EXHIBIT 13

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
Office of Inspector General
Washington, D.C. 20230

August 18, 2020

MEMORANDUM FOR: Dr. Steven D. Dillingham
Director
U.S. Census Bureau

FROM: Mark H. Zabarsky
Principal Assistant Inspector General for Audit and Evaluation

SUBJECT: ***2020 Census Alert:*** *The Census Bureau Faces Challenges in Accelerating Hiring and Minimizing Attrition Rates for Abbreviated 2020 Census Field Operations*
Final Memorandum No. OIG-20-041-M

The Office of Inspector General (OIG) is issuing this 2020 Census Alert to bring to your attention our concerns—about hiring and retaining sufficient numbers of field employees during the shortened nonresponse followup (NRFU) operation—that require immediate attention. Without taking timely action, the Bureau is at risk of not conducting a complete and accurate 2020 Census.

To accomplish the Constitutional mandate to conduct its decennial census,[1] the Bureau hires hundreds of thousands of field staff to work in Area Census Offices as enumerators to conduct the count in the community. In order to obtain a complete and accurate count, recruitment and retention of field staff is critical.

Our previous work has reported that the Bureau has had difficulties ensuring it can expeditiously hire employees.[2] The U.S. Government Accountability Office also noted the Bureau experienced hiring shortfalls during the 2020 address canvassing operation.[3] These challenges have been exacerbated by delays caused by the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic—which resulted in field operations, culminating with NRFU, being tentatively rescheduled to end by October 31, 2020, rather than July 31. However, after revising operation

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[1] The U. S. Constitution empowers Congress to carry out the census (Article I, section 2) and requires "counting the whole number of persons in each state" (Amendment XIV, section 2). Since 1790, the United States has conducted a census every 10 years. Data collected during the decennial census provides vital statistics for the nation. Census data are used, among other purposes, to apportion the seats of the U.S. House of Representatives; redraw congressional districts in each state; and allocate billions of dollars each year in federal financial assistance.

[2] U.S. Department of Commerce Office of Inspector General, February 27, 2018. *2020 Census: The Bureau's Background Check Office Is Not Fully Prepared for the 2020 Census*, OIG-18-015-A. Washington, DC: DOC OIG.

[3] U.S. Government Accountability Office, March 2020. *2020 Census: Bureau Generally Followed Its Plan for In-Field Address Canvassing*, GAO-20-415. Washington, DC: GAO.

plans to adjust to the October 31 deadline, the Bureau announced on August 3 that operations will end on September 30 (i.e., 4 weeks earlier than expected).

Bureau management have stated that their target number of enumerators, needed by the end of August 2020 to complete NRFU production, is just above 300,000. As of August 17, 2020, the Bureau has just under 220,000 enumerators[4] trained and ready to start working on the NRFU operation that is underway—this represents approximately 73 percent of the estimated number of enumerators needed to complete NRFU production. However, 132 out of 248 total Area Census Office (ACOs) are less than 75 percent toward reaching their estimated goals; of those 132 ACOs at less than 75 percent, 37 are less than 50 percent toward reaching their goal.

After the Bureau announced the September 30 deadline, Bureau personnel acknowledged to us there are challenges with hiring the number of enumerators needed to conduct NRFU. Specifically, ACOs[5] experienced the following:

- *No-shows for training.* Enumerators offered jobs are signed up to take training but never showing up at substantial rates (which vary, location by location, day by day). For example, on one day in August 2020, Bureau management stated that approximately 67 percent of staff showed up for training—indicating an attrition rate as high as 33 percent for that day. On another day in August, the attendance rate was 70 percent, indicating an attrition rate of 30 percent. One ACO manager informed us that, on some days, the office has experienced a no-show rate of 50–100 percent. Given the significant number of training no-shows, the Bureau is also facing challenges with deploying enumerators.

- *Pandemic-related issues.* With the delay in operations caused by COVID-19, some applicants offered positions as long ago as December 2019 no longer want to work for the Bureau or no longer respond when contacted.

- *Background-check-related issues.* Some applicants who are offered positions do not show up for their fingerprinting appointment or do not submit the required documentation.

Although it anticipated, and planned for, some enumerators not to finish the onboarding process, the Bureau stated that the attrition rate—at a number of points in the hiring and training process—is higher than it had expected.

NRFU is critical to the success of a decennial census. It is the largest, and last, field operation that occurs before the Bureau begins processing apportionment data for delivery to the President. NRFU enumerators represent a final opportunity for the Bureau to reach households who have not responded, including historically hard-to-count communities. To address these priorities, hiring and retaining sufficient enumerators is vital.

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[4] A certain number of these individuals, for a variety of reasons, will quit and/or not work the NRFU operation.

[5] In August 2020, we conducted interviews with Area Census Office Managers working in Gardiner, Maine; Beckley, West Virginia; Boise, Idaho; and New Orleans, Louisiana.

We are issuing a series of 2020 Census Alert memorandums to bring to the attention of the Bureau and its stakeholders immediate concerns with the 2020 Census that we have identified during our ongoing oversight. We prepared this memorandum in alignment with OIG's quality control standards and the CIGIE Quality Standards for federal offices of inspector general, which require that we conduct our work with integrity, objectivity, and independence.

We are not requesting a formal response to this 2020 Census alert memorandum, as the key issues discussed in it were briefed to cognizant Bureau officials in advance of issuance. This memorandum will be posted to our public website.

If you have any questions or concerns about this memorandum, please contact me at (202) 482-3884 or Terry Storms, Division Director, at (202) 482-0055.

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