

July 26, 2010



The Honourable Tony Clement
Minister of Industry, Canada
C.D. Howe Building
235 Queen Street
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0H5

Dear Minister Clement:

Re: Elimination of the Mandatory Long-Form Census

The Board of Health for Grey Bruce Health Unit would like to express our concern and disagreement with your government's decision to eliminate the mandatory long-form of the 2011 Census and replace it with a voluntary household survey.

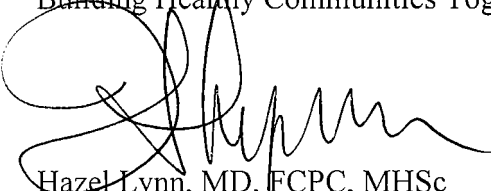
For 35 years, the Census has provided high quality data about the residents in our community. It is the sole source of information for many indicators used for the planning and delivery of Public Health services, not only in our area but province-wide. In fact, local Boards of Health are mandated through the *Ontario Public Health Standards* and the *Public Health Assessment and Surveillance Protocol* to use the Census information (found in the long-form) to assist in the planning, evaluation and delivery of public health programs and interventions that are inclusive of the entire population and in particular for the most disadvantaged or high risk.

As a mainly rural health unit, we try to deliver services in a large geographic area as efficiently as possible. We depend on the information from the Census long-form to help identify specific demographics within our community including the income, education, unemployment and detailed housing characteristics.

The change to the 2011 Census will significantly compromise the quality of the information. Voluntary reporting would introduce a significant bias resulting in data being of no value to those making informed planning and decision-making at the local level.

We strongly urge you to reverse this decision and reinstate the mandatory long-form questionnaire as part of the 2011 Canadian Census.

Building Healthy Communities Together,



Hazel Lynn, MD, FCPC, MHSc
Medical Officer of Health

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The Honourable Dalton McGuinty, Premier of Ontario
The Honourable Leona Aglukkaq, Minister of Health
The Honourable Laurel Broten, Minister of Children and Youth Services
The Honourable Madeleine Meilleur, Minister of Community and Social Services
The Honourable Leona Dombrowsky, Minister of Education
The Honourable Deb Matthews, Minister of Health and Long-Term Care
The Honourable Margaret Best, Minister of Health Promotion
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