



May 7, 2018

House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform
2157 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

RE: May 8 Public Hearing on Progress Report on the 2020 Census

Dear Chairman Gowdy, Ranking Member Cummings, and Members of the Committee,

On behalf of our nonprofit member organizations, we oppose inclusion of a citizenship question on the 2020 Census questionnaire because of the likelihood that, among other things, it will suppress participation and lead to an unfair, inaccurate, and incomplete count.

Community nonprofits have a significant stake in ensuring that all people in the United States are counted as part of a fair, accurate, and complete 2020 Census. Nonprofits operate in every county and community in our country, improving lives, uplifting culture, and solving local problems. We are often the first to encounter our fellow residents when they are in crisis and we are there for the long haul to see them through their challenges. Because these organizations are valued and trusted contributors to the wellbeing of our communities, the Census Bureau regularly seeks the engagement and partnership of charitable organizations to help reach hard-to-count populations.

As safe havens for people to gather in their communities, nonprofits have a duty to speak out for the public good and promote a more just and equitable society. Nonprofits often provide a voice for those individuals and groups who are unable to speak for themselves, some of whom may be unlikely to engage with Census staff, especially if their being in the country is questioned.

Promoting civic engagement and participating in public life is part of why community nonprofits are trusted voices in their communities. By promoting civic engagement, including an accurate 2020 Census, nonprofits will further their missions, have a positive impact on communities, build relationships with potential and current elected officials, and increase the general understanding of policy issues important to nonprofits.

We urge you to remove all barriers to an accurate, fair and complete Census count.

Sincerely,

Gian-Carl Casa
President & CEO

cc: Rep. John Larson
Rep. Joe Courtney
Rep. Rosa DeLauro
Rep. Jim Himes
Rep. Elizabeth Esty

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