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Six Former Census Directors File Comments Opposing Proposed Decennial Census Rule

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Washington, D.C. – Six former leaders of the U.S. Census Bureau that have served in administrations of both parties going back to 1994 have co-signed a [formal statement](#) and filed it in opposition to dramatic [proposed changes](#) to the conduct of the 2030 Decennial head count. The three Senate-confirmed Directors and three Acting Directors headlined their statement: “...Proposed & Untested Changes to 2030 Census Residence Rule Risk the Accuracy of the Count.”

Claiming that “...[t]he proposal will complicate what the Constitution calls for: an “actual Enumeration,” the Census leaders detailed new complexities proposed by the Administration that would confuse the public’s understand of how the Bureau has defined “usual residence” on Census Day for centuries. The new rule proposes instead a lengthy “census enumeration period” that would have to be confirmed with tax records.

“Before changing foundational residence rules, the Department of Commerce should conduct end-to-end and operational testing; measure effects on coverage, duplication, and geographic allocation; publish the findings, and allow independent experts, stakeholders, and the public to evaluate the results. The Department should also explain how it would resolve conflicts, protect confidential tax information, and preserve clear, workable rules for complex living arrangements, including families sharing a home, auxiliary dwelling units, and renting of a portion of a home,” wrote the former Census Bureau leaders.

The rare statement of opposition to a proposed rule was coordinated by The Census Project, whose Co-Director Mary Jo Mitchell said, “Almost 100,000 comments in opposition to this untested proposal have been filed with the Federal Register, but the expert comment of these Census professionals may prove to be the most consequential.”

The former Directors made clear they oppose all the untested provisions of the new rule: “For more than two centuries, the usual residence concept has adapted to a changing nation while keeping its central purpose: count every person once, only once, and in the right place. Any revision should strengthen that objective. The proposed rule dramatically complicates the collection of complete,

accurate data, and puts the 2030 Decennial at risk. This, in addition to proposed changes in content that depart from every U.S. Census conducted since 1790, leads us to strongly oppose all changes described in the Federal Register”

Census Project Co-Director Howard Feinberg added, “Among those opposing these changes, especially the proposed elimination of measures on race and ethnicity, are many industries that rely on current, complete, and trusted public data on the changing nation to make decisions and drive economic development.”

A range of fact sheets on these and other Census topics can be found on The Census Project website here: <https://thecensusproject.org/fact-sheets/>

The Census Project (<https://thecensusproject.org>) is a broad-based coalition of national, state, and local organizations and companies that support an inclusive and accurate 2030 Census and American Community Survey (ACS) (the modern version of the census “long form”). Its 900+ member organizations and companies, 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.