June 22, 2020

The Honorable Jerry Moran
Chairman
Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Jeanne Shaheen
Ranking Member
Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science
Washington, DC  20510

Dear Chairman Moran and Ranking Member Shaheen,

As the Senate prepares to consider its version of the next COVID-19 spending measure, we, as members and affiliates of The Census Project (www.thecensusproject.org), urge you to include supplemental funding to help the Census Bureau cover costs related to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and its conduct of the 2020 Census.

As you know, the 2020 Census is underway with just over 60% of American homes having responded to date. A successful decennial census is paramount. Its data will inform congressional apportionment and the distribution of over $1.5 trillion of federal funding a year for healthcare, education, roads, housing, and other vital services.1 Further, over the next decade, the private sector will rely on 2020 Census data to make critical planning and investment decisions, while state and local government officials will use the data to meet the needs of their communities.

The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated the challenge of conducting an inclusive, accurate, and efficient 2020 Census, forcing the Bureau to, among other things, adopt new procedures to protect field staff, temporarily suspend field operations and close local offices, and push the Nonresponse Follow-Up phase into the summer and fall. Because of these schedule adjustments, the Administration asked Congress for statutory relief to push back its delivery of apportionment counts to no later than April 30, 2021, and redistricting data to the states to before July 31, 2021—a decision that has deep operational and cost implications. Census stakeholders have already identified several needed enhancements, such as targeted advertising and outreach materials in additional languages and increased and expanded Census Questionnaire Assistance capacity, to address the severe disruption the COVID-19 crisis has caused for successful conduct of the 2020 Census.

The Census Bureau estimates that the additional cost of adjustments to the 2020 Census operational timeline, as well as direct COVID-related costs (such as PPE for field staff, extra technology to support more enumerators, COVID-sensitive advertising, etc.), will be $1.5 billion. The Census Bureau intends to cover these additional costs through its contingency fund. Census stakeholders are concerned that the Census Bureau could deplete its contingency fund, especially if the Bureau implements important enhancements beyond those currently planned, leaving the Bureau unable to adequately address other emergencies that may jeopardize the 2020 Census, including natural disasters (such as hurricanes), IT failures, and, unfortunately, further waves of COVID-19. Therefore, in its next COVID relief package, we urge the Senate to allocate at least $400 million to help ensure a successful 2020 Census amidst significant challenges, which the U.S. House of Representatives included in its latest COVID relief bill (H.R. 6800, the Health and Economic Recovery Omnibus Emergency Solutions Act, or HEROES Act).

We thank you for your continued support of the Census Bureau and the 2020 Census, especially during these difficult, unpredictable times.

Sincerely,

National
Academic Pediatric Association
African American Health Alliance
American Academy of Pediatrics
American Anthropological Association
American Association of University Women (AAUW)
American Educational Research Association
American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME)
American Library Association
American Pediatric Society
American Planning Association
American Sociological Association
American Statistical Association
American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee (ADC)
Arab American Institute (AAI)
Asian American Legal Defense and Education Fund (AALDEF)
Asian Americans Advancing Justice - AAJC
Asian Pacific American Labor Alliance, AFL-CIO (APALA)
Association of Medical School Pediatric Department Chairs
Association of Population Centers
Association of Public Data Users (APDU)
Association of State and Territorial Health Officials (ASTHO)
Campaign Legal Center
CensusChannel LLC
Common Cause
Consortium of Social Science Associations
Council for Community and Economic Research
Council of Professional Associations on Federal Statistics
Decision Demographics, LLC
Economic Policy Institute
Empowering Pacific Islander Communities (EPIC)
Fair Count Inc.
Feeding America
Free Government Information
Government Information Watch
Hispanic Federation
Insights Association
Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law
League of Women Voters of the United States
Maxfield Research and Consulting LLC
Mi Familia Vota Education Fund
NAACP
NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Inc. (LDF)
NALEO Educational Fund
National Association for Business Economics
National Association of Black County Officials (NABCO)
National Association of Councils on Developmental Disabilities
National Association of REALTORS®
National Association of Regional Councils
National Association of Towns and Townships
National Coalition for Literacy
National Community Action Partnership
National Community Development Association
National Disability Rights Network
National Education Association
National Federation of Filipino American Associations
National League of Cities
National Organization of Black County Officials (NOBCO)
National Organization of Black Elected Legislative Women
National Redistricting Foundation
NETWORK Lobby for Catholic Social Justice
NextDayBetter
Nielsen
Pediatric Policy Council
PFLAG National
Population Association of America
Prison Policy Initiative
ReadyNation
Service Employees International Union (SEIU)
Shepherding the Next Generation
SHK Global Health  
Society for Pediatric Research  
Southeast Asia Resource Action Center (SEARAC)  
State Voices  
The Gerontological Society of America  
The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights  
The National Association for Bilingual Education  
The U.S. Conference of Mayors  
Union for Reform Judaism  
Urban and Regional Information Systems Association  
Voices for Progress  
William C. Velasquez Institute  
Young Elected Officials (YEO) Network

**State/Local/City/Regional**

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Georgia Stand-Up
Housing Action Illinois
Housing California
Idaho State Complete Count Committee
Indivisible Hawaii
International Children Assistance Network (ICAN)
Kentucky Youth Advocates
Lao Assistance Center of Minnesota
Luib Health Specialty Services, LLC
MACS 2020 - Minnesotans for the American Community Survey & 2020 Census
Michigan's Children
Minnesota Council on Foundations
Minnesotans for the ACS
Montgomery Citizens United for Prosperity (MCUP)
Montgomery Counts, City of Montgomery (AL)
Montgomery County Community Action Board
New Mexico Thrives
New York Alumnae Chapter Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc.
New York Coalition of One Hundred Black Women, Inc.
New York Counts 2020
New York Immigration Coalition
Ohio Census Advocacy Coalition
Pennsylvania Partnerships for Children
PICO California
Public Justice Center
Rabun County Board of Commissioners
Research Advisory Services, Inc.
Rhode Island KIDS COUNT
San Diego Grantmakers
Silver State Equality-Nevada
Sisters of Providence Holyoke, MA
South Asian Network
Southeast Michigan Census Council
St. Paul African Methodist Episcopal Church - Beaumont
United Way of Madison County
UNM Community Engagement Center
Virginia Civic Engagement Table (VCET)
Voices for Utah Children