On May 2, the Metropolitan Mayors Caucus was awarded a grant for Census Participation from the Office of Illinois Secretary of State Jesse White. Our grant award is intended to convene Task Force members and other municipal leaders to connect them with the resources they need to structure their local Complete Count Committees and ensure that residents of all backgrounds are counted.

Our proposal offered to help our local municipalities address three challenges

- First, municipalities will have a harder time this count reaching their hard-to-count (HTC) populations. Many municipalities have become more diverse with Hispanic, Asian, and other immigrant and refugee populations that were not as numerous last count. The move to a partially online Census may make it harder for residents without broadband access or technology literacy to participate.
- Second, there are no local resources aimed at municipalities to connect them to best practices as they emerge. For example, some places are focusing on their HTC by setting up tablet stations at libraries and schools, which those residents use.
- Third, some municipalities may still need a catalyst to get started on their count efforts.

Our successful grant proposal included three components:

- **Three grasstops convenings** in the northern, western, and southern suburbs, intended to serve as a peer exchange between municipalities in their count efforts. It will:
  - Emphasize the importance of Census data for municipal and regional resources;
  - Share best practices and organizational resources for engagement; and
  - Advertise the availability of future state funding.
- **A complete count peer cohort** that will meet regularly to discuss progress in their efforts and share practices.
- **A complete count resource page** that will profile specialized best practices of Task Force members and others to help other municipalities understand how to achieve a complete count of various HTC populations.

Caucus staff requests input from communities forming complete count committees for the specific resources and practices that would be most useful as it work plans these tasks and activities this year.