

**FROM THE FRONT PAGE**

**Census officials urge Filipino community to fill out info**

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unions, and business to ensure that every resident is counted. "The Census is too important to leave anything to chance," Mayor Villaraigosa said.

However, many people in the community, especially in the Filipino community, have a misperception about giving

their information to the Census Bureau, said Plata.

Plata said that Filipinos (especially Filipinos living illegally in the US) believe that any information they give the census bureau will be used against them or the information will be given to other government agencies

like the Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE).

"But that's not true," said Plata. "The census is completely safe and confidential. We do not divulge any information out there to anybody and we don't share our information to any federal government agencies."

According to the 2000 census, there were only 2.3 million Filipinos living in the US. Almost half (1.3 million) lived in California and about 300,00 lived within the Greater Los Angeles County.

Plata said that there should have been more Filipinos counted in the last Census.

Plata said that it is important to have an accurate count of Filipinos.

"For example, suppose a disaster comes along (affecting Filipinos) and only 58 percent of Filipinos turned in their census information," questioned Plata. "What's going to happen to the other 42 percent? The government only gives money to what it sees on the census."

Plata added that filling out the census information is easy.

The census form asks 10 questions and takes 10 minutes to finish. ■

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