

Sending Office: Honorable Judy Chu

Support FY 2024 Funding for Census Bureau

Deadline: COB March 29, 2023

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Dear Chairman Rogers and Ranking Member Cartwright:

As the Commerce, Justice, Science (CJS) Appropriations Subcommittee considers its Fiscal Year 2024 Appropriations bill, we respectfully request that you prioritize the highest possible funding for the U.S. Census Bureau.

The Decennial Census is a cornerstone of our constitutional system of government determining reapportionment in the U.S. House of Representatives and the Electoral College. Census data helps the private sector make sound investments by identifying underserved or emerging markets and developing business plans and loan applications. Over \$1.5 trillion in Federal funding for healthcare, roads and bridges, education, first responders, rural businesses, and Veterans is allocated annually to states and localities based on census data. Further, census data inform evaluation and research activities conducted by state and local government officials and scientists at U.S. research institutions.

Although the 2020 Census was just recently completed, the Census Bureau is already a third of the way into the 2030 Census planning cycle. Funding for the 2030 Census must begin ramping up early in the decade to support critical testing and operations geared toward achieving an inclusive, accurate, and cost-effective decennial census. Funding shortfalls during the last decade forced the Bureau to scale back strategic field tests—a decision that may have contributed to the less accurate counts of racial and ethnic populations, rural areas, and young children resulting from the 2020 Census. Investing in the 2030 Census now will allow the Bureau to sustain essential capabilities and schedules and reduce the risk of requiring unplanned, additional funding in the peak planning years later in the decade.

In addition to supporting enhanced 2030 Census preparations, the Census Bureau should pursue other operational improvements, including the consolidation and integration of older surveys and systems into new, more nimble data collections; research on use of administrative records to reduce survey respondent burden; enhancements to the American Community Survey, which is the seminal source of timely, accurate information about our nation's changing demographic and socioeconomic characteristics; and improvements in the

Population Estimates program, which cities, counties, towns, tribal governments, and other localities use to assess and meet their communities' unique ongoing needs.

The Census is also the federal government's source of disaggregated racial and ethnic data. Disaggregated data helps policy makers understand differences between diverse subgroups within larger communities, like the Asian American & Pacific Islander (AAPI) community. Unfortunately, the Census Bureau faces many challenges and opportunities during this upcoming fiscal year, and additional support from Congress would assist the agency's modernization plans to make it operationally more efficient and improve data product quality.

Once again, we encourage your subcommittee to make the Census Bureau a high priority in the FY 2024 CJS bill. Thank you for considering our views.

Sincerely,