



July 12, 2011

Hon. Harold Rogers
Chairman
Committee on Appropriations
H-307 The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

Hon. Norm Dicks
Ranking Member
Committee on Appropriations
1016 Longworth H.O.B.
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Rogers and Ranking Member Dicks:

We are writing to express our disappointment with the Census Bureau's proposed funding level in the current Fiscal Year 2012 Commerce, Justice, and Science Appropriations bill, and to encourage the committee to restore all or some of the funds the Administration requested for an agency whose work touches virtually every community in this country. ***We believe the Subcommittee's recommendation of \$855.4 million, which is 25 percent below the Census Bureau's FY 2011 spending level, puts vital data collection programs in jeopardy and will cripple the agency's ability to achieve significant savings in the future through innovative methods and greater use of technology.***

The Census Bureau has already demonstrated its commitment to reducing costs by taking bold steps to streamline operations. On June 29, it announced plans to realign its national field office structure by permanently closing six regional offices, reducing costs by an estimated \$15 million to \$18 million annually beginning in 2014. Further, in its FY 2012 budget request, the Census Bureau outlined plans to terminate nine programs, including popular products such as the Statistical Abstract and Current Industrial Report, reaping over \$15 million in savings this year. In addition to eliminating programs, the Bureau has demonstrated its determination to use its funding wisely, making modest investments in required activities to help save billions of future dollars, especially with respect to conducting the 2020 Census and the ongoing American Community Survey. For example, continuous updating of the Master Address File throughout the decade — a proposed new initiative — would save hundreds of millions of dollars alone by eliminating the need for comprehensive pre-census address canvassing in 2019.

The subcommittee mark for the Census Bureau will likely compel the agency to cut core programs. The cut of \$169 million from the President's request puts in doubt the Census Bureau's ability to conduct the 2012 Quinquennial Economic Census, required by the Census Act. The Economic Census is the cornerstone of the nation's economic measurements, providing core

information on virtually all non-farm businesses and related data on business expenditures, commodity flows, and minority and women-owned businesses. It is a fundamental building block of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and national income and product accounts. Fiscal Year 2012 is the third year of the six-year 2012 Economic Census funding cycle. This benchmark census cannot be scaled back because public and private sector decision-makers would be left without a thorough picture of the nation's economic health and prospects. *Abandoning plans for this important assessment of economic activity across diverse sectors would be foolhardy at a time when data are an essential component of the roadmap to economic recovery and progress and job creation.*

Alternatively, the Census Bureau would have to eliminate key final components of the 2010 Census, such as the Count Question Resolution Program, under which local governments have challenged potential undercounts, and Census Coverage Measurement results, which will tell us how accurate the 2010 Census was and guide methodological decisions for the next enumeration. Other core programs at risk include the American Community Survey (ACS), the seminal source of annual socio-economic and demographic data about the nation used by decision-makers in the private sector and at all levels of government to allocate limited resources. For FY 2012, the Bureau requested \$5 million to test innovations in the American Community Survey, such as an Internet response option, that will contribute substantially to controlling the cost of the 2020 Census.

We understand the fiscal environment requires Congress to make difficult decisions and curtail current spending. The Census Bureau clearly appreciates the dilemma facing Congress, having already proposed cuts in its FY 2012 budget and significant streamlining of operations through administrative actions. Additional cuts will be counterproductive to an agency whose data are essential to running our government, informing our policies, and influencing economic productivity. **We encourage you to restore funding for the Census Bureau as proposed by the Administration in its FY 2012 budget and to reject any attempts to cut the agency's budget further in committee or in the full House.**

Thank you for your consideration of our views on this important and urgent matter.

Sincerely,

American Association for Public Opinion Research
 American Association of People with Disabilities
 Asian Pacific American Legal Center, a Member of Asian American Center for
 Advancing Justice
 American Educational Research Association
 American Planning Association

American Sociological Association
 American Statistical Association
 Arab American Institute and Foundation
 Asian American Justice Center, member of Asian American Center for
 Advancing Justice
 Asian American Legal Defense and Education Fund
 Association of Academic Survey Research Organizations
 Association of Population Centers
 Association of Public Data Users
 Association of University Business and Economic Researchers
 Community Action Partnership
 Consortium of Social Science Associations
 Council for Community and Economic Research
 Council of Professional Associations on Federal Statistics
 Demos
 Human Rights Campaign
 Japanese American Citizens League
 Latino Census Network
 Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law
 The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights
 Marketing Research Association
 Moving Forward Gulf Coast, Inc.
 National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials (NALEO)
 Educational Fund
 National Coalition on Black Civic Participation
 National Congress of American Indians
 National Education Association
 National Institute for Latino Policy
 Organization of Chinese Americans (OCA)
 Population Association of America
 Population Reference Bureau
 Population Resource Center
 Prison Policy Initiative
 Project Vote
 South Asian Americans Leading Together
 South Asian Network

Cc: Members, House Committee on Appropriations
 Hon. Daniel K. Inouye, Chairman, Committee on Appropriations
 Hon. Thad Cochran, Ranking Member, Committee on Appropriations
 Hon. Barbara A. Mikulski, Chairman, Subcommittee on Commerce,
 Justice, Science, and Related Agencies
 Hon. Kay Bailey Hutchison, Ranking Member, Subcommittee on
 Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies