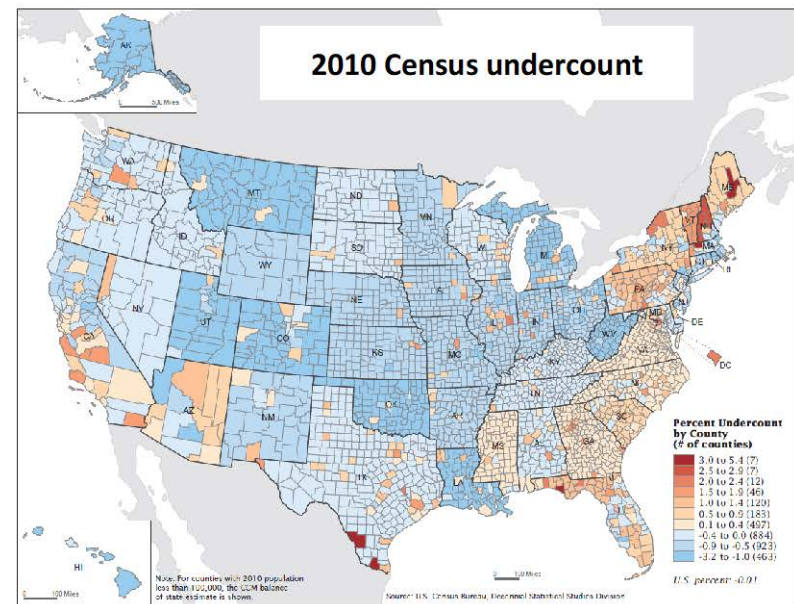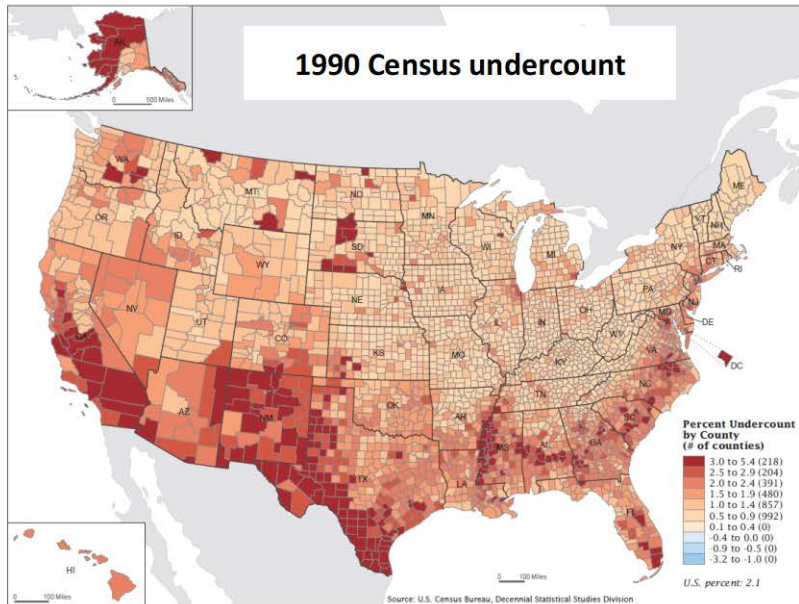
2020 Census Readiness

2020 Census Modernization and Efficiency

- Reengineer Address List Development

- Optimize Self Response

- Use Administrative Records and Third Party Data

- Reengineer Field Operations

- Integrated Communications and Partnership

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Importance of Community Support

2020 CENSUS INNOVATION

Integrated communications & partnerships program

1990 Census undercount

2010 Census undercount

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Source US Census Bureau

2020 Census Challenges

- Census appropriations $200 million below request

- Has forced prioritization of activities to core systems development to achieve cost saving

- Reduction in field testing

- Deferral of complete modernization

  – Increased in-person address listing

  – Return to paper-based methods for selected areas

- Deferral of Communications and Partnership

2020 Census Challenges

- Increased Funding Critical for an Accurate Census in 2020

- If not in Fiscal Year 2018, then Fiscal Year 2019 is essential

Opportunities

- Integrated statistical data from surveys administrative records and commercial data

- Accessible, high quality, public data to help businesses and communities grow the economy, create jobs, address socio-economic issues, improve quality of life, and offer better services.

- Chief Statistician of the United States modernization initiatives

- Commission on Evidence-Based Policymaking
  – www.cep.gov

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Evolution of the Role of Data in Good Government

- Public-Private Data Partnerships
  - The Opportunity Project (opportunity.census.gov)
- Census Bureau Local Update of Census Addresses
- Access tools
  - Census Bureau City SDK, Business Builder, and On the Map
- Greater use of local data to make informed decisions on allocation of resources and services

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Thank You

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