

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

March 16, 2018

The Honorable John Culberson  
Chairman  
House Committee on Appropriations  
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice,  
Science & Related Agencies  
H-305  
The Capitol  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Jose Serrano  
Ranking Member  
House Committee on Appropriations  
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice,  
Science and Related Agencies  
H-305  
The Capitol  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Culberson and Ranking Member Serrano,

As you consider appropriations for fiscal year 2019, we respectfully urge you to provide at least \$4.239 billion in funding to the U.S. Census Bureau. This amount is \$438 million above the Administration's FY2019 request of \$3.801 billion for the Bureau and reflects the level stated in the Department of Commerce's revised FY2019 cost estimate for the 2020 Census. As you know, FY2019 marks the peak operations for the 2020 Decennial Census as the Bureau opens forty field offices, conducts in-field address canvassing, and forms partnerships with local communities to help increase response rates.

The decennial census is a cornerstone of our constitutional system of government. It is used to apportion seats in the House of Representatives, define state legislature districts, and determine school district assignments. Census data helps the private sector make sound investments by identifying unsaturated or emerging growth markets and developing business plans and loan applications. The data also helps Congress make decisions on how distribute over \$4 billion in federal funding including, homeland security grants, funding for first responders, special-education and rural business enterprise grants, and other programs key to the American economy.

The 2020 Census is expected to be the largest and most digitally advanced census ever conducted, embracing new technology and data collection that could save more than \$5 billion over the lifecycle of the census. Unfortunately, a lack of adequate funding in previous fiscal years has already forced the Census Bureau to cancel tests of field operations in several locations, delay development and testing of critical information technology systems, and reduce the scope of the 2018 end-to-end test.

In addition to field operations, appropriating sufficient funding in FY2019 is critical to ensuring that critical information technology systems are tested and ready for use during the 2020 Decennial Census. Failing to do so could cost taxpayers billions of dollars, as the Census Bureau could be forced to revert to a paper and pencil census that threatens both cost effectiveness and accuracy.

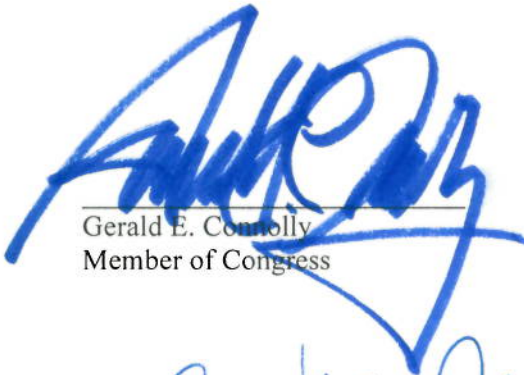
Funding for FY2019 is critical to ensuring system readiness for the 2020 Census and completing the list of residential addresses that will allow the Census Bureau to know where housing units are located throughout the country. Adequate funding is essential to ensure the proper integration of the 44 IT systems the Census Bureau plans to deploy for the 2020 Census. If any of the systems fail or do not integrate properly, decennial operations may be disrupted, costs could rise, data could be lost, and data quality could be compromised.

Funding above the Administration's request is also needed to ensure that the Bureau will not cut corners in conducting in-field address canvassing, in which approximately 76,000 people will go into communities to ensure that the Census Bureau has a complete list of all residential addresses and that the 2020 Census reaches all housing units in all localities.

Finally, in FY2019, the Census Bureau will finalize and print all materials that will be mailed to households for the 2020 Census. If the Census Bureau does not receive adequate funding for FY2019 and is not able to complete these activities, this or other preparations for the 2020 Census may be delayed and the quality of the 2020 Census will suffer.

Thank you for considering our views on this important matter. While we recognize and appreciate the challenges your Committee faces in drafting this legislation, we strongly urge you to provide robust funding for the U.S. Census Bureau so that it may fulfill its Constitutional mandate effectively and accurately.

Sincerely,



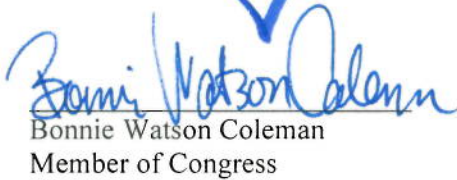
Gerald E. Connolly  
Member of Congress



Carolyn B. Maloney  
Member of Congress



Keith Ellison  
Member of Congress



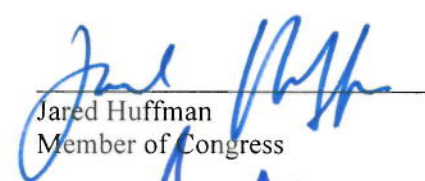
Bonnie Watson Coleman  
Member of Congress



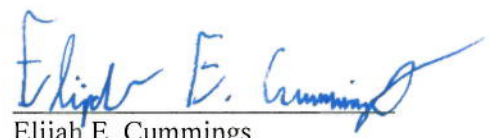
Joyce Beatty  
Member of Congress



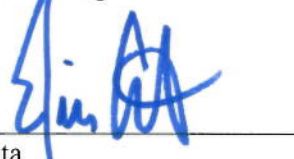
Mark DeSaulnier  
Member of Congress



Jared Huffman  
Member of Congress



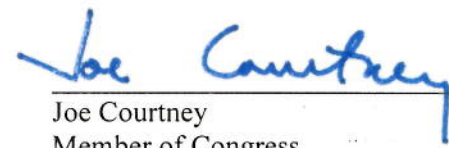
Elijah E. Cummings  
Member of Congress



Jim Costa  
Member of Congress



Barbara Lee  
Member of Congress



Joe Courtney  
Member of Congress





---

Zoe Lofgren  
Member of Congress



---

Alcee L. Hastings  
Member of Congress



---

Brad Sherman  
Member of Congress



---

Adriano Espaillat  
Member of Congress



---

Debbie Dingell  
Member of Congress




---

Danny K. Davis  
Member of Congress



---

Jamie Raskin  
Member of Congress



---

André Carson  
Member of Congress



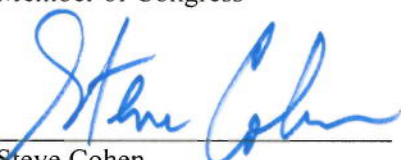
---

Janice D. Schakowsky  
Member of Congress




---

Daniel W. Lipinski  
Member of Congress



---

Steve Cohen  
Member of Congress



---

Judy Chu  
Member of Congress



---

Dina Titus  
Member of Congress



---

Vicente Gonzalez  
Member of Congress



---

Filemon Vela  
Member of Congress



---

Brenda L. Lawrence  
Member of Congress



Darren Soto  
Member of Congress



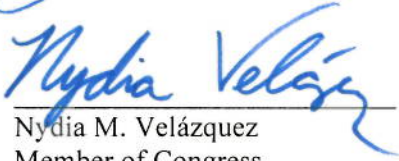
Terri A. Sewell  
Member of Congress



Jackie Speier  
Member of Congress



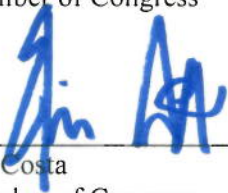
Earl Blumenauer  
Member of Congress



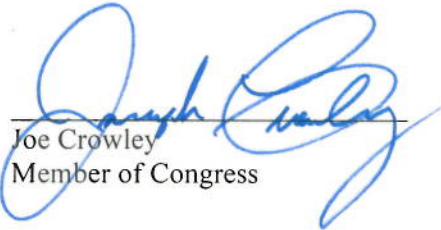
Nydia M. Velázquez  
Member of Congress



Alma S. Adams  
Member of Congress



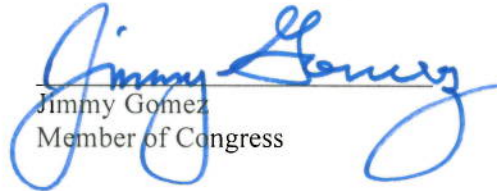
Jim Costa  
Member of Congress



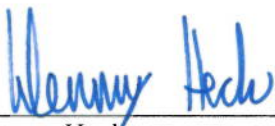
Joe Crowley  
Member of Congress



Charlie Crist  
Member of Congress



Jimmy Gomez  
Member of Congress



Denny Heck  
Member of Congress



Richard M. Nolan  
Member of Congress



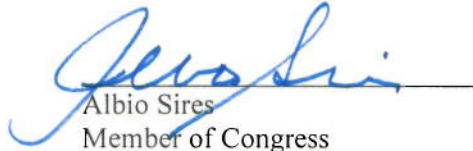
Yvette D. Clarke  
Member of Congress



Wm. Lacy Clay  
Member of Congress



J. Luis Correa  
Member of Congress



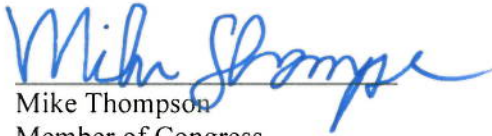
Albio Sires  
Member of Congress



Eleanor Holmes Norton  
Member of Congress



Sander M. Levin  
Member of Congress



Mike Thompson  
Member of Congress