



December 14, 2018

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Majority Leader
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Charles Schumer
Minority Leader
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

cc: The Honorable Ron Johnson
The Honorable Claire McCaskill

Dear Leaders McConnell and Schumer,

We write to urge the Senate's prompt confirmation of Dr. Steven Dillingham to be the next director of the U.S. Census Bureau.

Time is running out on the lame duck session and, more importantly, on preparations for the 2020 Census. The Bureau needs a leader in place, trusted by the White House and accountable to Congress, at this crucial juncture in the ramp up to America's largest peacetime mobilization.

Census stakeholders acknowledge that decennial census data are central to American democracy, affecting not only apportionment and redistricting, but also the distribution of approximately \$600 billion in federal funding across the nation every year, in addition to underpinning the decision-making of American businesses.

As soon as he is confirmed, Dr. Dillingham will have to quickly learn from the results of the 2018 End-to-End Readiness Test (which, thanks to funding shortfalls over multiple years, was reduced to a small test in Providence, RI this spring) and oversee final design decisions and preparations for the 2020 Census. He also must strengthen and streamline the American Community Survey (ACS), formerly known as the "Long Form," which updates census data throughout the decade. Delay is not an option.

Dr. Dillingham appears to meet the requirements for the position set in the **Presidential Appointment Efficiency and Streamlining Act of 2011** (P.L. 112-166), which requires that the Census Bureau Director have "demonstrated ability in managing large organizations and experience in the collection, analysis, and use of statistical data." He most recently served as director of the Office of Strategic Information, Research, and Planning for the U.S. Peace Corps. Previously, Dr. Dillingham led the Bureau of Justice Statistics and the Bureau of Transportation Statistics in prior GOP administrations. He has graduate degrees in law and public administration from the University of South Carolina and an undergraduate degree in political science from Winthrop University.

At his hearing, Dr. Dillingham stated that he “will be dedicated to ensuring that the workforce is ready, willing, and able to accomplish the Bureau's mission as the leading provider of quality information on the nation's people and economy.” He testified that his top concerns once he is confirmed will be IT acquisition, hiring a full workforce, and implementing the suggestions made by GAO and the Inspector General. Dr. Dillingham also pledged “to support a federal statistical agency culture of principles and practices grounded in relevance to policy issues, credibility among data users, trust among data providers, and independence from improper influences.”

He received a hearing in the Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee on October 3 and was reported favorably on November 13. It is time for Dr. Dillingham to take the mantle at the Census Bureau and help grapple with unprecedented challenges to an accurate decennial headcount. We urge the Senate to confirm him as soon as possible. Thank you for your prompt attention.

Sincerely,

American Association for Public Opinion Research
American Educational Research Association
American Sociological Association
American Statistical Association
Americans for Indian Opportunity
Asian American Legal Defense and Education Fund
(AALDEF)
Association of Population Centers
Association of Public Data Users (APDU)
Census Business Coalition
Consortium of Social Science Associations
Cornell University Program on Applied Demographics
Council for Community and Economic Research (C2ER)
Council of Professional Associations on Federal Statistics
Decision Demographics
Insights Association
NAACP
National Association of Home Builders
Native American Community Academy (NACA) Inspired
Schools Network
Native Americans in Philanthropy
Nielsen
Phoenix Indian Center Inc.
Population Association of America
ReadyNation

NY

Maricopa County AZ

Research Advisory Services, Inc.	Phoenix	AZ
Southeast Michigan Census Council	Southfield	MI
The American Economic Association's Committee on Economic Statistics		
The American Economic Association's Committee on Government Relations		
Urban and Regional Information Systems Association		
Western Native Voice		MT