



## PRESS RELEASE

*For Release: February 10, 2020*

*For More Information Contact:*

*Mary Jo Hoeksema: (703) 298-6818, [maryjo@popassoc.org](mailto:maryjo@popassoc.org)*

*Howard Fienberg: (202) 570-7312, [howard.fienberg@insightsassociation.org](mailto:howard.fienberg@insightsassociation.org)*

*Andrew Reamer: (202) 994-7866, [areamer@gwu.edu](mailto:areamer@gwu.edu)*

## **New Study Identifies Each State's Share of \$1.5 Trillion in Annual Census-driven Federal Funding: Eleven Receive Over \$40 Billion Apiece**

**Washington, D.C.** As state governments launch massive outreach and advertising campaigns to get a full, accurate count of residents for the 2020 Census, a new groundbreaking study identifies how many billions in census-guided federal funding each state has at stake. Expanding on recent research demonstrating that in Fiscal Year 2017 states and localities annually received over [\\$1.5 trillion dollars in census-guided federal funding](#) from 316 programs, George Washington University's "[Counting for Dollars 2020](#)" project, led by Professor Andrew Reamer, today [published the distribution of that funding](#) state-by-state.

The state numbers are staggering. Eleven states each received over \$40 billion from census-guided federal funding: California (\$171.9B), New York (\$121.7B), Texas (\$101.6B), Florida (\$86.8B), Pennsylvania (\$63.0B), Ohio (\$56.5B), Illinois (\$55.9B), Michigan (\$48.7B), New Jersey (\$45.8B), North Carolina (\$43.8B), and Georgia (\$40.5B). These numbers are expected to grow each year of the decade ahead.

The new study finds that census-guided funding drives a substantial proportion of the U.S. economy – 9.0% of personal income in 2017. By state, dependence on census-guided spending varies substantially. West Virginia relies more on census-guided funding (16.6% of personal) than any other state, followed by Mississippi (16.4%). Colorado and Utah have the lowest dependence (6.3% and 6.7%, respectively).

The GW study says most of the differences among the states can be explained by differences in the percentage of each state's population in poverty and the percentage living in rural areas. This finding makes sense in that many federal programs are targeted to poor households and rural areas.

Professor Reamer notes: "A large part of each state's economy depends on census-guided federal spending. The accuracy of each state's census population determines if it gets its fair share of federal funds. At the same time, census accuracy is particularly important for states with high percentages of residents who are poor or live in rural areas. Whether its poverty and rural status, each state should keep in mind that federal funds they lose due to undercounting don't go back to the U.S. Treasury — they get redistributed, essentially as a gift, to all the other states. For most programs, Congress determines the size of the pie and the census numbers determine the size of each state's slice," Reamer added.

The annual U.S. total of \$1.5 trillion is a significant increase from the project's last major state-level compilation ([published in spring 2019](#)) — the project team expanded coverage from 55 large federal programs to a complete list of the 316 federal programs that rely on census derived data and because the spending was updated from the FY2016 to the FY2017.

“This new data, thanks to Professor Reamer’s team, shows that states have a great deal more at stake in a quality census count than just their representation in Congress” said Census Project co-director Mary Jo Hoeksema. “Families in need, rural areas, and those especially dependent on government health care programs are at risk of losing federal support if their states don’t have a good count.”

Howard Fienberg of the Census Project said, “There can’t be any stronger motivation for every town, city, county, and state to fully mobilize for a quality 2020 Census.”

\*\*\*

*The Census Project (<https://thecensusproject.org>) is a broad coalition of national, state, and local organizations that support an inclusive and accurate 2020 Census and American Community Survey (ACS) (the modern version of the census “long form”). Its 700+ member organizations, representing the private, public, non-profit, and academic sectors, rely on objective data that the Census Bureau produces to inform evidence-based investment, policy and planning decisions.*

[www.TheCensusProject.org](http://www.TheCensusProject.org)