



The Census Project

February 8, 2021

The Honorable Charles E. Schumer
Majority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Minority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Majority Leader and Minority Leader McConnell,

On behalf of the [thousands of census stakeholders](#) in the public, private, non-profit, and academic sectors that we represent, we are writing to express our strong support for the confirmation of Governor Gina Raimondo to serve as the next Secretary of Commerce. In particular, we believe she will help restore public confidence in the work of the U.S. Census Bureau, ensure that the remaining work on the 2020 Census, ongoing work on the American Community Survey (ACS), and research and preparation for the 2030 Census, are guided by the highest scientific standards, and work with bureau officials to modernize a range of data collection methods.

In recent years, the Census Bureau, a major component of the Department of Commerce, has faced numerous challenges to completing an inclusive and accurate 2020 Census and delivering reliable decennial census data. Numerous lawsuits and significant operational disruptions due to the coronavirus pandemic threatened robust census preparations and implementation. The views of Census Bureau experts were often disregarded, resulting in inconsistent messages, rushed field operations, and overall concern about the management and outcome of the 2020 Census. Career Census Bureau officials are working to overcome the setbacks and determine revised timelines for delivering apportionment and redistricting data, as the U.S. Constitution and federal law require.

During her confirmation hearing, Governor Raimondo said she intends to “depoliticize” the Census Bureau and rely on the advice of the Bureau’s senior staff to carry out the agency’s vital statistical programs. Census stakeholders were heartened to hear Governor Raimondo express a desire to work closely with experts at the Census Bureau. We urge the United States Senate to approve Governor Raimondo’s nomination in a timely manner and provide strong leadership at the U.S. Department of Commerce and nonpartisan oversight of the Census Bureau.

Thank you for considering our views.

Sincerely,



Howard Fienberg
Co-Director, The Census Project



Mary Jo Hoeksema
Co-Director, The Census Project

cc: The Honorable Gary Peters
The Honorable Rob Portman