

In the coming weeks you will be hearing a lot about the U.S. Census. As I'm sure you know, our national Constitution requires that every 10 years the [Census Bureau](#) count every resident of the United States.

It is extremely important that everyone participate in this effort because, an accurate count of the U.S. population forms the basis for many important but often overlooked political, economic, and social decisions that affect our daily lives.

For example, information obtained by the Census Bureau will help determine how more than \$400 billion of federal funding is invested each year on such things as senior centers, hospitals, education, housing, transportation, emergency services, schools, job training centers and public works projects. All of those things are important for our quality of life.

Furthermore, it is estimated that **for every individual *not* counted**, more than **\$2,000 per year** in direct federal aid to a community is lost. When that figure is stretched over the 10-year cycle of the census, it's easy to see why it's important for each community to have every person counted.

Census information is also important because it will be used by our government to re-draw the state's Congressional districts and districts for seats in the state House of Representatives and the state Senate. The number of Congressional seats we have is dependent on the accuracy of that count.

According to the Census Bureau, here's what will happen over the next few months:

March 2010: Census forms will be mailed or delivered to all households in the country.

April 1st, 2010: National Census Day. Use this day as a point of reference for sending your completed forms back in the mail.

April-July, 2010: Census takers visit households that did not return a form by mail.

December, 2010: By law, the Census Bureau delivers population information to the President for apportionment.

March, 2011: By law, the Census Bureau completes delivery of redistricting data to states.