



June 8, 2009

The Honorable David Obey  
Chairman  
Committee on Appropriations  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Obey:

We are writing to you as members of the Census Project ([www.thecensusproject.org](http://www.thecensusproject.org)), a coalition of state and local governments, civil rights and labor groups, housing and child advocates, businesses, and research organizations interested in a fair and accurate Census 2010. As your committee prepares to consider the Fiscal Year (FY) 2010 Commerce, Justice, Science appropriations bill, we ask you to include the full funding level for the U.S. Census Bureau requested by President Obama and approved by the House Commerce, Justice, Science Appropriations Subcommittee.

As you know, the Administration requested **\$7.375 billion for the U.S. Census Bureau** in FY2010, more than twice the FY2009 appropriation of \$3.14 billion. With Census 2010 fast approaching, this proposed dramatic increase in funding is essential. Historically, about half of the lifecycle census cost is spent in the census year alone. A decade of preparations for Census 2010 will culminate officially on Census Day, April 1, 2010.

In 2010, the Census Bureau will:

- open and staff remaining Local Census Offices (for a total of almost 500);
- recruit 3.8 million and hire 1.4 million temporary employees to conduct the census;
- finalize data capture, data processing and telecommunications systems;
- print 140+ million census questionnaires and other materials (e.g. advance letter);
- launch a national advertising campaign;
- hire additional national and regional staff to oversee field operations;

- collect census information from every residential housing unit and group quarters in the country, using the mail, telephone and door-to-door visits; and
- conduct an accuracy-check survey (Census Coverage Measurement).

The Bureau's FY2010 request reflects the true cost of accomplishing all of these activities successfully, with an emphasis on reaching hard-to-count populations. In addition, the Administration's request will allow the agency to continue its other crucial operations, such as the American Community Survey, Economic Census and other surveys and population estimates programs.

We acknowledge that Congress faces tight fiscal constraints. We also know there are many worthy programs funded through the Commerce, Justice, Science appropriations bill. However, Census 2010 represents the nation's largest peacetime mobilization and most inclusive opportunity for civic engagement. Its outcome will determine the reapportionment of Congress, composition of the Electoral College and legislative districts at all levels of government, and distribution of almost \$400 billion in federal funds annually. We need to know that decisions this important are based on an accurate census count. For these reasons, we ask the full committee to maintain the current proposed level of funding for the Census Bureau and reject any amendments that would boost funding for other programs by using the Census Bureau as an offset.

Thank you for your consideration of our request and for your support of the Census Bureau and its efforts to conduct the 2010 Decennial Census.

Sincerely,

American Sociological Association  
American Statistical Association  
Asian American Justice Center  
Consortium of Social Science Associations  
Council of Professional Associations on Federal Statistics  
Marketing Research Association (MRA)  
National Low Income Housing Coalition  
Population Association of America and Association of Population Centers  
Southeast Michigan Census Council

cc: Representative Jerry Lewis  
Representative Alan Mollohan  
Representative Frank Wolf