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## **Sarasota Complete Count Committee urges participation in 2010 Census**

With U.S. Census forms due to arrive in area mailboxes within the next week, members of the Sarasota County Complete Count Committee are urging people to complete the form and return it to the Census Bureau.

"It's only 10 questions and will take less time to complete than filling out your tax return," said Sarasota County Commissioner Carolyn Mason, chairwoman of the committee. "But more importantly, an accurate count of Sarasota County's residents is necessary because population is often a determining factor in the dollar amount in federal grants an area can receive."

The importance of Census data in determining the allocation of federal funds was borne out by a recent analysis of data by the Brookings Institution. According to the institution's report, among the 100 largest metropolitan areas of the country in fiscal year 2008, the Sarasota, Venice and Bradenton area received \$336 per resident in federal assistance compared to the upstate New York area of Albany, Schenectady and Troy, which received \$5,217 per person in federal assistance.

The population count from the 2010 Census also forms the basis for representation in Congress.

Required by the U.S. Constitution, the census takes place every 10 years. The 10-question form will be delivered in mid-March and people are asked to complete and return the form in the enclosed pre-paid envelope. People who do not mail in a completed 2010 Census will be visited at their home by a census taker. The census includes questions about the number of people living in your household, their gender, age and race. All responses are confidential.

April 1 is Census Day. All responses throughout the nation will be based on circumstances that day.

Members of Sarasota County's Complete Count Committee are: Commissioner Carolyn Mason, Sarasota County; Commissioner Kelly Kirschner, Sarasota; Councilman Emilio Carlesimo, Venice; Commissioner Jim Blucher, North Port; Commissioner Robert Siekmann, Longboat Key; Board Member Caroline Zucker, Sarasota County School Board; Commissioner Carlos Beruff, Sarasota Manatee Airport Authority; Board Member Thomas Towler, Sarasota County Public Hospital Board.

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