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February 4, 2025

Sen. Susan Collins
Chair
Senate Appropriations Committee
Washington, DC 20510

Rep. Tom Cole
Chairman
House Appropriations Committee
Washington, DC 20515

Sen. Patty Murray
Ranking Member
Senate Appropriations Committee
Washington, DC 20510

Rep. Rosa DeLauro
Ranking Member
House Appropriations Committee
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Senator Collins, Senator Murray, Representative Cole, and Representative DeLauro,

On behalf of The Census Project, a broad-based coalition of data users and census stakeholders from the private, public, non-profit, and scientific sectors that are committed to supporting the U.S. Census Bureau’s mission to produce full, fair, complete, and accurate data, we commend your efforts to complete the Fiscal Year (FY) 2025 appropriations process. We are concerned that a prolonged continuing resolution (CR) jeopardizes key operations at the U.S. Census Bureau. Further, we wish to take this opportunity to reiterate our support for ensuring the Bureau receives no less than the Senate-recommended level of funding (\$1.57 billion) in the final FY 2025 Commerce, Justice, Science (CJS) Appropriations bill.

Potential Impacts of Continuing Resolution

As you know, by the time the current CR expires, almost half of FY 2025 will have passed. Although the Census Bureau has not publicly released details about how the agency is managing under the current CR, census stakeholders are concerned that numerous programs and key operations are being compromised. Further, the current budget uncertainty is undermining progress on new initiatives essential for modernizing the agency’s ability to collect and disseminate high quality, accurate data, and reduce respondent burden.

Preparations for the 2030 Decennial Census are the highest priority for census stakeholders. As you know, it takes over a decade of deliberate planning, including a robust testing schedule, to implement an inclusive, cost effective, and accurate decennial census. In FY 2025, the Bureau will finalize plans and preparations for the 2026 Census Test, the first of two major field tests.

These tests, which are slated to be conducted in six strategically-selected sites nationwide, will evaluate innovative technologies and methodologies to inform key facets of the 2030 Census. We are concerned that delays in the FY 2025 appropriations process may be hampering the Census Bureau's ability to make timely decisions, including acquisition, hiring, and design decisions, to keep the 2026 Field Test on schedule and in scope.

Other programs tasked with meeting ambitious, transformative goals in FY 2025 include the Economic Census, the Data Ingest and Collection for the Enterprise (DICE) program, and the Survey of Income and Program Participation (SIPP). These are just a few examples of programs at risk under the terms of the current, and potentially extended, CR.

Final FY 2025 Funding

With respect to the outcome of the final FY 2025 CJS appropriations bills, we reiterate our support for ensuring the Bureau receives no less than \$1.57 billion, the amount recommended by the Senate Appropriations Committee. This figure recommended by the House Appropriations Committee, \$1.354 billion, is the same funding level that the House CJS subcommittee recommended in Fiscal Year 2024. It is woefully inadequate --both below the agency's final FY 2024 funding level and the agency's FY 2025 request. Additionally, it is well below the amount [that over 120 national, state, and local organizations urged Congress to provide the Bureau in Fiscal Year 2025.](#)

Fiscal Year 2025 marks the midpoint in the decade-long planning process for the next decennial census in which preparations and costs begin to exponentially increase. As we learned in the run up to the 2020 Census, shortchanging funding for decennial operations introduces greater risk to a successful outcome. Adequate support for decennial census preparations now will reduce the risk of requiring unplanned, additional funding in the peak years at the end of the decade.

Thank you for considering our views as you are negotiating the final FY 2025 appropriations package. We look forward to working with you to produce a final FY 2025 CJS bill that provides the U.S. Census Bureau with adequate funding and empowers the agency to fulfill its constitutionally-required mission.

Sincerely,

cc The Honorable Jerry Moran
 The Honorable Chris Van Hollen
 The Honorable Hal Rogers
 The Honorable Grace Meng

National

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American Academy of Pediatrics
American Educational Research Association
American Statistical Association
Arab American Institute
Asian Americans Advancing Justice | AAJC
Asian and Pacific Islander American Vote (APIAVote)
Associated General Contractors of America
Association of Population Centers
Association of Public Data Users
Claritas
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Statistics
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National Urban League
Nielsen
Population Association of America
Project On Government Oversight
SHK Global Health
The Consortium of Social Science Associations
The Institute for Health Research & Policy at Whitman-
Walker
The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights
Urban and Regional Information Systems Association

State-Level

Arkansas Advocates for Children and Families	AR
Colorado Civic Engagement Roundtable	CO
DC Action	DC
Funders' Committee for Civic Participation	NY
Housing Action Illinois	IL
Indivisible Hawaii Statewide Network	HI
MACS - Minnesotans for the ACS and 2030 Census	MN
Michigan League for Public Policy	MI
Minnesota Council on Foundations	MN
NY Elections, Census & Redistricting Institute (New York Law School)	NY
Our Children Oregon	OR
Public Justice Center	MD
The Bingham Program	ME
VOICES for Alabama's Children	AL
Voices for Children in Nebraska	NE
Voices for Utah Children	UT
Wyoming Community Foundation	WY

Local/City/Regional

Asian American Federation	New York	NY
Catalyst of San Diego & Imperial Counties	San Diego	CA
Dreams United/Sueños Unidos	Long Prairie	MN
Health and Welfare Council of Long Island	Suffolk and Nassau Counties	NY
Henry County Board of Commissioners	McDonough	GA
RLS Demographics, Inc.	Rensselaerville	NY
The Minneapolis Foundation	Minneapolis	MN
Twin Cities Research Group	Minneapolis-St. Paul	MN