



American Statistical Association Statement on the June 23 US Census Bureau Appointments

June 24, 2020

The American Statistical Association (ASA) advocates for fair and objective collection and reporting of data throughout the Federal Government. This week's two political (versus career) appointments to the US Census Bureau are in direct conflict with the bureau's mission to ensure proper, accurate, and timely delivery of statistical information to the public. In his [statement](#), Census Bureau Director Steven Dillingham provided no justification for the new positions, description of duties, or qualifications of the appointees. The ASA Board of Directors is deeply troubled by this development.

The US Census Bureau produces statistics that are fundamental to our democracy, government, economy, and everyday life. The committed professional staff of the Census Bureau strives to ensure the bureau's products are accurate, reliable, and timely. The Census Bureau relies on the trust of its survey and census respondents, trust earned through objectivity, protection of personal information, transparency, and production of high-quality impartial data.

The Census Bureau's addition of two political appointees to its top ranks undermines the work of the Census Bureau and federal statistical agencies because of the lack of transparency and justification, as well as the perception—if not reality—of improper political influence.

We ask Director Dillingham to explain and provide rationale for the creation of the senior positions that includes their job duties in addition to the qualifications of the people appointed to the positions. In the absence of an explanation to US taxpayers for the need for these two senior political appointments, the ASA sees no justification for them.

The ASA was founded more than 180 years ago out of a desire to be supportive of and helpful to the US Census Bureau's vital work. We have continued to be loyal supporters of the Census Bureau throughout our history. We continue this role of strong support for the agency's mission by expressing our concerns and seeking explanations.