



April 13, 2012

Honorable Frank Wolf
Chairman
Commerce, Justice, Science
Committee on Appropriations
H-307 The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

Honorable Chaka Fattah
Ranking Member
Commerce, Justice, Science
Committee on Appropriations
1016 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Wolf and Ranking Member Fattah:

We are writing to express our support for funding the **U.S. Census Bureau** at the Administration's **Fiscal Year 2013 request level of \$970 million**. This amount — *a modest three percent increase* over the Fiscal Year 2012 appropriation — is a prudent recommendation, given challenges facing the agency in FY2013 and strict federal spending limits.

As you can see from the diverse group of stakeholder signatories to this letter, reliable, comprehensive, and objective data about our nation's demographic, social and economic conditions are essential guideposts for prudent decision-making in virtually all sectors of the U.S. economy, both public and private. Reasonable but steady support for statistical programs will ensure informed and transparent policy choices by civic, business, and nonprofit leaders, helping us avoid inefficient or misdirected investments in our nation's future every day.

The Census Bureau's top program priorities in 2013 will be the Economic Census and continued planning for the 2020 Census. Next year marks the peak of a six-year planning and implementation cycle for the 2012 Economic Census (\$112 million), as the Census Bureau gathers information from three million business enterprises across the country. The data collected from the Economic Census are cornerstones of key indicators such as Gross Domestic Product and guide economic development decisions made by business and government officials alike.

As 2010 Census activities wind down with final evaluations and data products, planning for the next decennial enumeration is on its cyclical upswing. The 2020 Census budget request (\$131.4 million) is nearly double the FY2012 funding level (\$66.7 million). To save potentially billions of dollars in future years, as Congress

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has directed, the Census Bureau must invest resources early in the decade to ensure cost-effective, successful implementation of census operations. In FY2013, the Bureau proposes numerous testing and research initiatives, such as an Internet response option for the American Community Survey, new enumeration methods, and innovative approaches for using administrative records to increase the efficiency of the decennial count. In FY2013, the Census Bureau will try again to update its Supplemental Poverty Measure, an important initiative hampered by lack of sufficient funds in FY2012. Updating the poverty measure would help ensure that this vital policy building block reflects modern conditions and accurate economic components of household well-being.

We believe the President's funding request for the Census Bureau is reasonable and responsible, taking advantage of cost savings whenever possible and investing prudently in programs that will yield, both directly and indirectly, savings for the agency and the nation well into the future. We urge the Appropriations Committee to support the Census Bureau's FY2013 budget request and to oppose any efforts that would reduce the agency's funding below the FY2012 level.

Thank you for your consideration of our views. We look forward to working with you during the FY2013 appropriations deliberations.

Sincerely,

Louis Kincannon, former Director of US Census Bureau
 American Educational Research Association
 American Planning Association
 American Sociological Association
 American Statistical Association
 Asian American Justice Center, Member of Asian American Center for Advancing Justice
 Association of Academic Survey Research Organizations
 Association of Population Centers
 Association for University Business and Economic Research
 Consortium of Social Science Associations
 Council of Professional Associations on Federal Statistics
 Decision Demographics
 Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights
 Marketing Research Association
 National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials (NALEO) Educational Fund
 Population Association of America
 Population Resource Center
 Prison Policy Initiative
 Project Vote
 The Social Compact
 Southeast Michigan Census Council