



November 2, 2011

The Honorable Barbara Mikulski
Chairman
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Mikulski:

Thank you for your leadership and efforts on H.R. 2596/S. 1572, the Fiscal Year 2012 Commerce, Justice, Science (CJS) and Related Agencies Appropriations bill. As you begin conference discussions, we urge you allocate **no less than \$943.3 million for the U.S. Census Bureau in FY 2012, as recommended in the Senate bill.**

Without this minimum level of funding, the Census Bureau will not be able to conduct a full 2012 Economic Census, leaving the nation without important guideposts to measure and plan the nation's continued economic recovery, nor complete important evaluations of Census 2010 accuracy and publication of all promised data products. Full coverage of the nation's population in the American Community Survey also is at risk.

Although the Senate recommended \$88 million less than the Administration, its proposed funding is sufficient for the Census Bureau to conduct many key activities — most notably, the 2012 Economic Census. H.R. 2596 reduces the agency's requested budget for Periodic Censuses and Programs by 21 percent. This dramatic cut would force the Bureau to cut or curtail many of its core programs, including all components of the 2012 Economic Census. This benchmark census cannot simply 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.

Neither bill leaves the Census Bureau with sufficient funding to complete measurement of undercounts and overcounts in the 2010 Census, information that state and local governments are anxious to see, and other evaluations that will improve planning for the 2020 enumeration. The Bureau also would eliminate coverage of group quarters (such as military barracks, college dorms, nursing homes, and prisons) in the American Community Survey, undermining the accuracy of some characteristics data, such as poverty, age, household composition, and educational attainment, for many communities.

The Census Bureau requested \$272.1 million for Salaries and Expenses, reflecting \$14 million in program decreases to help rein in spending, including popular activities such as the Statistical Abstract. Under both the House and Senate funding levels, the Census Bureau also would cancel three other initiatives: statistics on state and local government pension obligations, which inform GDP calculations; updates to the nation's poverty measure; and research on the use of administrative records to replace or supplement field data collection, potentially saving significant costs for future censuses. We are concerned about these additional program losses and urge the conferees to **accept no less than the higher House level for the Salaries and Expenses account.**

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The Census Bureau clearly is taking bold steps to curtail its spending and to focus on its highest priority activities, even announcing the closure of half of its regional offices to realize significant long-term savings. The Bureau also is committed to conducting a more efficient Census 2020. However, the agency cannot achieve its mandate to produce timely, comprehensive, reliable data, and implement cost-saving methods and operations in the future, without receiving steady, modest investments to devote to thorough research and testing. We expect the final funding package will reflect this reality and provide the agency with no less than \$943.3 million in FY 2012.

Sincerely,

American Association for Public Opinion Research
 American Association of People with Disabilities
 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
 Asian Pacific American Legal Center, a Member of Asian American Center for
 Advancing Justice
 Association of Academic Survey Research Organizations
 Association of Population Centers
 Association of Public Data Users
 Association of University Business and Economic Research
 Community Action Partnership
 Consortium of Social Science Associations
 Council for Community and Economic Research
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 Demos
 FairVote
 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
 National Low Income Housing Coalition
 National Urban League

Nonprofit VOTE
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
Southern Echo
Southwest Voter Registration Education Project
Voto Latino
William C. Velasquez Institute

cc: Members of the House and Senate Appropriations Subcommittees on Commerce,
Justice, and Science, and Related Agencies