



STATE OF MINNESOTA

Office of Governor Mark Dayton

130 State Capitol ♦ 75 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd ♦ Saint Paul, MN 55155-1611

June 20, 2018

Jennifer Jessup
Departmental Paperwork Clearance Officer
Department of Commerce, Room 6616
14th and Constitution Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20230

Dear Ms. Jessup:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the U.S. Census Bureau's proposed information collection for the 2020 Census, as published in the Federal Register Vol. 83, No. 111, June 8, 2018, pp. 26643-26653. The State of Minnesota supports the Census Bureau's goal of a complete and accurate 2020 Census. We appreciate the scientific rigor and careful forethought that the Census Bureau has long used to guide its important work. The Federal Register notice itself cites the multiple field tests and metrics that have been carefully considered in shaping the 2020 Census Operational Plan.

Census data provides the most up-to-date information we have on the characteristics of the people in Minnesota. Without an accurate count, it is difficult for state and local governments to use taxpayer dollars wisely, nonprofit organizations to respond to community needs, and business leaders to understanding markets and make strong investments. The decennial Census and its companion ACS are the lifeblood of wise decision-making for the next decade.

Further, if Minnesotans are undercounted in 2020, our fair share of federal tax dollars will not return to our communities. The decennial Census guides the distribution of more than 8 billion federal dollars to the State of Minnesota each year—that's \$1,532 per Minnesotan per year. Federal grants distributed on the basis of the census support the education, transportation, housing, and health of Minnesota residents across the state.

I am concerned with the addition of the citizenship question on the 2020 Census as it is a clear departure from the Census Bureau's history of careful, data-informed planning, and I am concerned that the inclusion of this question will irreparably degrade the quality, utility, and clarity of the 2020 Census data. Numerous experts from inside and outside the Census Bureau have voiced concerns that the new question will negatively impact the quality of the data. As Minnesota's Governor, I am troubled by these warnings. If the 2020 Census is not accurate and complete, it will be to our state's detriment for years to come.

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The decennial census has provided a foundation for our American democracy since 1790. Although a full count is never a foregone conclusion in any Census, the question on citizenship was developed outside the rigorous testing and development processes which the Census Bureau normally conducts and poses an unacceptable risk of discouraging participation. A complete and accurate count of everyone fosters responsible, representative government. Without a clear understanding of how this new question will affect participation rates, I cannot support its addition in 2020.

Sincerely,



Mark Dayton
Governor