



For Immediate Release: August 8, 2019

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Local Communities' Stake for Quality 2020 Census Never Higher: New Study Shows Major Federal Funding for Cities, Towns, States At Risk

WASHINGTON – The results of the 2020 decennial census are expected to determine the geographic allocation of approximately \$900 billion in federal spending annually. New details of a [study](#) prepared by the Project on Government Oversight (POGO) and the Counting for Dollars Project at George Washington University details some of the real financial impact for America's communities. POGO released details on federal funding directed at America's states, cities, and towns from five major federal programs that use Census data to allocate more than \$21 billion in federal funds to local governments.

Leaders of [The Census Project](#), a coalition of census stakeholders representing business, industry, civil rights, academia and state and local government, pointed to the new findings released last month as demonstrating why every American community cannot wait to start mobilizing for a full, fair, and accurate 2020 Census. The study provides a state by state, county by county breakdown of the federal funding at risk if communities do not stand up and get counted. Overall, at least \$9 trillion in federal funds are at stake before the nation conducts its next head count in 2030, according to data from the Counting for Dollars Project.

[Counting for Dollars](#), led by Professor Andrew Reamer, has been continuously updating the impact of federal funding since mid-2017 as more federal spending data became available. The new study with [POGO](#) is titled "The Distribution of Census-Guided Federal Funds to U.S. Communities: Five Program Examples."

"This is an incredible resource for every Mayor, town council, or local Chamber of Commerce to understand the consequence of a census undercount for their community," said Census Project co-director Mary Jo Hoeksema. "We are sharing this great work by POGO and GW with all our stakeholders to help them make the case for everyone to mobilize for a full 2020 count."

"The fair and equitable distribution of federal financial assistance to governments and households in each state will depend on the accuracy of the 2020 Census," said Professor Reamer.

www.TheCensusProject.org

Census Project co-director Howard Fienberg said, “The Census measures not only the progress of our nation, but also the fairness of the distribution of federal tax dollars, and every local community is now armed with the data to help them understand the impact of a 2020 undercount. Clearly, this should help community leaders communicate why answering the census is vital to the continued progress of every city in the country.”

According to the 2020 Census Barriers, Attitudes, and Motivators Study ([CBAMS](#)), 62 percent of respondents said that benefits to their communities are the most important reason for filling out the census questionnaire.

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The Census Project (<https://thecensusproject.org>) is a broad-based coalition of national, state, and local organizations that support an inclusive and accurate 2020 Census and American Community Survey (ACS) (the modern version of the census “long form”). Its member organizations, representing the private, public, non-profit, and academic sectors, rely on objective data that the Census Bureau produces to inform evidence-based investment, policy and planning decisions.