



September 11, 2009

The Honorable Daniel K. Inouye
Chairman
Senate Committee on Appropriations
Room S 128
The Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Inouye:

We are writing to you as members of the Census Project, a collaboration of state and local governments, civil rights and labor groups, housing and child advocates, businesses, and research organizations interested in a fair and accurate Census 2010.

Senate Majority Leader Reid acknowledged recently that Congress must pass a short-term continuing resolution since all of the Fiscal Year 2010 appropriations bills will not be completed before the current fiscal year ends. In light of this news, we respectfully ask the Census Bureau be given a funding anomaly in the anticipated continuing resolution (CR).

Unlike most other federal programs, census preparations cannot be delayed, even by a few weeks, or scaled back, without putting the accuracy of the decennial census at risk. Each final step in the census process is built on another; delays or modifications to any procedure at this point will jeopardize the Census Bureau's ability to carry out all operations effectively.

As you know, Census Day is April 1, 2010—a date that is quickly approaching. With support from the Administration and Congress, the Census Bureau is preparing for Census 2010 and making important progress. For example, the address canvassing operation, a nationwide address verification initiative, was completed several weeks before its deadline. Regional census centers are now open nationwide, recruiting and training thousands of temporary employees, and hundreds of Local Census Offices will open later this Fall, in preparation for the actual count. Partners in the field are working to educate the public about the importance of participating in the decennial census.

Our request is based on historical precedent. Prior to Census 2000, Congress exempted the Census Bureau from the CR's flat-funding constraints. Likewise, last year, Congress gave the Bureau funding exemptions repeatedly in its short-and long-term CRs. Two years ago, however, a six-week delay in exempting the Census Bureau from flat-line funding (for Fiscal Year 2008) led the agency to push back and curtail the important 2008 Census Dress Rehearsal.

In recognition of the Census Bureau's unique needs at this time, we urge Congress to provide the Census Bureau with a funding anomaly and provide it with a mark as close as possible to the Administration's Fiscal Year 2010 request of approximately \$7.4 billion. Failure to do so jeopardizes the accuracy of the 2010 Census and the American public's confidence in this operation so fundamental to our democracy.

Thank you for your attention to these issues and for your support of the Census Bureau and its valuable programs.

Sincerely,

Louis Kincannon, former director, U.S. Census Bureau
American Sociological Association
Asian American Justice Center
Association of Population Centers
Association of Public Data Users
American Planning Association
American Statistical Association
Consortium of Social Science Associations
Japanese American Citizens League
Leadership Conference on Civil Rights
The Marketing Research Association (MRA)
National Association of Counties
National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials (NALEO)
Educational Fund
National Low Income Housing Coalition
National Multi Housing Council
Population Association of America
Southeast Michigan Census Council

CC:

The Honorable Thad Cochran
The Honorable David R. Obey
The Honorable Jerry Lewis