

RESOLUTION CONCERNING THE AMERICAN COMMUNITY SURVEY

WHEREAS, the U.S. Census Bureau is only required by the U.S. Constitution in Article 1 Section 2 to enumerate the population of the U.S. every ten (10) years for the purpose of apportioning Members of the House of Representatives among the states; and,

WHEREAS, the U.S. Census Bureau has, over the years, progressively added more and more "survey questions" to the census, going far beyond the scope of just counting people; and,

WHEREAS, objections by the American public to this intrusive questioning caused the elimination of the census "long form," which 1/6 of the population received in census years through 2000; and,

WHEREAS, the Census Bureau in the past decade has replaced the census "long form" with the American Community Survey (ACS) which is sent every year to three million (3,000,000) American households (250,000 per month, 1 in 40 households), and since 2005, to housing units in all counties in the fifty (50) states, the District of Columbia and all seventy-eight (78) municipios in Puerto Rico; and,

WHEREAS, the twenty-eight (28) page ACS is an invasion of privacy that demands detailed personal information that the government has no business seeking, knowing, or compiling; and,

WHEREAS, the U.S. Constitution (Amendment IV) provides that "the right of the people to be secure in their persons, houses, papers, and effects against unreasonable searches and seizures shall not be violated," and,

WHEREAS, the ACS is delivered under the authority of Title 13, United States Code, Sections 141, 193, and 221 which makes response mandatory and by Title 18 which imposes penalties for not responding, but the Bureau does not clearly state what the penalties are in its mailed documents; and,

WHEREAS, specific questions about the respondent's personal finances are asked, including the value of their home, their yearly income from all sources, what they paid in personal property taxes, their mortgage payment, and what insurance they have, etc.; and,

WHEREAS, specific questions about the respondent's employment are asked including naming their employer, stating exactly what they do at work, what hours they work, when they leave the house to go to work and how long it takes to get to work, etc.; and,

WHEREAS, very specific questions about the respondent's personal life are asked including full name, sex, race, complete birthday, how many times they have been married, if they have been widowed or divorced in the last year, physical and mental health history, and even if the respondent has given birth to any children in the past year, etc.; and,

WHEREAS, specific questions about the respondent's home and possessions are asked, including how many bedrooms in their house, do they have a flush toilet and a sink with faucet; how many cars, trucks or vans do they have, etc.; and,

WHEREAS, specific questions about the respondent's education level from nursery school to college are asked, including listing degrees they have received; and,

WHEREAS, many of these questions seek information we are warned never to divulge to a stranger, but the Census Bureau acts exactly as a scam artist would, asking very personal questions and using fear of penalties to manipulate the respondent to answer; and,

WHEREAS, the Census Bureau has used tactics such as harassing letters, phone calls, agent visits and even questioning neighbors to get information about respondents; and,

WHEREAS, the Census Bureau has the power to impose upon a respondent who refuses to answer the over seventy-five (75) questions, fines of one hundred dollars (\$100) for each unanswered question, five hundred dollars (\$500) for each falsely answered question, and up to five thousand dollars (\$5,000) in total fines; and,

WHEREAS, though the Census Bureau purports to guarantee confidentiality, it shares its collected information with many other governmental agencies, uses multitudes of temporary employees, and in some cases sells the information, further exposing individuals to the criminal use of information and identity theft; now therefore be it

RESOLVED, the Republican National Committee recognizes that the Census Bureau has gone far above and beyond the constitutionally intended purpose of enumerating people and is conducting a dangerous invasion of privacy by the overreaching and intimidating implementation of the American Community Survey; and be it further

RESOLVED, the Republican National Committee recognizes that the Census Bureau is spending millions of tax dollars to violate the rights and invade the personal privacy of United States Citizens; and be it further

RESOLVED, the Republican National Committee supports either the elimination of the American Community Survey or the enactment of HR 3131 sponsored by Representative Ted Poe of Texas (introduced 7/08/09), which would make any response to the ACS voluntary; and be it further

RESOLVED, that upon the approval of this resolution the Republican National Committee shall deliver a copy of this resolution to each of the Republican members of Congress, all Republican candidates for Congress, and to each Republican state and territorial party office.

As approved by the Republican National Committee, August 6, 2010