

# Urge President Trump to quickly nominate a qualified, non-partisan U.S. Census Director

Sending Office: Honorable Ruben Gallego  
Sent By: [Marisel.Jorgensen@mail.house.gov](mailto:Marisel.Jorgensen@mail.house.gov)

Request for  
Signature(s)

**ENDORSED BY: American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), National Council of La Raza (NCLR), League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC), and Asian Americans Advancing Justice (AAJC)**

**Signers (57):** Gallego, Jeffries, Meng, Crowley, Meeks, Eddie Bernice Johnson, Butterfield, Anthony Brown, Rush, Napolitano, Serrano, Clay, Perlmutter, Lieu, Norton, Schakowsky, Raskin, Dingell, Danny Davis, Roybal-Allard, McCollum, Conyers, Hanabusa, Torres, Costa, Lee, Brownley, Watson Coleman, Clarke, Chu, Jayapal, Adam Smith, Cicilline, Pallone, Gonzalez, Richmond, Nolan, Lawrence, Vargas, Frederica Wilson, Lujan Grisham, Speier, Payne, Gutiérrez, Polis, Carbajal, McGovern, Beatty, Huffman, Sires, Maloney, Cárdenas, Grijalva, Matsui, Evans, Bobby Scott, Ellison

Dear Colleague:

As a result of the abrupt resignation of U.S. Census Director John Thompson and other high-level vacancies, the Census Bureau is in urgent need of strong, capable and trustworthy leadership. The coming year will be critical in the decade-long process of preparing for the U.S. census, and the fairness and accuracy of the 2020 survey could be at risk if an appropriate leader is not nominated soon.

Preparations for the 2020 census have already been shadowed by political controversies that could result in inaccurate undercounting of minority and immigrant communities. Because the results of the census play a key role in everything from congressional redistricting to the allocation of federal resources, it's imperative that the next Director is both highly qualified and non-partisan – an individual deserving of the trust and respect of Members on both sides of the aisle.

Please join us in urging President Trump to ensure that the 2020 census is conducted fairly and accurately by promptly nominating a proven leader to serve in this crucial role. The text of the letter is below. Please contact Matt Lee in Rep. Gallego's office ([Matt.Lee2@mail.house.gov](mailto:Matt.Lee2@mail.house.gov)), Zoe Oreck in Rep. Jeffries' office ([Zoe.Oreck@mail.house.gov](mailto:Zoe.Oreck@mail.house.gov)) or Rachana Shah in Rep. Meng's office ([Rachana.Shah@mail.house.gov](mailto:Rachana.Shah@mail.house.gov)) with any questions or to sign-on.

Sincerely,

Ruben Gallego

MEMBER OF CONGRESS

Hakeem S. Jeffries

MEMBER OF CONGRESS

Grace Meng

MEMBER OF CONGRESS

Dear President Trump:

We write to express our concerns regarding the impending vacancy at the head of the U.S. Census Bureau. On May 9<sup>th</sup>, U.S. Census Director John H. Thompson unexpectedly announced that he will step down from his post next month despite the fact that his term is set to expire in December 2017. In order to avoid compromising the 2020 census, we strongly request that you move quickly to nominate a new Director who is both non-partisan and highly qualified to fill this critical position.

Director Thompson's abrupt departure paired with other high-level vacancies have left a leadership void at the top of the Bureau. The agency currently has no permanent Deputy Director and no Deputy Secretary of Commerce to directly oversee its operations. These vacancies call into question the availability of a qualified interim acting director and could endanger the Bureau's ability to adequately prepare for dissemination of the 2020 census.

Given this leadership vacuum, it is critical that you appoint a well-qualified, experienced, and nonpartisan leader to guide this enormously significant undertaking. The results of the U.S. Census play a crucial role in everything from congressional redistricting to the distribution of federal resources. GAO's recent addition of the 2020 Census to its high risk list further reinforces the need for effective leadership at the Bureau. In order to maintain the trust of the American people, the census must be led by an individual who is unquestionably impartial and free from undue partisan influence.

In light of heightened concerns about the undercounting of minority populations, it's more important than ever for the individual heading the Bureau to have a proven record of competence, integrity, and objectivity. A partisan choice for Director could lead to increased mistrust in the communities most likely to be undercounted – especially immigrant communities – which could severely undermine the 2020 census process.

Finally, it is vital to move quickly to fill Director Thompson's position because of the uniquely time-sensitive operations of the U.S. Census Bureau. The agency is expected to conduct a full field test of the survey in 2018 to ensure a smooth and effective rollout in 2020. In order to have leadership in place for this essential step in the census preparation process and to afford the Senate ample time to vet a nominee, we urge you to identify an appropriate nominee with all possible haste.

Thank you for your attention to this request. We look forward to the appointment of a qualified and nonpartisan leader who will work to ensure the completion of a transparent, fair, and effective 2020 census.

Sincerely,

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