



October 14, 2011

The Honorable Harry Reid  
Majority Leader  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Mitch McConnell  
Minority Leader  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Leaders Reid and McConnell:

As the Senate prepares to consider S. 1572, the Fiscal Year (FY) 2012 Commerce, Justice, and Science Appropriations bill, we are writing to express our support for funding the Census Bureau at a level **no lower than the amount recommended by the Senate Appropriations Committee and to ask you to oppose any potential floor amendments that could further reduce the agency's funding.**

While we are pleased that S. 1572 provides approximately \$88 million more than the current House version of this bill, the bill's funding is still not sufficient to ensure the Census Bureau's ability to sustain all of its core programs and surveys at their optimum capacity. For example, unlike its House counterpart, S. 1572 provides enough funding for the Bureau to conduct core portions of the 2012 Economic Census. But the Census Bureau would have to eliminate important components of this census, including the Survey of Business Owners, which provides otherwise unavailable information about American business, such as sources of funding and education, veteran ownership, family-owned, and home based, and the Business Expense Survey, which provides the authoritative source of information on flows of services industries.

The Senate mark also reduces the 2010 Census request of \$165 million by \$40 million, which if it prevails, will delay or permanently cancel numerous 2010 Census products and possibly terminate the Count Question Resolution Program, which allows state, local, and tribal governments to challenge their official 2010 Census counts. Further, this proposed reduction will delay the release of the Census Coverage Measurement (CCM) quality measures, which will tell us how accurate the 2010 Census was and guide methodological decisions for the next enumeration. Other core programs at risk include the American Community Survey (ACS), the seminal source of annual socio-economic and demographic data about the nation used by decision-makers in

the private sector and at all levels of government to allocate limited resources. For FY 2012, the Bureau requested \$5 million to test innovations in the American Community Survey, such as an Internet response option, that will contribute substantially to controlling the cost of the 2020 Census—an issue the Senate highlighted as a priority in the bill’s accompanying report language.

The Census Bureau has already demonstrated its commitment to reducing costs by taking bold steps to streamline operations. In June, the Director announced plans to realign the agency’s field structure by permanently closing six regional offices, reducing costs by an estimated \$15 million to \$18 million annually beginning in 2014. Further, in its FY 2012 budget request, the Census Bureau outlined plans to terminate nine programs, including popular products such as the Statistical Abstract and Current Industrial Reports, reaping over \$15 million in savings this year. In addition to eliminating programs, the Bureau has demonstrated its determination to use its funding wisely, making modest investments in required activities to help save billions of future dollars, especially with respect to conducting the 2020 Census and the ongoing American Community Survey. For example, continuous updating of the Master Address File throughout the decade — a proposed new initiative — would save hundreds of millions of dollars alone by eliminating the need for comprehensive pre-census address canvassing in 2019.

We understand the fiscal environment requires Congress to make difficult decisions and curtail current spending. The Census Bureau clearly appreciates the dilemma facing Congress, having already proposed cuts in its FY 2012 budget and significant streamlining of operations through administrative actions. Additional cuts will be counterproductive to an agency whose data are essential to running our government, informing our policies, and influencing economic productivity.

**We encourage you to support any efforts that may arise during floor consideration to preserve key Census Bureau programs, as proposed by the President in his FY2012 budget request, and to reject any attempts to cut the agency’s budget further in the full Senate.**

Thank you for your consideration of our views on this important and urgent matter.

Sincerely,

American Association for Public Opinion Research  
American Association of People with Disabilities  
Asian Pacific American Legal Center, a Member of Asian American Center for Advancing Justice  
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  
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  
Council of Professional Associations on Federal Statistics  
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 for Business Economics (NABE)  
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: All Members of the United States Senate