

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

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May 8, 2008

The Honorable Steve H. Murdock  
U.S. Census Bureau  
4600 Silver Hill Road  
Washington, D.C. 20233

Dear Director Murdock:

Organizations and functions under your direction are categorized as high risk programs by the Government Accountability Office (GAO). The decennial census is a Constitutionally-mandated activity that produces critical data used to apportion congressional seats and allocate billions of dollars in federal assistance. The current state of the Census Bureau's operations caused GAO to designate the 2010 census as "High Risk" in advance of its anticipated January 2009 report in March 2008.

I am writing to express my concern that the Census Bureau has limited time to take corrective action in advance of the 2010 census. GAO's work has highlighted a number of long-standing and emerging challenges facing the 2010 Census. Because the census is one of the foundations for many government decisions, threats to a timely and reliable census can affect the public's confidence in government. GAO has recommended that the Bureau improve acquisition management capabilities, operational planning, cost estimation, and performance measurement.

The Bureau currently has four reports with multiple issues identified by the GAO that remain outstanding. What actions has the Bureau taken to address these issues and achieve removal from the GAO high risk list in January 2009? Your prompt response is greatly appreciated.

Please do not hesitate to contact me or Sheldon Shoemaker of my staff at (202) 228-6476 if you would like to discuss these concerns or other matters.

Sincerely,



CLAIRE McCASKILL  
United States Senator