

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

November 22, 2019

The Honorable Wilbur Ross
Secretary
U.S. Department of Commerce
1401 Constitution Ave., NW
Washington, DC 20230

The Honorable Steven Dillingham, Ph.D.
Director of the U.S. Census Bureau
U.S. Department of Commerce
4600 Silver Hill Road
Washington, DC 20233

Dear Secretary Ross and Dr. Dillingham,

The House Democratic Caucus, Tri-Caucus and the Census Caucus write to you to request information on the status of the U.S. Census Bureau's Community Partnership Engagement Program (CPEP) and National Partnership Program (NPP). As part of our ongoing oversight of the 2020 Census, we request information on both the partnership process and the partners currently enrolled in each program. We ask that all the information requested in this letter be provided to us by December 13, 2019.

The Census Bureau's 2020 Census Partnership Plan outlines CPEP's objectives, chief among which is to establish committed partnerships with at least 300,000 local partners by March of 2020. In order to ensure the Census Bureau is on track to meet its stated goals, we request that the Census Bureau provide us with the name and location of every local partner organization in the United States, organized by congressional district. In addition to a list of local partners, we also ask that the Census Bureau provide us with information on how it defines local partners, specific activities expected of partners and the process through which it identifies and recruits them. We also ask that the Census Bureau provide a timeline of specific actions taken in collaboration with current CPEP and NPP partners to prepare for Census 2020.

The 2020 Census Partnership Plan also details the objectives of the NPP, although it does not specify a target number of national partners. In order to ensure the NPP is progressing as planned, we request a list of all currently registered national partners, as well as information on the Census Bureau's quantifiable goals for this program. We also ask that the Census Bureau provide us with information on how it defines, identifies and recruits national partners.

The stakes for the 2020 Census could not be higher. The results will impact the allocation of more than a trillion dollars of federal funds and guide how communities across the country are represented in government in the decade to come. However, the 2020 Census will also be the most challenging enumeration in modern history. America is more ethnically and linguistically diverse than ever before, and recent efforts to politicize the census have created concerns about its confidentiality and integrity in many minority communities.

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We understand that local and national partners play an essential role in building trust, raising awareness and increasing participation in the 2020 Census. As intermediaries between the Census Bureau and the residents it is responsible for counting, partners help enumerators make inroads in hard-to-count communities. They also provide the relationships and supplemental resources and language support that census workers need to successfully count residents from all walks of life. Without sufficient local and national partnership activities in place for the 2020 Census, we are concerned that the Census Bureau will fail to meet its goal of “counting everyone once, only once, and in the right place.”

Communities across the country depend on a fair and accurate census to receive the resources and representation they deserve. The NPP and the CPEP both play crucial parts in building the groundwork needed to ensure a complete count in 2020. We look forward to receiving information on all current local and national partners, as well as details on how the Census Bureau identifies, defines and recruits partners for both programs, by December 13, 2019.

Please direct your response to Jacob Nelson with the House Democratic Caucus. Responses can be sent by mail to B245 Longworth House Office Building, Washington, DC, 20003 or by email to Jacob.Nelson@mail.house.gov.

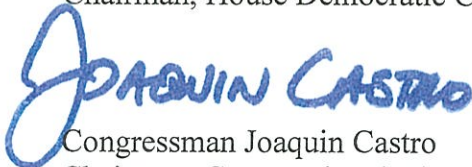
Sincerely,



Congressman Hakeem Jeffries
Chairman, House Democratic Caucus



Congresswoman Karen Bass
Chairwoman, Congressional Black Caucus



Congressman Joaquin Castro
Chairman, Congressional Hispanic Caucus



Congresswoman Judy Chu
Chairwoman, Congressional Asian Pacific
American Caucus



Congresswoman Carolyn Maloney
Chairwoman, Congressional Census Caucus



Congressman Steven Horsford
Chairman, Congressional Black Caucus
Census Task Force