



Cooper Center analysis adds more than 70K Virginians to 2020 census

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The Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service today released a report titled "Every Virginian Counts," which details a residential address review for the upcoming 2020 census, conducted for the Office of the Governor.


After reviewing as many as 1.5 million residential addresses in 120 days, Cooper Center demographer, Hamilton Lombard, identified 33,555 missing or incorrect addresses, potentially adding more than 70,000 Virginians to the decennial census.

The US Constitution requires a full count of every resident in this country every ten years, and the next such census will be conducted in 2020 by the United States Census Bureau. The result is not just a number. Census results determine allocation of seats in the United States House of Representatives; direct the awarding of hundreds of billions of dollars in federal funds each year to states and communities; and serve as foundational data for analyses of the United States population for the next decade.

The Governor's Office recognized the importance of ensuring the greatest accuracy of the list of residences for all Virginians and engaged the Cooper Center's Demographics Research Group to represent Virginia in the U.S. Census Bureau's Local Update of Census Address (LUCA) program.

"LUCA is a critical step to ensure a complete count," said Lombard, who led the review. "If an address is not on the list, the residents of that address will likely not be counted, and Virginia will be underrepresented."

Because the review required completion of the work within 120 days, Cooper Center staff prioritized examining places most likely to have missing or incorrect information on the census list, such as counties with substantial rural areas, cities with a significant number of conversions of nonresidential buildings to residential units, and communities experiencing rapid growth in the past ten years. In addition, the Cooper Center reviewed address files for all 46 localities that did not register to participate in the local government LUCA program.



"The decennial census is very important, and we greatly appreciate the Governor's vision, commitment, and support to ensure every living quarter in Virginia is fully and accurately counted," said Qian Cai, director of the Demographics Research Group. "Now that the technical review of addresses is complete, we look forward to assisting the Commonwealth's communication efforts to inform every Virginian why their participation in the census matters."

In the last decennial census in 2010, 80 percent of Virginia households returned the census form. "What many people may not realize is that Census Bureau employees (known as enumerators) will visit the homes of those who do not return the form mailed to every residential address," Cai reported. "In 2010, twenty percent of Virginia residences were visited by census enumerators, increasing the cost of the census."

The full report can be found on the Cooper Center's website at <https://demographics.coopercenter.org/Census2020>

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