

Sent: Tuesday, January 18, 2022 11:02 PM **To:** DCMD PCGQR <dcmd.pcgqr@census.gov> **Subject:** 2020 Post-Census Group Quarters Review

My name is John McNeill.

Having worked the Census as a Field Supervisor the...I know there were undercounts in the area I was responsible for...the Kalamazoo/Calhoun County area in West Michigan, due to the timing of the pandemic and the decision to cut the count short. Homes were scratched from our Count List for reasons that were due more to expedience than the goal of getting an actual count.

The political climate was not at all conducive to someone from the government coming around and asking intrusive questions about living arrangements. We got refusals from folks on the left, the right, Native and African Americans and recent immigrants included. I have worked previous Census counts and this was by far the worst. I once worked on a group of enumerators specifically assigned to tough cases. That didn't happen this time. After refusals, many addresses were simply struck from the list.

The problem in Kalamazoo specifically was students living off-campus. Western Michigan University and Kalamazoo College took care of their on-campus counts early. The majority of college students live off-campus, and many of them went home before Census Day, April 1st. and those students were likely counted in their hometowns rather than in Kalamazoo. They should have been included in the city's count but by the time we got around to investigating, months later...there was no way for our enumerators to track that, using the system provided by the Bureau. .

Normally we do that investigating a month or two after Census Day, but this time it was delayed until late summer and fall by the pandemic.

We complained about the undercounts to our supervisors.

There was supposed to be an additional process to address these issues, with census takers specifically trained, with their own set of directives, making it possible for them to work with landlords over time to get counts. That was what we were told but we heard they never got deployed, or were reassigned to enumerator status. Time ran out.

I think the Bureau would be justified to work out some arrangement for cities to adjust their numbers accordingly, with so many bucks at stake down the road.