



MA-E7-1

Bob Dechert, M.P.

*Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice
Member of Parliament for Mississauga-Erindale*



**Regional Municipality of Peel
Office of the Regional Chair**

OTTAWA

AUG 18 2010

RECEIVED

Ms. Emil Kolb
10 Peel Centre Drive
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Brampton, Ontario
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Peel Living	<input type="checkbox"/>

Dear Ms. Kolb

I want to thank you for your correspondence regarding our government's decision to eliminate the penalties for failing to complete the long form census questionnaire.

Please be assured that I will raise your concerns with the Honourable Tony Clement, Minister of Industry, whose department oversaw this decision.

Firstly, I would like to clarify that the short form census remains mandatory and that every Canadian will still be required to provide this basic information, as they did in previous censuses. The data collected through the long-form census will now be collected through a new voluntary survey, called the National Household Survey. The questions that will be asked in the new Survey are identical to the questions that would have been asked in the mandatory long-form census.

Our government has replaced the mandatory census with the voluntary national survey because we do not believe that it is appropriate to compel Canadians to divulge extensive private and personal information. I do not believe that Canadians should be forced under threat of fines, jail, or both, to divulge the answers to certain intimate questions.

Furthermore, I am confident that a sufficient number of civic minded Canadians will complete and return the National Household Survey to provide equally valid and valuable information to the data collected under threat of penalty.

Our approach to this issue is about finding a better balance between collecting necessary data and protecting the privacy rights of Canadians. I recognize that the information gathered in the long form census is valuable. However, I believe that a balance must be drawn when the government is collecting data under the threat of fines, or jail, or both.

I am pleased that Statistics Canada will administer the National Household Survey in close coordination with the census and will use a variety of non-coercive methods to encourage

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MA-E7-2

Canadians to respond to the survey. Our government will also take steps to strengthen the communications and advertising efforts around the national household survey in order to address concerns about response rates. I am confident that Statistics Canada's employees will continue their hard work and dedication within these new parameters to ensure Statistics Canada remains one of the best national statistical organizations in the world.

Thank you again for taking the time to bring your concerns to my attention. Should you have any further questions regarding another federal matter please do not hesitate to contact my office at decheb@parl.gc.ca

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bob Dechert". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal stroke at the end of the name.

Bob Dechert MP
Mississauga-Erindale



Office of the Chair

COPY

July 14, 2010

Mr. Bob Dechert, M.P.
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 1300 Central Parkway West Suite 108
 Mississauga, ON
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Mr. David Tilson, M.P.
 Dufferin-Caledon
 229 Broadway, Unit 2
 Orangeville, ON
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Dear Mr. Dechert & Mr. Tilson:

On behalf of the Region of Peel, I am writing to express great concern about the recent decision to discontinue the long form Census questionnaire and to replace it with a voluntary National Household Survey (NHS). The proposed change will diminish the level and quality of information that municipalities have relied upon over the past 35 years to plan and deliver services efficiently and effectively to the residents and citizens we mutually represent throughout the Region of Peel.

The Region of Peel has one of the most diverse populations in the country and naturally, a diverse range of needs. Home to 1.35 million residents and over 90,500 businesses, the Region of Peel has undergone a major transition during the past few decades. As such, we respectfully request your assistance to convince the federal government to re-instate the Census long form questionnaire.

The change to the voluntary NHS model will significantly impact communities, businesses and people across all Canadian municipalities, which include our four jurisdictions: the Region of Peel, the Cities of Brampton and Mississauga and the Town of Caledon. The Census long form survey has been a reliable source of consistent information on our diverse population and communities which is used to provide the adequate level of service that our residents deserve and rely upon. This instrument is the only tool available for municipalities and community partners to track trends over the long term and address issues at a neighbourhood level.

The quality of information gathered from the mandatory long Census questionnaire has enabled the Region of Peel to work in collaboration with all levels of government and community stakeholders to identify and deliver new and innovative programs and services to meet the growing, unique and complex needs of its residents and businesses.

The Region of Peel, for example, relies heavily on the information to examine our rapidly growing child poverty rate through a multicultural and diversity lens. By examining this issue using different variables, the Region has been able to provide services in an efficient and targeted fashion throughout our communities and neighbourhoods. This information helps identify, outreach, and engage vulnerable groups; learn where there are language barriers; know where we need to emphasize certain programs or place community hubs.

The Region of Peel has also used the information from the long Census survey extensively with our health status reports which help communicate the health of our population to the three levels of government. We have also used the information to identify, describe and map priority populations which is a provincial requirement. This has helped us develop and tailor programs to meet the needs of special target groups such as low income seniors and recent immigrants.

Information collected from the long form Census questionnaire is also instrumental for transportation planning purposes. Peel's estimated population growth of over 1.64 million by 2031 will indeed result in increased congestion on our roads and highways. The long Census survey helps regional and local planners develop clear profiles of those who use transportation networks and how such networks impact their surrounding neighbourhoods. Continued effective development of integrated transportation strategies will require accurate neighbourhood, regional and city-wide residential profiles. Without the information from the long Census survey our planners will have significant challenges in developing long term strategies to help our residents travel to and from work and school.

Using targeted based principles in overall policy development as well as program and service delivery has allowed Peel to make the best use of resources locally.

These are just a few of the many examples of how information from the long Census survey is used. We would be pleased to discuss these issues in greater detail and present why this will affect the quality of life of those living in our communities.

Please feel free to contact me at the Region of Peel at 905-791-7800 x4309 should you have any questions. We look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely,



Emil V. Kolb
Regional Chair & C.E.O.

cc: Hon. Stephen Harper, Prime Minister
Hon. Tony Clement, Minister Industry Canada
Hon. Michael Ignatieff, Leader of the Official Opposition
Members of Peel Regional Council
Peel Area M.P.'s and M.P.P.'s
Ms. Kelly Darnley, Caledon Chamber of Commerce
Mr. Gary Collins, Brampton Board of Trade
Mr. Sheldon Lieba, Mississauga Board of Trade
Ms. Shelly White, United Way of Peel Region
Ms. Carol Kotacka, Fair Share for Peel