

April 12, 2018

The Honorable Trey Gowdy
Chairman
House Committee on Oversight and
Government Reform
U.S. House of Representatives
2157 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Elijah Cummings
Ranking Member
House Committee on Oversight and
Government Reform
U.S. House of Representatives
2471 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Gowdy and Ranking Member Cummings:

On behalf of the undersigned organizations, we urge you to hold oversight hearings promptly on

census. We believe that Secretary Ross, who previously expressed concerns to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform about adding untested questions, must explain his decision, which was made despite widespread objections from stakeholders, former Census Bureau directors, and career however, the addition of an untested citizenship question after years of careful, and costly, research, testing, and planning will compromise preparations for the 2020 Census, thereby jeopardizing the accuracy of the count in all communities an outcome that the nation will have to live with for the next ten years.

We believe Secretary Ross must explain why he disregarded the advice of Census officials, including six former Census Bureau directors from Republican and Democratic administrations, who stated in a January 26th [letter](#) status at this late point in the decennial planning process would put the accuracy of the enumeration and

[reports](#) that the Commerce Department overruled the advice of career officials at the Census Bureau. Officials rightly worried that adding a citizenship question to the decennial census could depress response rates and lead to an undercount. These officials worked throughout the decade to understand the intricacies of the census and how asking certain questions can affect response rates, data collection methods, truthfulness of responses, and overall willingness to be counted in the census. Their advice should not be disregarded, especially for an issue that Secretary Ross himself acknowledged

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stated in his memo explaining the decision, when in fact the question has never been tested in a contemporary census-like environment. While the American Community Survey includes a citizenship

goes to all households since 1950. As the former census directors highlighted, every census is different, and the environment in which a census occurs is a significant factor. Small changes to the order of questions, wording, and instructions can have significant and often unexpected consequences for response

rates and the quality and truthfulness of answers.

AFL-CIO
African American Ministers In Action
AgeOptions

Asian Services In Action, Inc.
Association of Asian Pacific Community Health Organizations
Association of Farmworker Opportunity Programs
Association of Population Centers
Association of Public Data Users (APDU)
Association of University Centers on Disabilities (AUCD)
Autistic Self Advocacy Network
AZ AAPI Democratic Party Caucus
AZ Asian & Pacific Islander American Vote Table
Bend the Arc Jewish Action
Berkeley Media Studies Group
Breakaway Research Group
California Calls
California Calls Education Fund
Cambodian Women Networking Asso.
Campaign for Youth Justice
Campaign Legal Center
Center for Democracy & Technology
Center for Media and Democracy
Center for Popular Democracy
Center for Urban and Racial Equity
CenterLink: The Community of LGBT Centers
Child Care Aware of America
Children's Advocacy Alliance - NV
Children's Defense Fund
Chinese Community Center, Houston
Chinese for Affirmative Action
CIRC
Claritas
CLASP
CLC
Clearinghouse on Women's Issues
Coalition for Humane Immigrant Rights (CHIRLA)
Coalition for the Peoples Agenda
Coalition on Human Needs
Colorado Children's Campaign
Colorado Cross-Disability Coalition
Common Cause
Communications Workers of America (CWA)
Community Action Against Rape DBA The Rape Crisis Center
Community Catalyst
Congregation of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd, US Provinces
Congregation of Sisters of St. Agnes
Congregation Rodeph Sholom

Consortium of Social Science Associations

Holy Spirit Missionary Sisters - USA-JPIC
HOPE For Nevada
Human Impact Partners
Human Rights Watch
Illinois Coalition Against Domestic Violence
Impact Fund
In Our Own Voice: National Black Women's Reproductive Justice Agenda
Indivisible Baltimore
International Children Assistance Network
International Rescue Committee
Japanese American Citizens League
Jewish Council for Public Affairs
John H. Thompson, Director of the U.S. Census Bureau - August 2013 to June 2017
Justice in Aging
Kansas Action for Children
Kansas Appleseed
Kansas Center for Economic Growth
KIDS COUNT in Delaware
Kids Forward
Lambda Legal
Laotian American National Alliance
LatinoJustice PRLDEF
Latinx Voice WI
Laurin Associates
Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law
Layton Boulevard West Neighbors, Inc.
LCLAA
Leadership Conference of Women Religious
League of Women Voters of the United States
Let America Vote
Lisa Gibson, Indivisible Hawaii
Los Angeles LGBT Center
MA Voter Table
MALDEF (Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund)
Maxfield Research and Consulting LLC
Mi Familia Vota
MinKwon Center for Community Action
Minnesota Council on Foundations
MomsRising
Musikanten
Muslim Public Affairs Council
NAACP
NAACP Legal Defense & Educational Fund, Inc.
National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials Educational Fund

National Action Network

National Advocacy Center of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd

National Asian Pacific American Women's Forum (NAPAWF)

National Association of Social Workers

National Black Justice Coalition

National Center for Law and Economic Justice

National Center for Lesbian Rights

National Center for Transgender Equality

National Coalition for Asian Pacific American Community Development (CAPACD)

National Coalition for the Homeless

Our Wisconsin Revolution
Partnership For America's Children
Pennsylvania Council of Churches
Pennsylvania Partnerships for Children
People For the American Way
PFLAG National
Planned Parenthood Federation of America
PolicyLink
Poligon Education Fund
Population Association of America
positively kids
Prison Policy Initiative
Progressive Hmong American Organizers
Project On Government Oversight
ProLiteracy
Public Citizen
public health
Public Health Institute
Public Justice Center
Purdue Marion & Associates
Research Advisory Services, Inc.
Research Allies for Lifelong Learning
Revolving Door Project
Ribbon Demographics, LLC
Rid Racism Milwaukee
RLS Demographics, Inc.
Rock the Vote
San Francisco AIDS Foundation
Sargent Shriver National Center on Poverty Law
SEIU 32BJ
Service Employees International Union (SEIU)
Services, Immigrant Rights, and Education Network (SIREN)
Sierra Club
SIKH AMERICAN LEGAL DEFENSE AND EDUCATION FUND
Sinsinawa Dominican Peace and Justice Office
Sisters of Charity of Nazareth Western Province Leadership
Sisters of Charity of St. Vincent de Paul of New York
Sisters of St. Dominic of Blauvelt, New York
Sisters of St. Francis, Clinton, IA
Sisters of the Good Shepherd
Sisters of the Holy Cross
Sisters of the Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary, New Windsor, NY
SiX Action
Society of American Archivists

SocioEnergetics Foundation
South Asian Americans Leading Together (SAALT)
SOUTH ASIAN NETWORK
Southeast Asia Resource Action Center (SEARAC)
Southeast Michigan Census Council
Southern Coalition for Social Justice
Southern Poverty Law Center
Srs. of Mary Reparatrix
State Innovation Exchange (SiX)
State Voices
Sunlight Foundation
Tangible Consulting Services
Texas Civil Rights Project
Texas Progressive Action Network
The Arc of the United States
The Census Project
The Data Center
The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights
The National Council of Asian Pacific Americans (NCAPA)
The New Florida Majority Education Fund
The Resurrection Project
The Sikh Coalition
The United States Conference of Mayors
Theresa Nowlin
Transformative Justice Coalition
Union for Reform Judaism
Union of Concerned Scientists
United Church of Christ, Justice and Witness Ministries
United Methodist Women
United Neighborhood Houses of New York
Urban and Regional Information Systems Association
URI Feinstein Center for a Hunger Free America
Vermont State Data Center
Virginia Civic Engagement Table
Voices for Progress
Voting Rights Institute
West Side Campaign Against Hunger
Wisconsin Democracy Campaign
Wisconsin Voices
World Without Genocide at Mitchell Hamline School of Law
YWCA Southeast Wisconsin
YWCA USA
ZERO TO THREE

cc: Members of the U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Oversight and Government Reform