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Senate and House Letters Urge Congressional Leaders to Fully Fund 2020 Census and American Community Survey

WASHINGTON - The Census Project today released two letters to congressional Appropriations Committee leaders, urging full funding of the Obama Administration's FY 2017 budget request for the 2020 Census and continued support for the companion American Community Survey (ACS). [Six U.S. Senators](#) and [more than 50 U.S. Representatives](#) signed the letters to their respective funding panels.

"Fiscal Year 2017 is a critical year of preparation to successfully execute the 2020 Census. The Bureau is conducting research and operational development on new data collection technology that could save the taxpayers more than \$5 billion over the lifecycle of the Census. Next year, the Census Bureau must complete production of interoperable systems to implement a re-designed Census as well as initiate the Local Update of Census Addresses program in partnership with state and local governments, finalize questionnaire content for congressional approval, and acquire Regional Census Centers. Additionally, the Bureau will be preparing to perform an End-to-End Readiness test in 2018, requiring completion of the new information technology systems," the Senate letter said.

The administration is requesting \$778 million in FY 2017 funding for 2020 Census planning and preparation, and \$251 in funding for the ACS.

"The decennial Census is the nation's largest peacetime activity and the foundation of our representative system of governance, from Congress down to local school boards. Congress itself relies on Census and ACS data to allocate, prudently and fairly, most federal discretionary funding to the communities we represent. The Census must be a budget priority for Congress. We cannot continue to shortchange an activity so fundamental to

our democracy and the sustained well-being of our communities,” declared the House letter.

Sen. Al Franken (D-MN) spearheaded the letter to Senate appropriators, while Reps. Carolyn Maloney (D-NY), Keith Ellison (D-MN), and Gerald Connolly (D-VA) organized the House sign-on letter.

In addition, the House letter noted that, “Beyond preparing for the Census, the Bureau is charged with the important task of managing the American Community Survey (ACS) each year. The importance of the ACS cannot be overstated; it provides Congress, state and local governments, businesses, and social service providers with the objective, reliable data they need to invest wisely, stimulate economic growth, and meet the needs of vulnerable populations like veterans, people with disabilities, older Americans, and low income households.”

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