



AMERICAN STATISTICAL ASSOCIATION  
Promoting the Practice and Profession of Statistics®

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August 5, 2020

The Honorable Mitch McConnell  
Majority Leader  
US Senate  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Chuck Schumer  
Democratic Leader  
US Senate  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Ron Johnson  
Chair, Committee on Homeland Security  
and Governmental Affairs

The Honorable Gary C. Peters  
Ranking Member, Committee on Homeland  
Security and Governmental Affairs

The Honorable Richard Shelby  
Chair, Appropriations Committee

The Honorable Patrick Leahy  
Ranking Member, Appropriations  
Committee

The Honorable Jerry Moran  
Chair, Appropriations Subcommittee on  
Commerce, Justice, Science, and  
Related Agencies

The Honorable Jeanne Shaheen  
Ranking Member, Appropriations  
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice,  
Science, and Related Agencies

Dear Leaders McConnell and Schumer, Chairs Johnson, Shelby, and Moran, and Ranking  
Members Peters, Leahy, and Shaheen,

We write to ask your strong and urgent action to avoid unnecessarily and severely disrupting the ongoing decennial census. Enshrined in the US Constitution, the decennial census is a cornerstone of our democracy and informs our governance, commerce, and daily life. The importance of a fair and accurate census cannot be overstated.

Given the importance of the 2020 census, we specifically request your swift response to realize the following:

1. Grant the US Census Bureau's spring request for a [120-day extension](#) of the legal deadline for delivering decennial census data to the president and states in consideration

of necessary adjustments due to COVID-19, regardless of the fact that the bureau has since rescinded the request

2. Restore the data-collection timeline put in place by the bureau following the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic— namely October 31, 2020—for the field data collection and self-response options

There is no scientific rationale to curtail the data-collection period for this constitutionally mandated activity, and the premature cessation of census enumeration will produce flawed counts.

Since its founding in 1839, the American Statistical Association (ASA) has worked to ensure scientific objectivity in the decennial census, and the ASA continues its steadfast support of the Census Bureau with our recent statements and this letter. In summary, we call for the Senate's leadership to allow the US Census Bureau career professionals to conduct a fair and impartial census and thereby continue to maintain scientific integrity in data collection and use, honoring their commitment to the nation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Robert Santos", written in a cursive style.

Robert Santos  
2021 ASA President