



April 17, 2018

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The Honorable Wilbur L. Ross, Jr.
Secretary, U.S. Department of Commerce
1401 Constitution Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20230

RE: 2020 Census

Dear Secretary Ross:

As president of the California State Association of Counties (CSAC), representing all of California's 58 counties, I am writing to offer our partnership to you as you prepare for the 2020 Census.

Counties in California are the critical link between the policies and programs of the federal and state governments and the residents those programs serve and protect. Due to our unique role, we are keenly aware of the importance of the Census in correctly allocating the federal funds that make those programs possible, and we share your desire to make sure everyone is counted. In fact, federal funds constitute approximately 15 percent of county budgets in California, for everything from safety net programs to infrastructure.

Likewise, as an elected official responsible for representing everyone in my district, I know how important it is that our residents all have equal representation, from the county all the way up to Congress. As you know, this question of representation is the reason the U.S. Constitution requires the decennial count of every resident in the United States.

Given our shared interest in an accurate count, please contact me if there is anything counties can do to help you with this enormous undertaking.

I would like to share one concern California counties have and respectfully request that you reject questions related to citizenship status. While well-intentioned, counties worry that these questions could have the unintended consequence of undercounting some people, thus not fulfilling the Constitution's mandate to count every resident.

We strongly support a fair and equitable distribution of federal funds to state and local governments. Given the possibility that questions regarding citizenship status could deter residents from completing and submitting their information, we respectfully request those questions be left off of the Census.

Thank you for your consideration of this important matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "Leticia Perez", written in a cursive style.

Leticia Perez
President
California State Association of Counties