



United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-0504

<http://feinstein.senate.gov>

June 10, 2020

Dr. Steven Dillingham
Director
United States Census Bureau
4600 Silver Hill Road
Washington, DC 20233

Dear Dr. Dillingham:

I am writing to express concern about the potential for the COVID-19 pandemic to decrease participation in the 2020 Census and thereby lead to an undercount of our country's population. I ask that you ensure that communities are counted accurately and completely by enhancing the U.S. Census Bureau's media and field outreach plans.

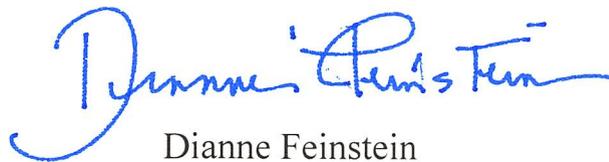
It is my understanding that the COVID-19 pandemic affected every 2020 Census operation to some degree, with the Census Bureau delaying, suspending, modifying, or canceling most planned activities since mid-March. Of particular consequence, the health crisis forced the cancellation of countless census promotional events arranged by both the Census Bureau and census "partner" organizations. In order to compensate for the absence of face-to-face communication that educates and encourages census participation, I urge you to consider taking the following actions to augment outreach efforts.

- Expand the advertising campaign to the public by running additional print, TV, radio, and Internet ads, in more languages than are currently used, in order to reach historically undercounted communities. This expanded effort should include new advertising targeted to rural communities where field workers have only recently delivered census packets as part of the delayed Update/Leave operation and where response rates continue to lag considerably.

- Increase your investment in the hiring and training of census employees who are prepared to conduct in-person enumeration and staff census events when it is safe to do so. Ensure that these employees receive appropriate cultural and linguistic training based on the demographics of the areas where they will be deployed.
- In compliance with health and safety protocols, increase capacity of the Census Questionnaire Assistance operation to receive census responses and answer questions from respondents.
- Whenever possible, avoid using administrative records for enumeration, since such records are often unavailable or lack comprehensive information for many historically undercounted population groups. Utilize administrative records only as a last resort to count households that have neither self-responded nor responded to several in-person attempts to collect the information.

Thank you for your attention to this request, and for the adjustments you have already made in support of a comprehensive and fair 2020 Census. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me or my staff.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Dianne Feinstein". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "D".

Dianne Feinstein
United States Senator

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