



131 West 33rd Street
Suite 610
New York, NY 10001
(212) 627-2227
www.nyic.org

February 20, 2018
By USPS Express Mail

The Honorable Wilbur L. Ross, Jr.
Secretary of Commerce
U.S. Department of Commerce
1401 Constitution Avenue NW
Washington, D.C. 20230

John M. Mulvaney
Director of the Office of Management and Budget
725 17th Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20503

Dear Secretary Ross and Director Mulvaney:

On behalf of 106 undersigned organizations throughout New York State, we are requesting that you reject any effort by the Department of Justice to add a question regarding citizenship to the 2020 decennial Census. To do otherwise, would severely undermine the accuracy and non-partisan legitimacy of the Census, impair the delicate trust between the community and the role of the Census, and skyrocket the cost of the Census.

A non-partisan, reliable and responsive 2020 Census is needed to ensure the proper distribution of over \$600 billion in federal funding to communities across this country for needed schools, hospitals, housing, and transportation. For that reason, great effort has been expended by the Census to ensure questions will elicit both an accurate and high response rate, a process that has involved extensive screening, focus groups, and field tests. At this stage in the process, there is no time to add questions that have not been properly vetted, especially since citizenship is already included in the American Community Survey.

There is no doubt that adding a citizenship question to the decennial Census would pose a chilling effect and result in a significant undercount, particularly by already under-counted racial and ethnic minority groups, including immigrants and non-citizens. Such requests to bypass the process would only fuel distrust and concerns of the Census Bureau's obligation to keep the data confidential amid heightened anti-immigrant furor in the current, politically charged climate and the checkered history of the Bureau sharing data to aid the government in the internment of Japanese Americans during World War II and the post 9-11 targeting of Arabs, Muslims, and South Asians. Further, a high non-response rate to the Census, would result in exorbitant follow-up costs to do door-to-door canvassing to ensure an accurate count.

We are asking you to ensure the Census remains non-partisan and is not politicized, and to work with us to ensure an accurate decennial Census that involves maximum participation by the entire, diverse population that constitutes this great nation.

Sincerely,



Steven Choi, Esq.
Executive Director
New York Immigration Coalition

New York Statewide:

American Jewish Committee
Asian American Federation
CAIR-NY
Common Cause/New York
Greater New York Labor Religion Coalition
Japanese American Citizens League-New York
The Japanese American Association of New York Inc.
LatinoJustice, PRLDEF
NAACP Legal Defense & Educational Fund, Inc.
National Action Network (NAN)
New York Civil Liberties Union
New York Immigration Coalition
Omicron Chapter of Phi Iota Alpha
Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union

New York City:

AJC NY
African Communities Together
Arab American Family Support Center
Asian Americans for Equality
Bangladeshi American Community Development and Youth Services
Brooklyn Defender Services
CAAAY-Organizing Asian Communities
Cabrini Immigrant Services of NYC
CHHAYA, CDC
Chinese American Planning Counsel
Chinese Progressive Association
Coalition of Asian-American IPA
Columbia Law School Latino/a Law Students Association

Nightline Peer Listening at Columbia College
Community Voices Heard
Damayan Migrant Workers Association
DRUM - Desis Rising Up & Moving
DSI International, Inc.
El Centro del Inmigrante
Emerald Isle Immigration Center
GlobeMed
Henry Street Settlement
Hunter Dream Team
Indo-Caribbean Alliance
Japanese American Social Services, Inc.
Korean American Youth Foundation
Masa-MexEd, Inc.
DuBois Bunche Center for Public Policy, Medgar Evers College, CUNY
Mexican Coalition for the Empowerment of Youth and Families
Mexican Student Association (MexSA)
MinKwon Center for Community Action
American Constitution Society at New York University School of Law
A/P/A Institute at New York University
New York University Asian Pacific American Coalition
Bengali Students Association, New York University
The Interfaith Students of Color Coalition, New York University
Generation Citizen @ New York University
Immigrant Justice Center, Elisabeth Haub School of Law at Pace University, John Jay Legal Services
Independent Drivers Guild
Latino Commission on AIDS
Latino Unidos Con Honor y Amistad @ New York University
Phi Chapter of Hermandad de Sigma Iota Alpha, Inc.
ProColumbia-New York University Chapter
NMIC
OCA-NY
OCA-APA Advocates-Long Island Chapter
Opportunities for a Better Tomorrow
People's Theatre Project
Pilipino American Unity for Progress (UNIPRO)
Asian/American Center at Queens College (CUNY)
Queer Detainee Empowerment Project
Russian-speaking Community Council of Manhattan and the Bronx, Inc.
Safe Horizon Immigration Law Project
Sakhi for South Asian Women
SAPNA NYC
Shetu Inc.

South Asian Council for Social Services (SACSS)
Sunnyside Community Services
The Door-A Center of Alternatives
The Ghanaian Association of Staten Island, NY Inc.
United Neighborhood Houses
UNITEHERE Local 100
University Settlement
Viva Peru
Volunteers of Legal Service
Womankind

Long Island:

Dejus Center, Inc.
Long Island Wins
OCA-APA Advocates-Long Island Chapter

Upper and Lower Hudson Valley/Westchester:

Community Resource Center
Community Voices Heard
OCA-Westchester and Hudson Valley Chapter
Worker Justice Center of New York, Inc.

Northern New York:

Plattsburgh Cares

Central New York:

American Constitution Society-Cornell Law School Chapter
Tompkins County Immigrant Rights Coalition
Volunteers Lawyers Project of Onondaga County
Workers Center of Central New York

Western New York State:

ACCESS of WNY
Catholic Family Center
First Presbyterian Church of Buffalo
Greater Rochester Coalition for Immigration Justice
International Institute of Buffalo
Justice for Migrant Families
Kids for College

Legal Aid Society of Rochester
PUSH Buffalo
Sisters of St. Joseph of Rochester Office
University at Buffalo, SUNY
Wayne Action for Racial Equality
Western New York Council on Occupational Safety and Health (WNYCOSH)
Worker Justice Center of New York, Inc.

Outside New York State:

OCA-New Jersey Chapter
OCA-San Mateo Chapter
Wind of the Spirit, Immigrant Resource Center

cc:

New York Congressional Delegation
New York State Senate
New York State Assembly
New York City Council
New York Governor Cuomo
Buffalo Mayor Brown
Rochester Mayor Warren
Syracuse Mayor Walsh
New York City Mayor de Blasio
Nassau County Executive Curran
Suffolk County Executive Bellone
Westchester County Executive Latimer