

U.S. Census Bureau 2017 Census Test Tribal Enrollment Reinterview Discussant Comments

Desi Rodriguez-Lonebear

Northern Cheyenne Tribal Member

NAC Member

Dual PhD Candidate, University of Arizona (Sociology) & University of Waikato (Demography)



Tribal Enrollment: A Contentious Journey

- Impetus from 2010 tribal consultations & *federal agencies*
- CB is currently testing the feasibility of collecting tribal enrollment data
- NAC voted *against* the cognitive interviews at the May 2016 meeting; no response yet from CB
- Cognitive interviews proceeded as planned and will culminate at the end of August



Unintended Consequences

- Capturing enrollment could yield a wealth of new data for tribes, agencies, communities, and researchers alike, but what about consequences?
- Concept of the CB "validating" enrollment is way beyond the purview of the federal of government
- National Congress of American Indians in opposition
- CB needs to tread carefully



Tribal Partnership

- Successful tests on Colville and Standing Rock (or any tribal lands) require partnership; not simply consultation
- Reconsider the ease with which tribes will share their enrollment records with the CB
- How will the CB reciprocate? That is, what do these two tribal nations get out of being involved in the 2017 test?
- Alaska Native strategy



International Example

Walling, J., Small-Rodriguez, D., and Kukutai, T. (2009) “Tallying Tribes: Waikato-Tainui in the Census and Iwi Register.” *New Zealand Journal of Social Policy* (36), pp. 2-16.

- How closely aligned is the tribal population captured in the NZ census with the tribe’s own enrollment register?
- Tribal register population was significantly older, far more heavily concentrated in a certain geographic region, and more evenly balanced in terms of its sex ratio.



For NAC's Consideration

- Do you agree with the reinterview questions?

Are the process questions asking how one became an enrolled member or a shareholder necessary? Why?

- Changes to any reinterview questions?

