

NATIONAL STATE DATA CENTER STEERING COMMITTEE

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*Representing a Network of 1,800
State Data Centers and Affiliates Nationwide*

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We Bring Value-Added Census Data and Education to the User

July 31, 2020

Dr. Steven Dillingham, Director
US Census Bureau
4600 Silver Hill Road, Room 8H001
Washington, DC 20233

Dear Director Dillingham,

The State Data Center (SDC) network is proud to be one of the longest and most successful Census partnerships. SDCs share the Census Bureau goal of providing accurate data to serve the needs of all communities in the nation. SDCs are the local face of Census data and have facilitated the use of Census Bureau data in meeting local needs including from emergency response to economic development. The State Data Centers appreciate and respect the importance of Census data not only to local funding and planning but also as a Constitutional foundation to our representative government. As dedicated Census partners, the State Data Centers must express concern over the recent decision to shorten the 2020 Census response period to September 30, 2020.

As of July 30, 2020, nearly 40% of households in the nation have not responded to the 2020 Census. The US Census Bureau must be given the time to accurately count, tabulate, and report the resident population of the country. Reducing Census data collection to September 30 puts the Census Bureau at risk of failing the Constitutional mandate of the US Census and providing inaccurate data for redistricting and funding to every state, congressional district, and community. Planning and services to the American people for the next decade will suffer from a rushed and inaccurate 2020 Census. The credibility of the US Census Bureau as the gold standard of data in the United States will be undermined by rushing an incomplete Census count to meet release deadlines. As responsible stewards of the nation's data, the US Census Bureau itself recognized these risks and requested 2020 Census data release deadlines be extended into 2021. The State Data Centers support you in this extension.

The State Data Centers applaud the service and commitment of the US Census Bureau and your history of serving complete and accurate data. We call on you to continue your commitment to the Constitutional mandate and the foundational need for accuracy in Census data by maintaining 2020 Census data collection until at least October 31, 2020. We ask that the US Census Bureau and Congress agree to the revised 2021 Apportionment and Redistricting deadlines that will allow the US Census Bureau to produce the most accurate 2020 Census data

possible. Taking these actions, you will provide decision makers in every state the accurate data needed to serve their people, and the State Data Centers remain your dedicated partners in that task.

Our steering committee can be reached by email: Bob.Coats@osbm.nc.gov, or by US mail: Bob Coats, North Carolina Office of State Budget and Management, 430 N. Salisbury Street, Raleigh, NC 27603.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bob Coats", written in a cursive style.

Robert Coats
Chair, State Data Center Steering Committee

CC:

US House of Representatives Committee on Oversight and Reform

US Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Government Affairs

Mr. Ali Ahmad, US Census Bureau, Associate Director of Communications

Ms. Lakiva Pullins, US Census Bureau, Assistant Division Chief, Customer Liaison and Marketing Services Office

State Data Center network