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[U.S. Census Kicks Off Nationwide Promotional Tour](#)

The [ABC News Web site](#) has a good article today about the federal government's program to encourage people to comply with the requirement of cooperating with census workers. As you know, the census is taken every ten years, and the federal government bases many budget decisions on the results of the census. States also use the census information for political redistricting, which affects the party makeup of the states' political delegations. Here are excerpts from the ABC article:

The U.S. government today launched a massive outreach effort to alert the nation about this year's census, kicking off a \$340 million promotional campaign that will travel across the country in the upcoming months.

After launching today in New York City's Times Square, the census road tour will stop at more than 800 events nationwide, including high-profile sporting events such as the Super Bowl and the NCAA Final Four. There is even a scheduled stop at New Orleans' Mardi Gras.

It is all part of an effort to notify the American population about this spring's census. In March, the census form (10 questions for most Americans) will arrive in mailboxes, the government's once-a-decade attempt to paint a new portrait of the country.

Then on April 1, only about 100 days away, comes National Census Day.

One fact that the public might learn is that the 2010 census form is the shortest in history. The bureau says it can be completed in only 10 minutes. For the first time since 1930, the bureau is using just one form, not two. The bureau has also unveiled a bilingual form that will be sent to areas with high Hispanic populations.

The objective is to maximize the number of completed forms that get mailed back to the bureau. Non-responses, the bureau knows, can be very costly. For every one percent increase in the number of people who mail back their forms, the bureau saves \$80 million by not having to seek them out.

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However, a recent analysis conducted by the bureau said there may be a three-percent decrease in mailed-back forms, caused by government mistrust, fear of identity theft, and the surge in home foreclosures.

The census will also have to overcome other issues, such as Hispanic advocacy groups calling for illegal immigrants to boycott the census unless immigration laws are not changed. The boycott is led by the National Coalition of Latino Clergy & Christian Leaders, a group claiming to represent 20,000 evangelical churches in 34 states.