

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

May 18, 2017

The Honorable Richard Shelby  
Chairman  
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice,  
Science, and Related Agencies  
142 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Jeanne Shaheen  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice,  
Science, and Related Agencies  
125 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Shelby and Ranking Member Shaheen,

We are writing to urge you to provide the Census Bureau strong funding in the Fiscal Year 2018 Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies appropriations bill in order to prepare for the 2020 Census.

The Census is vitally important to our nation's future. Not only do state and local governments rely on it in planning critical services and investments, but businesses and non-profit organizations rely on the accurate, accessible data provided by the Census to plan their investments and services as well. The critical role played by the Census in helping to create economic opportunities and services in our local communities is too often overlooked. Businesses across the nation use Census data to create new jobs, develop new projects to meet population needs, and expand to new areas. Non-profits in our states, from hospitals to community organizations, use Census data to better understand the needs of their localities.

Fiscal Year 2018 is a critical year of preparation to successfully execute the 2020 Census. The Census Bureau is conducting research and developing new data collection technology that could save taxpayers more than \$5 billion over the lifecycle of the Census. This year, the Census Bureau must complete production of interoperable systems to implement a re-designed Census as well as initiate the Local Update of Census Addresses program in partnership with state and local governments, finalize questionnaire content for congressional approval, and acquire Regional Census Centers. Additionally, the Bureau will be performing an End-to-End Readiness test in 2018, requiring completion of the new information technology systems.

Accurate planning and testing is crucial in the years before the actual 2020 Census in order for it to be rolled out correctly and as efficiently as possible. Enumerating all U.S. residents is a time intensive and complicated process because the U.S. population is large, transient, and distributed over a wide geographic area. It is important that we understand the population in order to make the efficient investments we need to compete in the global economy.

We respectfully request that you provide the Census Bureau the financial resources it needs to adequately plan and test data collection methods. This funding supports future investments to strengthen our economy – like education innovation, and infrastructure. Failure to invest in planning and preparation now could leave the Census Bureau with no choice but to use

traditional counting methods that are expensive and less accurate. A well-funded Census Bureau will save taxpayer dollars in the future, and result in a more cost effective, accurate 2020 Census.

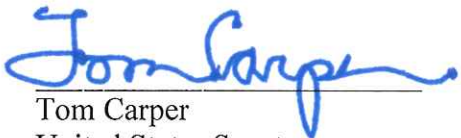
Sincerely,



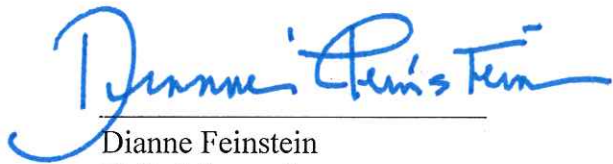
Al Franken  
United States Senator



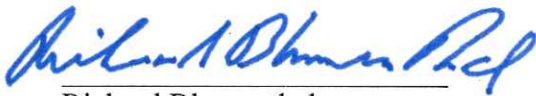
Kirsten Gillibrand  
United States Senator



Tom Carper  
United States Senator



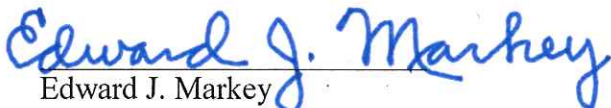
Dianne Feinstein  
United States Senator



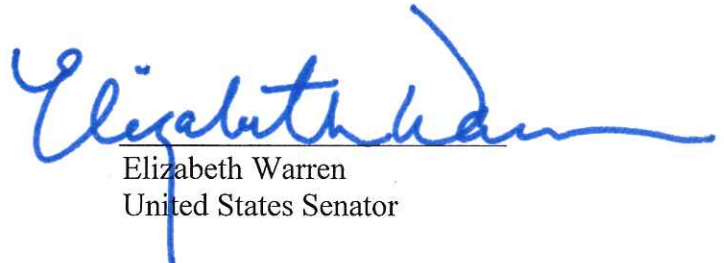
Richard Blumenthal  
United States Senator



Martin Heinrich  
United States Senator



Edward J. Markey  
United States Senator



Elizabeth Warren  
United States Senator



Michael F. Bennet  
United States Senator



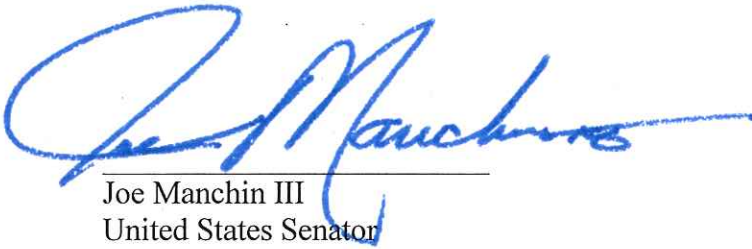
Amy Klobuchar  
United States Senator



Robert Menendez  
United States Senator

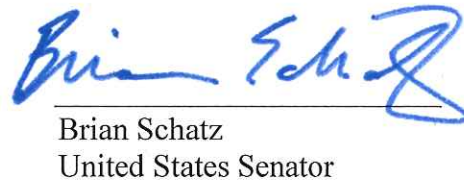


Margaret Wood Hassan  
United States Senator



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Joe Manchin III  
United States Senator



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Brian Schatz  
United States Senator



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Chris Van Hollen  
United States Senator



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Sherrod Brown  
United States Senator