



Board of County Commissioners
Multnomah County Chair
501 SE Hawthorne Blvd., Suite 600
Portland, Oregon 97214

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Majority Leader
United States Senate
U.S. Capitol Building, Room S-230
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Chuck Schumer
Minority Leader
United States Senate
U.S. Capitol Building, Room S-224
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker of the House
U.S. House of Representatives
U.S. Capitol Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
Minority Leader
United States House of Representatives
U.S. Capitol Building
Washington, DC 20515

August 17, 2020

Dear Majority Leader McConnell, Speaker Pelosi, Leader Schumer and Leader McCarthy:

We are writing to you today to express our deep concern and opposition to recent actions that would negatively impact the ability of the U.S. Census Bureau to achieve a full and accurate 2020 Decennial Census. We respectfully request immediate Congressional intervention to ensure a complete, fair and accurate Census count.

On July 21, 2020, the Administration announced the “Memorandum on Excluding Illegal Aliens from the Apportionment Base Following the 2020 Census.” Further, the U.S. Census Bureau recently announced that field data collection and the self-response period would be shortened by one month and end on September 30, 2020. Together these actions could lead to severe negative budgetary consequences for state and local governments throughout the nation.

The decennial census, as outlined in the Constitution, aims to count every United States resident each decade, is critical to county governments. With nearly a trillion dollars in federal funding being apportioned each year based on Census results, an accurate, complete count is crucial to county governments and their residents. Funding for health care, economic development, infrastructure, education and other critical county responsibilities are all informed by Census results. Census counts are also increasingly critical to data-driven businesses and research efforts. Therefore, without an accurate and complete count, counties across the country, and our residents, will not have access to the services we critically need.

In addition, Census response rates are currently down throughout the Country, and the sudden and unexpected curtailment of data collection by an entire month only serves to adversely impact ongoing efforts for state and local jurisdictions. Allowing enough time for the Bureau's Nonresponse Followup Operation (NRFU) is crucial to reaching households that have been historically undercounted and are disproportionately impacted by COVID-19. Additionally, halting counting operations early will disproportionately affect the quality of life and resources for county constituents for the next decade as well as the effectiveness of county officials to execute their responsibilities.

The Multnomah County Board of Commissioners stand together in our efforts to get a complete picture of the diversity in our county and in our dedication to providing the services our community needs. We reiterate our request for Congressional intervention to secure a complete, fair and accurate 2020 Census count and affirmation of The Bureau's prior commitment to the October 31, 2020 deadline. Thank you for your attention to these critical issues.

Sincerely,



Deborah Kafoury
Multnomah County Chair



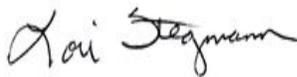
Sharon Meieran
District 1 Commissioner



Susheela Jayapal
District 2 Commissioner



Jessica Vega Pederson
District 3 Commissioner



Lori Stegmann
District 4 Commissioner

cc: Senator Ron Wyden
Senator Jeff Merkley
Representative Earl Blumenauer
Representative Suzanne Bonamici
Representative Kurt Schraeder