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SAVE THE DATE!
2019 Nonprofit Summit
March 11-13
Greenville Hyatt

TogetherSC.org

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B-500, Columbia, SC 29223

The Honorable Trey Gowdy
Chairman, Oversight and Government Reform Committee
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515
Sent by email

RE: Progress Report on the 2020 Census

Dear Chairman Gowdy,

Together SC, your state’s network of charitable nonprofits with 800+ members, urges you to take every possible action to promote a fair, accurate, and complete 2020 Census count of all persons living in our state and across the country.

In particular, we urge: 1) your opposition to including any questions on citizenship, and 2) your support for full funding of the Census Bureau, both of which are necessary to obtain full participation in the 2020 Census.

We thank you for holding the May hearing and update on the 2020 Census and for considering the following facts when making decisions on this matter:

- 1) Charitable nonprofits operate in all 46 counties in South Carolina improving lives, uplifting faith and culture, and solving local problems. Many of our member organizations will actively participate in the get-out-the-count efforts in 2020 and, like us, are deeply committed to securing a fair, accurate, and complete count.
- 2) There is only one chance for the Census Bureau to get the 2020 Census right; there can be no do-overs. While much of the focus has been on the impact of the Census redistricting of legislative districts, **an unfair, inaccurate, and incomplete count will have severe adverse impact on funding allocations and on management, and planning decisions that impact the nation’s economy long-term.**
- 3) Census Bureau data **influences the allocation of \$7.3 billion in South Carolina each year**, affecting spending on key programs, many of which are administered through charitable organizations.
- 4) According to a [recent analysis](#) of the Georgetown University Institute of Public Policy using 2015 data, **South Carolina stands to lose \$809 for every person missed in the census.**
- 5) Our state’s population is estimated to have passed 5 million people. Many new segments of our state’s population will be undercounted if resources are insufficient for the Census Bureau to properly gather accurate data.

- 6) If this happens, our state will receive less federal funding, putting even greater pressure on our policymakers to come up with extra revenues to fill gaps. Moreover, children and low-income South Carolinians suffer disproportionately from decreases to education funding and programs that help them become contributing members of society.
- 7) Undercounts of individuals and demographic groups that charitable nonprofits serve can lead to inadequate funding, putting greater pressure on nonprofits and foundations, state and local governments, and businesses in undercounted areas to address unmet needs.

Therefore, Together SC believes that charitable nonprofits have a significant stake and role to play in ensuring that all residents are counted as part of the 2020 Census. It is imperative that Congress adequately fund the 2020 Census to ensure that the process for counting residents across the state and nation is fair and complete.

We would also like to address Commerce Secretary Ross's recent announcement that a question about citizenship will be included on the 2020 Census questionnaire. Together SC strongly opposes the inclusion of a citizenship question because of the clear and well-documented negative effects it will have on the count.

- 1) The Census Bureau has previously provided research that a question on a person's citizenship status would discourage participation in the count.
- 2) [Six former Census Bureau directors](#), individuals who served in Republican and Democratic administrations, have warned that the move would depress responses among minorities who fear that the government would use that information against them.
- 3) [Mayors from 160 cities](#), including Charleston and Sumter, wrote of their concerns of "lower participation by immigrants who fear the government will use this information to harm them and their families."

Together SC opposes 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.

Chairman Gowdy, we ask for your continued support for full funding of the 2020 Census and your help ensuring a fair, accurate, and complete census count by insisting that an unwarranted citizenship question not be included in the questionnaire.

Thank you to you and your staff for representing the people of South Carolina and for listening to our concerns.

Sincerely,



Madeleine McGee,
President, Together SC



Forrest Alton,
Board Chair, Together SC



Paige Stephenson,
Advocacy Committee Chair, Together SC

Cc: Cindy Crick, Anna Bartlett, Clayton Tufts, Laura Rush, Sharon Casey, Alexa Armstrong, William McKenna.
Cc: Hon. Mark Sanford, Hon. Joe Wilson, Hon. Jeff Duncan, Hon. Ralph Norman, Hon. James Clyburn, Hon. Tom Rice, Hon. Tim Scott, and Hon. Lindsay Graham, via their staff.