



The Census Project

The 2020 Census Needs Full-Year FY20 Funding Now

December 6, 2019

The Honorable Richard Shelby
Chairman
U.S. Senate Appropriations Committee
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Nita Lowey
Chairwoman
U.S. House Appropriations Committee
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Patrick Leahy
Vice Chairman
U.S. Senate Appropriations Committee
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Kay Granger
Ranking Member
U.S. House Appropriations Committee
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Senator Shelby, Senator Leahy, Congresswoman Lowey, and Congresswoman Granger,

As Congress works to finalize and pass the Fiscal Year 2020 appropriations bills, the stakeholders of The Census Project (www.thecensusproject.org) implore you to provide full-year funding for the 2020 Census as soon as possible, at least at the Senate committee-passed level, whether as part of a package of final spending bills or in a new Continuing Resolution — whichever vehicle will be enacted first in the coming weeks.

The constitutionally mandated 2020 Census has already started. Twelve weeks after the most recent FY20 Continuing Resolution (CR) ([P.L. 116-69](#)) is due to expire on December 20, U.S. households will begin receiving their 2020 Census materials, by mail or hand-delivery. Major census operations have already begun and critical final steps— from recruiting and screening staff, to verifying addresses, to finalizing outreach and advertising plans — are finished or underway.

We are grateful that the latest CR, funding the federal government through December 20, provides the Census Bureau with a temporary spending rate of \$7.3 billion for the Periodic Censuses and Programs account, which includes a spending rate of at least \$6.7 billion for the 2020 Census, for the duration of the CR. It also allows the Bureau to spend at least \$90 million to implement a mobile Question Assistance Center program.

However, an accurate count is jeopardized without **sufficient, on-time resources**. The Census Bureau needs the **certainty of full-year funding for the 2020 Census now**, so that it can commit necessary resources for final preparations, major operations, and expanded activities targeting hard-to-count communities in rural, suburban and urban areas, without concern that its funding may fall short of need. **Therefore, in the event Congress must pass a third CR, we respectfully request that the bill include a direct full year appropriation — rather than an apportioned appropriation — of no less than the Senate committee-reported amount of \$6.7 billion for the 2020 Census (\$7.3 billion for the Periodic Censuses and Programs account in the Commerce, Justice, Science (CJS) Appropriations bill) the same level provided in the second CR.**

There is clear precedent for taking special care of census funding in a CR as the launch of peak counting operations approaches. In the prior decennial cycle, when not all full-year appropriations bills were completed on time at the start of FY10, Congress provided the Census Bureau with a full-year funding anomaly for its Periodic Censuses and Programs account in the first CR. We urge you to give the Census Bureau the same authority for 2020, should another CR be necessary.

Without funding certainty, the Census Bureau could be forced to curtail or delay important activities — from outreach and advertising, to cyber-security improvements, to hiring a full complement of census field staff — to prevent a funding shortfall later in the fiscal year. All major components of the census are equally important and intricately interrelated, and the Bureau can't confirm the scope and carry out each operation in a timely way unless it knows how much money it will have for each and every vital operation throughout the full fiscal year. Further, sufficient, timely funding is critical to the Census Bureau's capacity to address threats that could undermine the count — such as natural disasters, cyber-attacks, IT failures, disinformation campaigns, and low self-response (a significant risk given the first-time nature of the online portal and political controversies, which have diminished trust in the census in some communities). Full funding will allow the Census Bureau to reduce the risk of some of these threats, have plans ready to execute if these threats materialize, and execute contingency plans quickly, if necessary. Insufficient resources or funding uncertainty will hobble the Bureau's ability to manage risk and counter threats.

An inaccurate census resulting from delayed or insufficient funding would jeopardize the availability and quality of data required for essential decision-making across the U.S. for the next decade, in both the private and public sectors. Everything from apportioning representation, to business investment and siting decisions, to guiding the geographic distribution of \$1.5 trillion in federal funding every year,¹ depends on an accurate 2020 Census.

In conclusion, we are gravely concerned about the timing of funding, which is so critically important at this stage of the 2020 Census. The Census Bureau cannot make up for lost time during final census preparations and implementation, as it works between two statutory deadlines: Census Day on April 1, 2020, and the December 31, 2020 requirement to deliver the state population counts used for congressional apportionment to the President. **The window of opportunity to ensure a successful 2020 Census in all communities is closing.** Congress should remove any uncertainty as to the full-year funding level for the 2020 Census, and provide much-needed spending flexibility and foresight in the process, by appropriating the full amount for the 2020 Census (as part of the Periodic Censuses and Programs account) in the next CR or in the final FY 2020 appropriations measure covering the Census Bureau, whichever comes first.

Thank you for prioritizing the 2020 Census as Congress finalizes FY20 spending measures.

Sincerely,

National

Academic Pediatric Association

ACCESS (Arab Community Center for Economic and Social Services)

African American Health Alliance

¹ New Report Says \$1.5 Trillion in Federal Funding to States and Localities Annually Depends Upon Good Census Count. Nov. 18, 2019. <https://thecensusproject.org/2019/11/18/new-report-says-1-5-trillion-in-federal-funding-to-states-and-localities-annually-depends-upon-good-census-count/>

Alliance for Strong Families and Communities
American Academy of Pediatrics
American Anthropological Association
American Federation of Government Employees (AFGE)
American Federation of State, County, and Municipal
Employees (AFSCME)
American Federation of Teachers
American Heart Association
American Library Association
American Mathematical Society
American Pediatric Society
American Planning Association
American Sociological Association
American Statistical Association
American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee
Americans for Indian Opportunity
Arab American Institute
Asian American Legal Defense and Education Fund
(AALDEF)
Asian Pacific American Labor Alliance
Association of Medical School Pediatric Department Chairs
Association of Population Centers
Association of Public Data Users (APDU)
Association of State and Territorial Health Officials
Campaign Legal Center
Center for Native American Youth at the Aspen Institute
Child Care Aware of America
Coalition on Human Needs
Common Cause
Consortium of Social Science Associations
Council for Community and Economic Research
Council of Professional Associations on Federal Statistics
Decision Demographics
Dominicanos USA
Economic Policy Institute
Empowering Pacific Islander Communities (EPIC)
Feeding America
Food Research & Action Center
Government Information Watch
Hispanic Federation
Insights Association
International Association for Indigenous Aging
Justice in Aging
Laotian American National Alliance
League of Women Voters of the United States
NAACP

NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Inc.
NALEO Educational Fund
National Action Network
National Adult Day Services Association (NADSA)
National Adult Protective Services Association
National Association for Business Economics
National Association of Realtors (NAR)
National Association of Regional Councils
National Association of Social Workers
National Coalition on Black Civic Participation
National Community Development Association
National Congress of American Indians
National Council of Nonprofits
National Diaper Bank Network
National Disability Rights Network
National League of Cities
National Low Income Housing Coalition
National Urban Indian Family Coalition
National WIC Association
NEO Philanthropy
NETWORK Lobby for Catholic Social Justice
Network of Jewish Human Service Agencies
Nielsen
OCA - Asian Pacific American Advocates
Partnership for America's Children.
Pediatric Policy Council
PFLAG National
Planned Parenthood Federation of America
Population Association of America
Prison Policy Initiative
Queens Alumnae Chapter Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc.
ReadyNation
Ribbon Demographics, LLC
Seattle Indian Health Board
Service Employees International Union (SEIU)
Society for Pediatric Research
Southeast Asia Resource Action Center (SEARAC)
State Voices
The Gerontological Society of America
The Jewish Federations of North America
The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights
U.S. Conference of Mayors
UJA-Federation of New York
Union for Reform Judaism
United Church of Christ Justice and Witness Ministries
Urban and Regional Information Systems Association

Voices for Progress
 Women Donors Network
 Xaverian Brothers
 ZERO TO THREE

State/Local/City/Regional

ABG Consulting LLC		ME
Advancement Project California		
Advocates for Children of New Jersey		NJ
Agenda for Children		LA
American Indian Center		IL
American Indians in Texas at the Spanish Colonial Missions	San Antonio	TX
American Planning Association Florida Chapter		FL
Arab American and Chaldean Council (ACC)	Troy	MI
Asian American Federation		NY
Association of Chinese Americans, Inc.	Madison Heights, Detroit, Canton, Macomb	MI
Berrien Community Foundation	St. Joseph	MI
Bilingual International Assistant Services	St. Louis	MO
Black Lives Matter Brooklyn	Brooklyn	NY
Brooklyn Community Foundation	Brooklyn	NY
California Native Vote Project		CA
Center for Pan Asian Community Services, Inc. (CPACS)	Atlanta	GA
Center for the Integration and Advancement of New Americans, Inc. (CIANA).	Astoria	NY
Chaldean Community Foundation		MI
Children's Advocacy Alliance		NV
Citizens' Committee for Children of New York		NY
City of Pleasant Ridge, MI	Pleasant Ridge	MI
CivicGeorgia		GA
Cleveland VOTES	Cleveland	OH
Colorado Civic Engagement Roundtable		CO
Community Economic Development Association of Michigan		MI
Community Foundation of Marquette County	Marquette	MI
Detroit Hispanic Development Corporation	Detroit	MI
Equality California		CA
Fair Count Inc.		GA
Fairfield County's Community Foundation	Fairfield County	CT
Florida Nonprofit Alliance		
Fremont Area Community Foundation	Fremont	MI
Georgia Association of Latino Elected Officials (GALEO)		GA
Global Cleveland	Cleveland	OH
Greater New Jersey Pride At Work		NJ
Habitat for Humanity of Michigan		MI
Heart of West Michigan United Way	Grand Rapids	MI
Housing Action Illinois		IL

Human Service Chamber of Franklin County	Columbus	OH
Incompass Michigan		MI
Indiana United Ways		IN
International Institute of St. Louis	St. Louis	MO
Japanese American Social Services, Inc.		NY
Jewish Family and Children's Service of Minneapolis	Minneapolis	MN
Jewish Family Services of Columbus	Columbus	OH
Kansas Action for Children		KS
Kentucky Nonprofit Network		KY
Kentucky Youth Advocates		KY
KIDS COUNT in Delaware		DE
Lifewise STL	St. Louis	MO
Literacy Assistance Center		NY
MACS 2020 - Minnesotans for the American Community Survey & 2020 Census		MN
Marion County Commission on Youth, Inc.		IN
Metropolitan Council	St Paul	MN
Michigan Asian Pacific American Affairs Commission		MI
Michigan Community Action		MI
Michigan League for Public Policy		MI
Michigan Nonprofit Association		MI
Michigan Voice		MI
Michigan's Children		MI
Mid York Library System	Utica	NY
MinKwon Center for Community Action	Flushing	NY
Minnesota Census Mobilization Partnership		MN
Minnesota Council on Foundations		MN
Missouri Immigrant & Refugee Advocates		MO
NACA Inspired Schools Network		NM
NC Child		NC
NC Counts Coalition		NC
New Georgia Project Action Fund		GA
New Jersey Institute for Social Justice		NJ
New Mexico Thrives		NM
New Michigan Media		MI
NMIC	New York City	NY
Nonprofit Network	Jackson - Mid Michigan	MI
Oklahoma Institute for Child Advocacy		OK
PathWays PA	Folsom	PA
Pennsylvania Partnerships for Children		PA
Philanthropy California		CA
PICO California		
Public Justice Center		MD
Research Advisory Services, Inc.	Phoenix	AZ
Rhode Island KIDS COUNT		RI
RISE for Youth		VA

San Diego Grantmakers	San Diego	CA
SEPA Mujer Inc.	Patchogue	NY
Silver State Equality-Nevada		NV
SOMA Action	Maplewood	NJ
South Asian Network	Artesia	CA
Southeast Michigan Census Council	Metro Detroit	MI
Sunnyside Community Services	Sunnyside	NY
Texas Progressive Action Network		TX
The Arc Michigan		MI
The Children's Partnership		CA
United Way of Madison County, Indiana, Inc.	Anderson	IN
Urban League of Detroit & SEM	Detroit	MI
Vernon Area Public Library	Lincolnshire	IL
Virginia Civic Engagement Table		VA
VOICES for Alabama's Children		AL
Voices for Virginia's Children		VA
Washington University in St. Louis		MO
Westchester Children's Association	White Plains	NY
Westchester Library System	Elmsford	NY
Western Native Voice		MT
Women for Afghan Women	Fresh Meadows	NY

cc The Honorable Mitch McConnell
 The Honorable Charles Schumer
 The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
 The Honorable Steny Hoyer
 The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
 The Honorable Jerry Moran
 The Honorable Jean Shaheen
 The Honorable Jose Serrano
 The Honorable Robert Aderholt