

The Census Project

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Census Stakeholders Express Concern Biden FY2022 Budget Summary Does Not Mention Investments in Census Bureau.

Washington, D.C. – In response to the release of President Biden’s “skinny budget”, or outline of the President’s upcoming detailed Fiscal Year 2022 budget proposal, leaders of The Census Project reminded stakeholders and Congress of the need for greater investment in modernization of the Census Bureau’s work.

“After a decade in which the Census Bureau received inconsistent and delayed funding, had to curtail essential research, and experienced significant pandemic-related disruptions, investments are needed to not only help the agency recover, but to also help it improve the collection and delivery of official statistics for the nation,” said Census Project Co-Director Mary Jo Hoeksema.

“That’s why last month we [sent](#) Congress a budget proposal for the Census Bureau to receive \$2 billion in Fiscal Year (FY) 2022, representing a \$335 million increase over the agency’s FY 2021 funding level of \$1.65 billion,” Hoeksema added.

“These investments are important to provide the public and private sectors with more robust, granular and timely data for decision-making,” said Co-Director Howard Fienberg. “We support efforts in Congress to provide the Bureau with greater authority for multi-year funding to strengthen the innovations necessary to consolidate and improve data collection and analysis,” Fienberg added.

The leaders of the largest, most diverse census stakeholder organization pointed to important near-term milestones at risk without reliable funding for the Bureau in Fiscal 2022. These included mitigating the effects of Covid-19 induced operational delays to the Census 2020 count, including those necessary to produce and disseminate the Apportionment counts, redistricting data products, and downstream detailed census files. In addition, the Economic Census of 2022 is rapidly approaching and may be even more vital than normal as the nation seeks to understand and recover from the current economic crisis.

“We encourage our stakeholder organizations in their ongoing communications to emphasize the importance of these FY2022 investments,” Hoeksema concluded.

Innovations at the Census Bureau

Among the major innovations at the Census Bureau supported by the Census Project are: (1) Modernize the Bureau's data infrastructure--The Census Bureau needs to harness currently-available Big Data technology and methodology to reduce respondent burden and realign the Bureau's already-existing data from multiple sources into universal "frames." (2) Enhance the American Community Survey (ACS). The Census Bureau needs the flexibility to combine data sources with the ACS, the ongoing survey that replaced the "long form" of the Census in 2005 which provides consistent, timely and accurate data about the nation's changing socioeconomic and demographic characteristics, in order to produce more timely granular data for a significant number of geographies and sub-populations than achievable from the current ACS 5-year estimates. (3) Stabilize and increase funding for Survey of Income and Program Participation. Stabilizing and increasing support for SIPP, to no less than \$48 million in FY 2022, will help Congress make evidence-based policy decisions on the effectiveness of government assistance programs. (4) Extend Pulse Surveys. The Bureau's "Pulse Surveys" have provided timely data regarding the economic, social, and health effects of COVID-19 on U.S. communities and businesses. The surveys have attracted support from other federal agencies that have requested to add questions and collaborated with the Census Bureau to produce the surveys. The Census Bureau needs no less than \$6 million in FY 2022 to sustain and expand this innovation that provides much more timely data on current economic and social issues.

The Census Project (<https://thecensusproject.org>) is a broad-based coalition of national, state, and local organizations and companies that support an inclusive and accurate 2020 Census, 2030 Census, and American Community Survey (ACS) (the modern version of the census "long form"). Its 900+ member organizations and companies, 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.