April 24, 2017

Dear Senator:

As you consider the final FY 2017 appropriations bills and the FY 2018 bills, the multisector, nonpartisan Census Project urges you to consider the upcoming increased expenditures that will be needed to plan and then implement the U.S. Census Bureau’s 2018 End-To-End field test of new, innovative and cost-saving techniques for the 2020 Census.

This large-scale field test of 700,000 targeted households next year in Rhode Island, Washington state and West Virginia will be needed to test all elements of the Census Bureau’s plans before taking the 2020 Census. The resources for implementing this critical test are substantial both this fiscal year and next.

Therefore, either in your omnibus FY 2017 appropriations for the Census Bureau or in an anomaly, if you proceed with a Continuing Resolution for the balance of this fiscal year, we call upon Congress to provide the 2020 Census with as close as possible to the Census Bureau’s FY 2017 budget request of $1.35 billion for Periodic Censuses and Programs, but no less than the $1.25 billion level for this account recommended by the Senate Committee on Appropriations (S. 2837).

The 2020 Census will need a steady ramp-up of funds, without sacrificing the scope and quality of other large scale surveys like the American Community Survey. The budget for FY 2018 therefore must provide another substantial increase in funds over the FY 2017 amounts originally requested.

The Periodic Censuses and Programs (PCP) account covers final planning and early preparations for the 2020 Census, as well as vital support activities such as development of a new IT architecture (CEDCaP) and updating the Master Address File and digital maps (Geographic Support Services). In addition, the PCP account funds the American Community Survey (ACS), the ongoing portion of the census that updates important data to guide decision-making and resource allocation throughout the decade. The Census Bureau has indicated that failure to adequately fund the PCP account in FY2017 will force suspension of ACS data collection for at least one month this year, jeopardizing the quality and reliability of data for all communities, but especially for rural and less populous areas and small population groups, such as veterans and persons with disabilities.

Failure to fund this cyclical ramp-up for the 2020 Census would severely jeopardize the fairness and accuracy of the next decennial census.

Sincerely,

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1 The Census Project (www.thecensusproject.org) is a long-standing coalition of diverse census stakeholders that includes state and local governments, business and industry, civil rights and labor groups, housing and child advocates, and research and professional organizations that support an accurate and comprehensive census and ACS.
Advocates for Children and Youth
Advocates for Children of New Jersey
American Educational Research Association
American Sociological Association
American Statistical Association
American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee
Asian & Pacific Islander American Health Forum
Asian American Federation
Asian Americans Advancing Justice - AAJC
Asian Pacific American Institute for Congressional Studies
Association of Population Centers
Association of Public Data Users (APDU)
Capital District Regional Planning Commission
Center for Asian American Media
Child and Family Policy Center
Child Care Aware of America
Children Now
Connecticut Association for Human Services
Connecticut Voices for Children
Consortium of Social Science Associations
Cornell Institute for Social and Economic Research
Council for Community and Economic Research (C2ER)
Decision Demographics
FairVote
Forefront
Housing Consortium of Everett & Snohomish County
Indiana Business Research Center, Kelley School of Business
Insights Association
Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research
Kansas Action for Children
Laotian American National Alliance
Latino Census Network
League of United Latin American Citizens
Long Island Housing Services, Inc.
MACS 2020 - Minnesotans for the American Community Survey and the 2020 Census
Michigan Disability Rights Coalition
Michigan Forward Urban Affairs Group, LLC
Michigan Nonprofit Association
Minnesota Council on Foundations
Minnesota State Demographic Center
Montgomery County Community Action Board

Baltimore MD
Newark NJ

New York NY

Albany NY

Des Moines IA

Oakland CA

Hartford CT

New Haven CT

Ithaca NY

Topeka KS

Bohemia NY

Minneapolis MN

East Lansing MI

Detroit MI

Lansing MI


St. Paul MN

MD
NAACP
NAKASEC
NALEO Educational Fund
Nashville Area Metropolitan Planning Organization
National Association for Business Economics
National Association of Social Workers
National CAPACD
National Council of Asian Pacific Americans (NCAPA)
National Institute for Latino Policy (NiLP)
National Low Income Housing Coalition
Nazareth Housing Services
NC Child
NETWORK Lobby for Catholic Social Justice
New Jersey Public Health Association
New Mexico Voices for Children
Partnership for America's Children
Pennsylvania Partnerships for Children
Philanthropy Ohio
Population Association of America
Prison Policy Initiative
Public Justice Center
Quorum
Ramsey County
Research Advisory Services, Inc.
Ribbon Demographics, LLC
RLS Demographics
SER Jobs for Progress National Inc.
Social IMPACT Research Center at Heartland Alliance
Social Science Research Institute, Duke University
Southeast Michigan Census Council
SSTI
State Voices
Sugar Law Center for Economic & Social Justice
Tangible Consulting Services
The Center for Asian Pacific American Women
Urban and Regional Information Systems Association (URISA)
Voices for Vermont's Children
West Virginia Healthy Kids and Families Coalition
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