

United States Senate
WASHINGTON, DC 20510

April 11, 2018

The Honorable Jerry Moran
Chairman
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice,
Science, and Related Agencies
Senate Committee on Appropriations
142 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Jeanne Shaheen
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice,
Science, and Related Agencies
Senate Committee on Appropriations
125 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Moran and Ranking Member Shaheen:

As you consider fiscal year (FY) 2019 appropriations, we write to respectfully request your support for \$4.735 billion for the Census Bureau as a minimum funding level. This amount is \$933.50 million above the administration's estimated Census Bureau request for FY 2019. For the 2020 Census alone, the administration's FY 2019 request is itself \$437 million below the Department of Commerce's (the Department) revised FY 2019 cost estimate of \$3.452 billion.

This level would fund Current Surveys and Programs at \$270 million, which is \$21 million above the administration's request, and equal to both the FY 2017 appropriation and the Senate-passed appropriation for FY 2018. This level would also provide \$3.928 billion for the 2020 Census within the Periodic Censuses and Programs account — \$912.5 million above the administration's request.

Our proposed 2020 Census mark reflects an increase of \$124 million over the administration's request to match the Department's revised lifecycle estimate, as well as an additional \$314 million contingency fund proposed by Secretary Ross. It also provides an additional \$100 million for the development of the communications campaign under the Integrated Partnership and Communications contract, \$62.5 million to increase the number of Partnership Specialists from 1,000 to 2,000, and \$312 million for an additional 52 Area Census Offices.

The 2020 Census is rapidly approaching, yet final preparations are considerably underfunded compared to the Department's revised lifecycle cost estimate. As our nation's largest peacetime undertaking, the decennial census determines the outcome of apportionment, directly influencing the composition of our representative democracy. It also drives more than \$700 billion annually in federal assistance to state and local governments.

While technology, automation, and the growth of big data have kept census costs in check, the fact remains that counting 330 million people in a geographically and culturally diverse country is no easy feat. Congress can help ensure a fair and accurate census as required by the Constitution by providing the additional funding outlined above for activities most likely to reach hard-to-count communities and people: low income rural and remote areas and urban

neighborhoods; American Indian reservations; young children; immigrants and migrant workers; households without reliable Internet access; frequent movers, including military families and young adults; and single parent households.

The additional funding is a responsible and necessary step in light of a lower projected self-response rate, providing for (1) 2,000 Partnership Specialists who will engage, educate, and mobilize states, localities, and community-based organizations in support of the census; (2) an expanded communications campaign that targets harder-to-reach communities, includes more 'in-language' advertising, and addresses growing public fears about cyber-security; and (3) expands the field footprint through 20 percent more local census offices.

Without the necessary support, the federal government will not be able to meet its first constitutional responsibility. Failure to invest sufficiently in final preparations and early operations could depress participation and increase operational mistakes and failures in 2020, which then would increase census costs by billions of dollars when the census starts, diminish public confidence in the results, and put a fair and accurate 2020 Census in jeopardy. An accurate count of all Americans is a constitutionally required activity, and we believe Congress must commit to an adequate investment in the decennial census.

Sincerely,



TINA SMITH
United States Senator

BRIAN SCHATZ
United States Senator



DIANNE FEINSTEIN
United States Senator

MARIA CANTWELL
United States Senator



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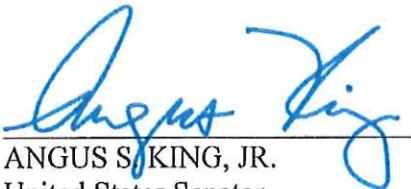
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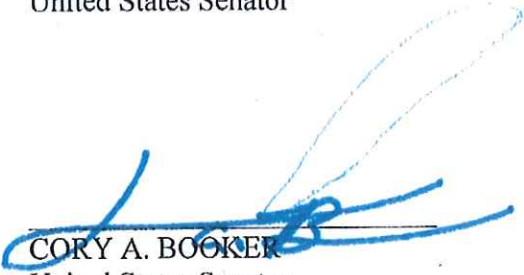
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