

2020 Census

We urge Congress to support a fully funded, accurate, and cost-effective 2020 Census

Rationale

The U.S. Census is the “largest civic action undertaken by the entire country”—a decennial event required by the U.S. Constitution that aims to count every person living in the United States, regardless of race, gender, or citizenship status. That has been the intent ever since James Madison helped design the first census back in 1790.

The federal decennial Census assures a fair, proportionate representation in Congress. It helps community and business leaders plan to address emerging social service, business, and infrastructure needs. It helps funders make good decisions about where to best allocate scarce resources. Federal dollars are also used for education, healthcare, housing, food, income security, and rural access to broadband.

In Indiana, dollars received as a result of the 2010 Census are estimated at approximately \$1,600 per person, or \$11 billion total.

Most digitally advanced census in history

The upcoming 2020 decennial census is anticipated to be the largest census and most digitally advanced count in U.S. history. Despite these expectations, the Census Bureau's planning and preparation cycle has been severely hindered by unfulfilled budget requests, forcing the delay and even cancellation of critical testing of new cost saving technology. In 2018, the Census is supposed to be running an end-to-end test, which is essentially a dress rehearsal for 2020 where all new technologies and enumeration methods will be tested. However, because of the historic underfunding, operational testing in only one urban site is being planned, and testing planned for all sites in rural or suburban communities has been cancelled. This introduces unprecedented risk to successfully modernizing the census in 2020 and potentially puts numerous populations at risk of not being accurately counted.

Business and nonprofit leaders alike rely on accurate census data

Nonprofits, foundations, and other community leaders rely on accurate census data to make good decisions about schools, seniors, veterans, and other community needs; to identify community and demographic trends that inform long-term plans and grants; and define where services are delivered. It is vitally important that the Census Bureau provide an accurate count. And to provide an accurate count, it must be funded sufficiently.