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Inside C2

# Southern DAILY

Make Today Different

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## Congressman Al Green Joins President Biden for Signing of Infrastructure Investment & Jobs Act

### Landmark Measure Includes Rep. Green's Legislation to Permanently Codify the Minority Business Development Agency, 52 Years After Its Creation



(Houston, TX) — On Monday, November 15, 2021, Congressman Al Green (TX-09) released the following statement:

“I am honored to witness the ratification of the bipartisan Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act by joining President Biden at the White House today. The Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act is one of the most consequential pieces of legislation in recent history. It will create good-paying infrastructure-related jobs across America to restore our railways, roadways, seaports, airports, and more. In Texas alone there are 818 bridges and over 19,400 miles of highways in poor condition. This bill provides \$537 million over five years to Texas for bridge replacement and repairs,” Congressman Al Green stated. “Equally as important, this legislation strengthens public transportation for Texans by allocating \$3.3 billion over five years to improve our public transportation options across the state.”

The Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act codifies Rep. Green's Minority Business Resiliency Act of 2021, which will establish rural minority business centers and promote economic resiliency for minority businesses by providing supportive grants.

Congressman Al Green continued, “More than 50 years after the creation by Executive Order of the only federal agency dedicated solely to the growth and global competitiveness of minority businesses, the bill signed today by President Biden will permanently establish in federal law the Minority Business Development Agency (MBDA). The codification of the MBDA will boost minority businesses, including minority-owned banks, as they struggle to keep pace with a rapidly changing economy and recover from a global pandemic. Additionally, this legislation establishes an entrepreneurship grants program to fund minority businesses and nonprofits that serve them. I am proud to be associated with this groundbreaking legislation on this historic occasion.”



## Delta dominates the world, but scientists watch for worrisome offspring

CHICAGO, Nov 15 (Reuters) - The Delta variant of the SARS-CoV-2 virus now accounts for nearly all of the coronavirus infections globally, fueled by unchecked spread of the novel coronavirus in many parts of the world. So far, vaccines are still able to defend against serious disease and death from Delta, but scientists remain on alert.

The Delta variant, first detected in India in December 2020, remains the most worrisome version of the SARS-CoV-2 virus. The World Health Organization classifies Delta as a variant of concern, a category that means the variant is capable of increasing transmissibility, causing more

severe disease or reducing the benefit of vaccines and treatments.

Delta's “superpower” is its transmissibility, according to Shane Crotty, a virologist at the La Jolla Institute for Immunology in San Diego. Delta is more than two times as contagious as previous SARS-CoV-2 variants, according to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Studies suggest it may be more likely to put infected people in the hospital than prior forms of the virus.

Delta also can cause symptoms two to three days sooner than the original

coronavirus, giving the immune system less time to mount a defense.

People infected with Delta carry around 1,200 times more virus in their noses compared with the original version of the coronavirus. The amount of virus in vaccinated individuals who become infected with Delta is on par with those who are unvaccinated, and both can transmit the virus to others.

In vaccinated people, however, the amount of virus drops more quickly, so they likely spread the virus for a shorter time.

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# WEA LEE'S GLOBAL NOTES

## CORONAVIRUS DIARY

11/15/2021



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## Leaders Of The U.S. And China Will Meet Today



President Biden will convene a virtual meeting today with China's President Xi Jinping and will discuss how to, "responsibly manage the competition" between the two countries, as well as, "to work together where the mutual interests align."

This is third direct engagement between the two leaders since Biden became President. As the White House indicated,

a joint statement is not expected after the meeting.

The Chinese president has not left China since the outbreak of the coronavirus pandemic.

Just last week, the U. S. and China issued a joint announcement on climate saying that they will cooperate to slow global warming by boosting clean energy initiatives including the curbing of methane emissions.

President Biden has repeatedly emphasized that the relationship between the United States and China is one of competition, but not conflict. Biden has known President Xi since 2011 when he was Vice President.

Lately, China has been angry at U.S. efforts with its close relationship with Taiwan. China claims it will stay on high alert at all times and take all necessary measures to resolutely smash any interference by external forces.

Today the world is suffering because of the pandemic and many economic issues. We all hope the leaders of the two nations will work out solutions to their problems and help solve the many challenges facing the whole world.



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**Southern DAILY** Make Today Different

## Editor's Choice



Migrants gather on the Belarusian-Polish border in an attempt to cross it at the Bruzgi-Kuznica Bialostocka border crossing, Belarus. Oksana Manchuk/BelTA



Daran Duffy, together with his wife and daughter, wear yellow stars on their chest in the style of the Star of David, during an appearance before the Special Committee on Government Overreach and the Impact of COVID-19 Mandates to complain about the implications of forcing employees to choose between an injection or losing their job, according to local media, in Topeka, Kansas. Thad Allton - Kansas Reflector



Yungblud performs on stage during the MTV Europe Music Awards in Budapest, Hungary. REUTERS/Marton Monus



Members of Taliban sit on a military vehicle during Taliban military parade in Kabul, Afghanistan. REUTERS/Ali Khara



Medical specialists place the body of a person who died at the ICU unit for coronavirus patients in a bag at a local hospital in the town of Kalach-on-Don in Volgograd Region, Russia. REUTERS/Kirill Braga



People attend a protest at the UN Climate Change Conference (COP26), in Glasgow, November 12. REUTERS/Yves Herman



# BUSINESS

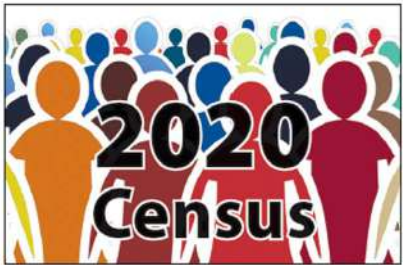
## Were Many People Of Color Left Out Of The 2020 Census? COVID Makes It Harder To Tell



A person wearing a mask walks past posters encouraging census participation in Seattle in April 2020. The coronavirus pandemic has disrupted not only last year's national head count, but also a critical follow-up survey that the U.S. Census Bureau relies on to determine the tally's accuracy. (Photo/Ted S. Warren/AP)

Compiled And Edited By John T. Robbins, Southern Daily Editor

The U.S. Census Bureau is extending a final round of door knocking into early 2022 for a key survey that is expected to help determine the accuracy of last year's national head count, NPR has learned. The change is the latest in a series of delays to the little-known but critical follow-up survey. The disruptions have raised concerns about whether the bureau can produce important indicators about who was missed and which groups were over- or undercounted in a census that was upended by both the coronavirus pandemic and interference by former President Donald Trump's administration. The results of the Post-Enumeration Survey are factored into population statistics that guide how an estimated \$1.5 trillion a year in federal funds are distributed to local communities, as well as how to better carry out future once-a-decade counts that are used to reallocate each state's share of congressional seats and Electoral College votes.



In a statement on Friday, the bureau confirms what was expected to be a month-long operation for gathering information on housing units starting in late October, is now set to begin sometime in November and end in February. "We adjusted the start date and operational length as a result of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the schedule of the preceding census operations," the bureau said of the change to the Post-Enumeration Survey, which does not involve college dorms, prisons or other group-living quarters and is not conducted in re-

mote areas of Alaska. About 1,100 of the bureau's field representatives — who, like all federal government employees, must be fully vaccinated for COVID-19 by Nov. 22 — will try to interview people at some 14,000 housing units while wearing masks and practicing social distancing.

Some census watchers outside the bureau say they're worried the difficulties of conducting in-person interviews during the pandemic could limit the usefulness of the survey's findings, which the bureau has said it plans to start releasing within the first three months of 2022.



**Were people of color undercounted by the census?**

Decade after decade, the U.S. census has overcounted people who identify as white and not Latino, while undercounting other racial and ethnic groups. That unevenness often translates into inequities when census data is used to redraw voting districts and inform research and planning.

"I'm just worried that we're going to have a starting point for the next 10 years of enumeration counts that undercount people of color," Robert Santos, president of the American Statistical Association and President Biden's pick for the next Census Bureau director, told NPR in an interview before his April nomination. Santos, who is waiting for the Senate to vote on whether to confirm him, added that not having reliable PES results runs the risk of baking racial inequities into other government statistics that rely on census data. "I don't think that that's acceptable," Santos said.



**Many people don't want to talk to Census Bureau workers because of COVID-19**

Door knocking for the PES, which takes place in multiple phases, started as originally planned in January 2020. It was supposed to wrap up by mid-2021. But COVID-19 quickly intervened. Lower-than-expected levels of participation from the public in the final months of 2020 led the bureau to add another round of interviews about people's demographic information. Those early response rates were hurt by a devastating new reality — "people don't want to open their doors to talk to a stranger during a pandemic," the bureau acknowledged in a March presentation to its scientific advisory committee. That raises

the risk of the bureau missing certain people not only in the census, but also in the follow-up survey that determines who was not counted.



**Could COVID-19 stop the bureau from releasing survey results?**

The delays to the survey make it harder for the bureau to collect accurate data. Tallying for the 2020 count has been over for nearly a year, and some people interviewed for the PES may have a hard time remembering exactly where they were living on Census Day, which was April 1, 2020. People who moved during the pandemic may not know who used to live at their current address.

And many households are experiencing census fatigue.

Data quality issues brought on by the pandemic have already forced the bureau to cancel a release of American Community Survey results this year and replace them with "experimental" estimates. Some census watchers fear the Post-Enumeration Survey may be headed toward a similar fate.



**There are early signs of a likely undercount of Black people**

In the meantime, researchers outside the bureau have been comparing the latest census numbers with a set of benchmark data based on birth and death certificates, Medicare enrollment files and other government records about the country's residents.

"It does look like the 2020 census had some undercount problems for some groups," says Citro, who recently conducted an independent analysis that was not part of her work with the committee. Using publicly available data and a method that is different from what's used for the PES, Citro estimates that nationally, the 2020 census may have produced a net undercount rate for Black people similar to what the bureau's PES estimated for the 2010 count (2.05%) or more than two times as high (4.36%).

"The Census Bureau did just a heroic and really outstanding job, but they faced a combination of circumstances for conducting a census that was unprecedented in our history," Citro, who once worked as a social science analyst at the bureau early

in her career, says of the pandemic and the push by Trump officials to end counting early.



**Children were likely undercounted in 2020, too**

There are also signs the 2020 census likely didn't correct a decades-long flaw with the national tally: undercounting children.

"All the evidence I'm seeing from the 2020 census suggests that that's going to be a continuing problem," says Bill O'Hare, a demographer and former research fellow at the bureau who wrote the book *The Undercount of Young Children* in the U.S. Decennial Census.

O'Hare, who is currently consulting with the Count All Kids Campaign, estimates that the net undercount rate for children bumped up to 2.1% last year, while adults had a net overcount rate of less than a percent for the 2020 census, according to a report released this week. The report also cites preliminary estimates by Citro that suggest the net undercount rates for Black and Latinx children were about double that for all children.

Still, both Citro and O'Hare say they're waiting for the PES results to reveal a more comprehensive look at the count's accuracy.

Jeri Green, a former senior adviser for civic engagement at the bureau, remains concerned that the 2020 census — which the agency recently estimated to cost around \$14.2 billion — will repeat the undercounting of Black people and Latinos, as well as Native Americans who live on reservations, in the 2010 census.



"The American taxpayer is being cheated, the congressional appropriators who funded the census also are not getting their dollars' worth, if the PES and the undercount are not accurate," Green says. "And we have to live with this for the next 10 years." (Courtesy npr.org)

# COMMUNITY

## New Alief Neighborhood Center Represents Future Cultural Reality Of Area

Compiled And Edited By John T. Robbins, Southern Daily Editor



The Alief Neighborhood Center combines three City of Houston departments (Library, Parks, & Health) to create a civic center at the heart of the redeveloped 37-acre urban park. Raised out of the floodplain, the building's elevated 'front porch' frames a space for the diverse community to come together, share ideas, and express an identity unique to Alief. The Center is a model for resilient design in a post-hurricane Harvey environment — a 'Lilly-pad' for those seeking shelter from the storm.

### BUILDING AWARDS-

Rethinking The Future Awards 2020 First Award | Public Building (Concept) The \$52 million, 63,000-square-foot multi-purpose facility at 11903 Bellaire will combine a health clinic, community center and library into one space. The structure, which will sit in 37-acre Alief Park, will consolidate the Hennington-Alief Regional Library at 7979 South Kirkwood and the park's existing community center, both of which are aging. It also will replace the area's Women, Infants and Children Center, which today leases space at 12660 Beechnut. City council passed one item appropriating \$4.8 million for contractor EYP Inc. to begin construction on the new center, and another item giving Manhattan Construction \$100,000 for construction management services.

The 70,000sf 2-story new building is elevated over a parking area providing convenient access to the building programs directly above. Health Department programs provided include W.I.C. (Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children), DAWN (Diabetes

Awareness Network) that provides support for a variety of chronic illnesses, and a Senior Center. The Parks Department programs include a full-size competition gymnasium with a perimeter elevated walking track above, a community fitness center and spaces to support youth after-school and summer programs.



The library, located on the second floor, and accessed through a grand 'stair-a-torium' in the lobby contains light-filled stack-space and reading

areas with expansive views both to the park to the south and to the existing grove of preserved trees on the north. Directly adjacent to the library, HPL's technology-rich TechLINK youth maker-doer program contains spaces for collaboration, the 'Tiny Techs' children's area, music recording studio, virtual reality stations, photo/video lab, and a maker space.

Site amenities include a competition soccer field, two full-size practice soccer fields, two futsal courts (fast-paced soccer played on a hard-surfaced smaller court) baseball field, skate park, tennis courts, children's playground, outdoor swimming pool facility, community gardens, a marketplace venue, and outdoor event space areas. The Alief Neighborhood Center is

scheduled to open in early 2022.

## The Mission Of The Alief Neighborhood Center



To Foster A Culture Of Health



To Create A Heart For Civic Engagement



All In A Spirit Of Shared Collaboration



With The Biggest Front Porch In Texas!

### Related

## Community Resource Center Opens

Sponsored by the ITC Community Empowerment Organization with the collaboration of the SEONE Corporation, the Community Resource Center opens its door on Tuesday, April 6, 2021, at the Southern News Group building.

The mission of the Community Resource Center is to serve as a "one stop-shop" for the underserved minority population in the southwest area of Houston. The Center will provide members of the community with information that will empower them to improve their quality of life and to also serve as a way for participants to access the rich pool of resources avail-

able to them.



Southern News Group, Houston, Texas

Members of the community who have questions about any of the variety of issues the Center will address are encouraged to schedule interviews with the Center. The Center will link the person with a professional who can best address their needs.



The areas the Center will address include disaster assistance, loans and grants, small business development, tax information, immigration, legal issues, workforce, housing and renting, veterans issues, medical, healthcare service, education, skills development, children and child welfare and city services.

The Center's services will be led by senior educator, Dr. Tina Agosa and many other assistants.

