May 31, 2017

President Donald J. Trump
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20500

A Fair and Accurate Census is Essential:
The 2020 Census Must be Well-Funded with a Highly Qualified and Established Leader as Census Bureau Director

Dear President Trump:

On behalf of The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights, a coalition charged by its diverse membership of more than 200 national organizations to promote and protect the civil and human rights of all persons in the United States, and the 168 national, state, and local undersigned organizations, we write to urge your prompt nomination of a highly qualified and widely respected professional to serve as the next Director of the U.S. Census Bureau. Strong leadership at the Census Bureau is of paramount importance now, when the Bureau needs the stature and clout to advocate for the resources necessary to ensure a successful census.

An accurate and fair census, and the collection of useful, objective data about our nation’s people, housing, economy, and communities, is among the most important civil rights issues of our day. The resignation (effective June 30, 2017) of the current Census Director, John Thompson, will leave the premier U.S. statistical agency with a leadership vacuum less than three years before the start of the nation’s largest, most complex peacetime mobilization and less than one year before a critical “dress rehearsal” of the full census process. Failure to fill this vacancy quickly could delay final design decisions and impair preparations for the 2020 Census. The Census Director also must oversee the conduct of the 2017 Economic Census, the source of all baseline data for our economic indicators and national income accounts, as well as efforts to strengthen and streamline the American Community Survey (ACS), which updates the census throughout the decade.

The strength of our civic and economic institutions depends on the success of these activities and other irreplaceable surveys and data programs. Since 1787, the U.S. Constitution has required a census every ten years to apportion seats in the U.S. House of Representatives among the States and to uphold the Constitution’s guarantee of equal representation. State and local governments rely on the census for their own allocation of political representation in accordance with constitutional principles. Census-derived data guide the prudent distribution of more than $600 billion annually in federal assistance to states, localities, and individuals in need. Businesses and entrepreneurs use census data to locate new facilities, understand the strengths and needs of the labor force, and target services and goods where customers need them, thereby spurring economic growth and job creation in communities across the country. Accordingly, the Census Bureau requires an established leader at the helm who will provide stability through the final years of this decade, explain the
importance of its mission compellingly, address Congress’s fiscal concerns, and be ready for full immersion in the important tasks at hand.

The candidate for this position also must meet the qualifications set forth in the Presidential Appointment Efficiency and Streamlining Act of 2011. That law, which established a five-year renewable term for the director, envisions a nonpartisan candidate with “demonstrated ability in managing large organizations and experience in the collection, analysis, and use of statistical data.” It is imperative that all members of Congress, state and local officials from both political parties, the Census Bureau’s professional staff, and — most importantly — the American people have full confidence in the objectivity, integrity, and capability of the next Census Director.

We would welcome the opportunity to discuss qualified candidates with appropriate officials in your administration. Thank you for your attention to our concerns. If you have any questions regarding this issue, please contact Corrine Yu, Leadership Conference Managing Policy Director at 202-466-5670.

Sincerely,

The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights
9to5, National Association of Working Women
A. Philip Randolph Institute
ACCESS
Advancement Project California
AFGE Council 241
American Federation of Government Employees (AFGE)
American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees
American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee
Americans for Democratic Action (ADA)
Andrew Goodman Foundation
APANO (Asian Pacific American Network of Oregon)
APAPA Austin TX Chapter
Asian American Federation
Asian American Federation of Florida - South Region
Asian American Legal Defense and Education Fund (AALDEF)
Asian American Organizing Project
Asian American Psychological Association
Asian Americans Advancing Justice - AAJC
Asian Americans Advancing Justice - Asian Law Caucus
Asian Americans Advancing Justice - Atlanta
Asian Americans Advancing Justice - Los Angeles
Asian Americans United
Asian and Pacific Islander American Vote
Asian & Pacific Islander American Vote - Michigan
Asian Community Development Council (ACDC)
Asian Counseling and Referral Service
Asian Law Alliance
Asian Pacific American Senior Coalition
Asian Pacific Community in Action
Asian Pacific Development Center
Asian Pacific Islander American Public Affairs Association
Asian Pacific Islander Americans for Civic Empowerment Votes (APACEvotes)
Asian Pacific Islanders for Civic Empowerment (APACE)
Asian Services In Action
Association of Asian Pacific Community Health Organizations (AAPCHO)
Association of Population Centers
AZ APIA VOTE TABLE
Bayside Community Center
Bend the Arc Jewish Action
Caribbean-American Advancement Foundation, Inc.
Catholics in Alliance for the Common Good
The Center for Asian Pacific American Women
Center for Community Change Action
Center for Pan Asian Community Services, Inc (CPACS)
The Center for Popular Democracy
CHANGE Illinois
Charles Houston Bar Association
Children’s Defense Fund
Children’s Defense Fund- Ohio
Chinese American Citizens Alliance, Portland Lodge
Coalition of Black Trade Unionists
Common Cause
Congregation of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd, US Provinces
CT Commission on Equity and Opportunity
Disability Rights Education and Defense Fund
Economic Policy Institute
Empowering Pacific Islander Communities
Equal Justice Society
Equal Rights Advocates
Equality California
Every Voice
Faith Coalition of Southern Nevada
Families USA
Family Equality Council
Forefront
Four Freedoms Forum
Franciscan Action Network
Friends of the Earth
Georgia Association of Latino Elected Officials (GALEO)
Global Justice Institute
GLSEN
Hindu American Foundation
Hip Hop Caucus
Human Rights Campaign
Indian Horizon of Florida
Institute for Science and Human Values
International Association of Official Human Rights Agencies
International Association of Women in Radio and Television USA (IAWRTUSA)
Japanese American Citizens League
Jewish Council For Public Affairs
Justice in Aging
La Maestra Family Clinic, Inc
Labor Council for Latin American Advancement
Lambda Legal
Laotian American National Alliance
Latino Academy of Workforce Development
LatinoJustice PRLDEF
Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law
League of United Latin American Citizens
League of Women Voters
Loretto Kansas City
Main Street Alliance
Massachusetts Voter Table
Metropolitan Community Churches
Mi Familia Vota
MinKwon Center for Community Action
MomsRising
NAACP
NAACP Legal Defense & Educational Fund, Inc.
NALEO Educational Fund
NANAY CEDC
NANAY, Inc.
National Action Network
National Advocacy Center of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd
National Alliance for Partnerships in Equity (NAPE)
National Association of Human Rights Workers
National Association of Social Workers
National Bar Association
National Black Justice Organization
National Center for Transgender Equality
National Coalition for Asian Pacific American Community Development - CAPACD
National Coalition on Black Civic Participation
National Congress of American Indians
National Consumer Law Center, on behalf of its low-income clients
National Council of Asian Pacific Americans (NCAPA)
National Council of La Raza (NCLR)
National Council on Independent Living
National Disability Rights Network
National Domestic Workers Alliance
National Education Association
National Employment Law Project
National Federation of Filipino American Associations (NaFFAA)
National Health Law Program
National Hispanic Media Coalition
National Immigration Law Center
National Institute for Latino Policy (NiLP)
National LGBTQ Task Force
National Network for Arab American Communities
National Organization for Women
National Queer Asian Pacific Islander Alliance (NQAPIA)
National Tongan American Society
NETWORK Lobby for Catholic Social Justice
New York City for CEDAW
North Carolina Asian Americans Together
OCA - Asian Pacific American Advocates
OCA South Florida Chapter
Ohio Organizing Collaborative
Ohio Voice
Orange County Asian and Pacific Islander Community Alliance
PFLAG National
PICO California
PICO National Network
PolicyLink
Population Association of America
Pride at Work
Prison Policy Initiative
Progressive Leadership Alliance of Nevada
ProgressNow
Public Citizen
SALDEF
Sargent Shriver National Center on Poverty Law
Service Employees International Union (SEIU)
Silver State Voices
Southeast Asian Educational Development of Wisconsin, Inc.
State Voices
The Trevor Project
Union for Reform Judaism
Upsilon Alpha Omega Chapter of AKA Sorority, Inc.
Vision New American
Voices for Progress
The Voter Participation Center
Voting Rights Institute
Voto Latino
The Williams Institute, UCLA School of Law
Women Watch Afrika, Inc.
Women’s City Club of New York
YWCA South Hampton Roads
YWCA USA

cc: Honorable Wilbur Ross, Secretary of Commerce
    Honorable Mitch McConnell, Majority Leader, U.S. Senate
    Honorable Charles Schumer, Minority Leader, U.S. Senate