



The Census Project

September 11, 2008

The Honorable David R. Obey
Chairman
Committee on Appropriations
2314 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Obey:

As the House Appropriations Committee considers the consequences of a Fiscal Year 2009 Continuing Resolution (CR) on various government activities, we respectfully remind you of the urgency in the final year before the decennial census of keeping final preparations on track and on time. Previous CRs have included funding anomalies for the Census Bureau, and we urge you to include such a funding mechanism in the upcoming 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. The census must start early in 2010, and all preparations take a certain amount of time to complete in advance. For example, it takes a full year to print and address 130 million census forms. The Census Bureau must open and staff hundreds of Local Census Office across the country, and begin to recruit the millions of candidates it will need to conduct the census during peak field operations. Next spring, census workers must canvass every block and road in the country to verify addresses. Each operation must be done on time and thoroughly to ensure the best count possible in 2010.

In recognition of the Census Bureau's unique needs at this time, we urge the Committee to provide the Census Bureau with a funding anomaly and provide it with a mark as close as possible to the Administration's revised Fiscal Year 2009 request of approximately \$3.2 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.

The members of the Census Project, a coalition of diverse organizations supporting a fair and accurate 2010 decennial census, thank you for supporting the Census Bureau in both the Fiscal Year 2008 supplemental funding bill and the proposed Fiscal Year 2009 Commerce, Justice, and Science Appropriations bill. Without your support, plans for the 2010 Decennial Census would be woefully behind schedule, threatening the success of this constitutionally mandated population count that influences the composition of Congress and the distribution of \$300 billion of federal funds annually.

Thank you for your consideration and continued leadership in support of the census.

Sincerely,

American Sociological Association
American Statistical Association
Arab American Institute Foundation
Asian American Justice Center
Association of Population Centers
Consortium of Social Science Associations
Council for Marketing and Opinion Research
Council of Professional Associations on Federal Statistics
Latino Census Network
Leadership Conference on Civil Rights
Louis Kincannon, former director of the U.S. Census Bureau
National Association of Counties
National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials Educational Fund
National Institute for Latino Policy
National Multi Housing Council
Population Association of America
Population Resource Center
Southeast Michigan Census Council
U.S. Conference of Mayors

cc: The Honorable Jerry Lewis
The Honorable Robert Byrd
The Honorable Thad Cochran
The Honorable Alan Mollohan
The Honorable Rodney Frelinghuysen
The Honorable Barbara Mikulski
The Honorable Richard Shelby