



Media Contacts:

Mario Ceballos
CABE Media Director
(213) 819-5202

Shelly Spiegel-Coleman
Executive Director, Californians
Together
(562) 756-0493

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

New U.S. Census Bureau Report states that California leads the country with close to 43% of its residents speaking English and one other language. According to the Los Angeles Times, the majority of Los Angeles metropolitan area residents (53%) “speak another language out of choice rather than necessity.” Nationwide, one out of every American over the age of 5 spoke a language other than English.

This annual U.S. Census Report, American Community Survey (ACS), focuses on key social, economic and housing characteristics to help decision makers and planners respond and better understand the population changes of the nation, states and geographic areas with populations over 65,000 or more.

West Covina (September 18, 2007): The finding of the 2006 U.S. Census American Community Survey (ACS) Report demonstrate that a significant portion of the U.S. population is bilingual and wants to be able to speak more than one language to further their professional goals, keep their family and/or cultural connections. The American Community Survey results debunk the notion that only a small minority of U.S. residents are or support bilingualism. Based on the report’s findings a significant number of the nation’s residents speak a different language and want to continue speaking it even when they are fluent in English.

“The results from this U.S. Census report clearly demonstrate that across the nation a significant number of U.S. residents, foreign and domestic, chose to be bilingual for many professional, cultural and personal reasons”, states Maria S. Quezada, CABE’s Executive Director. “It is CABE’s hope that our country’s government leaders, policy-makers and the business community embrace the changing characteristics and needs of our country’s population to develop the necessary political, economic and educational policies of today. CABE continues to promote the learning of English as well as many other languages to help all U.S. citizens and residents become fully prepared and well-rounded individuals.”

“The American Community Survey meets a critical need for timely information,” said Census Bureau Director Louis Kincannon. “In these fast-paced times, 10 years is too long to wait for detailed census data. These data are vital for the planning, implementation and evaluation of policies ranging from building new schools and roads to establishing initiatives that drive economic development.” According to the U.S. Census, data is available for over “7,000 areas, including all congressional districts as well as counties, cities, metro areas and American Indian and Alaska Native areas of 65,000 population or more.”

“Becoming or retaining our bilingualism should no longer be politicized but seen as an important characteristic of the American ideal for all its citizens,” states Karling J. Aguilera-Fort, CAFE’s President. He adds, “As our country continues to mature and grow, our identity and place in the world become more dynamic. Being able to communicate in more than one language allows for the promise of a better future, personally and professionally, for all of America’s citizens and residents.”

Shelly Spiegel-Coleman, Executive Director of Californians Together adds, “We hope that once and for all the acrimonious debate of the past decades regarding bilingual education come to an end so we can all focus on supporting and educating America’s future generations. Reports such as the American Community Survey make it clear that any arguments against bilingualism are irrelevant to the life choices and experiences of many of California’s residents.” To validate the linguistic talents of our high school seniors, CAFE and Californians Together are asking the governor to sign AB 280 which would create the California Seal of Biliteracy. This new seal could be affixed to a high school diploma or transcripts. Business and colleges will see these students as assets and as leaders for the 21st century.

CAFE supports educational programs, such as dual language immersion, that have as a goal the learning of English and another language to a high literacy level for all students who participate. Becoming bilingual really prepares them for the 21st century global society. CAFE further supports the maintenance of languages other than English, especially for the children who bring them to our schools, because they are also a vital link to their families and important for their sense of identity. This census report truly highlights, that especially in Los Angeles County, we have many multilingual cities that can celebrate this fact and pass resolutions declaring themselves “Multilingual Cities” as San Francisco has done.

For more information on the U.S. Census American Community Survey visit: www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/releases/archives/american_community_survey_acs/index.html

CAFE is a statewide organization with over 6,000 members and 60 chapters/affiliates who firmly believe in the learning of English, high quality educational programs and respect for diversity of California’s students and parents. CAFE supports research, planning and learning to guide equitable instructional programs and practices for English Learners. www.bilingualeducation.org

Californians Together is a statewide coalition of parents, teachers, and education advocates and civil rights organizations committed to securing equal access to quality education for all children. Californians Together founded in 1998 as a non-profit organization after the passage of Proposition 227. Californians

Together, in conjunction with many of its affiliates, strive to foster full participation in a democratic society through quality education for children and parents from underserved communities.

###