



February 22, 2018

The Honorable Thad Cochran  
Chairman  
U.S. Senate Committee on Appropriations  
S-128, The Capitol  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Patrick Leahy  
Vice Chairman  
U.S. Senate Committee on Appropriations  
S-146A, The Capitol  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Rodney Frelinghuysen  
Chairman  
U.S. House Committee on Appropriations  
H-305, The Capitol  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Nita Lowey  
Ranking Member  
U.S. House Committee on Appropriations  
1016 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Cochran, Vice Chairman Leahy, Chairman Frelinghuysen, and Ranking Member Lowey:

On behalf of a broad-based coalition of business, civic, and academic groups who strongly support a full, fair, complete and accurate 2020 Decennial Census, The Census Project ([www.thecensusproject.org](http://www.thecensusproject.org)) urges you to secure the mandate of the U.S. Constitution to fairly distribute political representation and to power the nation's economic growth and job creation by ensuring full funding for the U.S. Census Bureau in the final FY 2018 omnibus appropriations bill.

**We further urge you to make investment in the best possible Census for 2020 when allocating additional funding by increasing the 302(b) allocations for the Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies (CJS) bill at the highest possible level to accommodate the traditional and necessary increase in Census Bureau funding at this point in the Decennial planning cycle.** As you know, FY 2018 is a pivotal year in which the Census Bureau, among other things, conducts the End-to-End Readiness test—the final, and only, assessment of technological innovations conducted in a census-like environment. FY 2018 is also an important year for launching efforts, such as the Partnership Program, to encourage historically hard-to-count populations to participate in the Decennial—efforts that will help ensure the accuracy and quality of decennial census data and save taxpayers potentially millions of dollars by boosting self-response rates. Decennial census data are central to our democracy, affecting not only apportionment and redistricting, but also the distribution of approximately \$600 billion in federal assistance to states and localities each year, or more than \$6 trillion over the coming decade.

Increasing the 302(b) allocation is the critical first step to securing even the minimum funding level necessary for the professionals at the Census Bureau to fully implement the long-planned operations to launch 2020 activities that will soon begin. We respect that there are many demands and difficult tradeoffs in your deliberations over 302(b) allocations; however, we

[www.TheCensusProject.org](http://www.TheCensusProject.org)

submit that only one of these is a Constitutionally mandated task that has one opportunity for success.

Thank you for considering our request and for your leadership regarding the 2020 Census.

Sincerely,



Phil Sparks  
Co-Director



Mary Jo Hoeksema  
Co-Director



Howard Fienberg  
Co-Director