



June 2, 2015

On behalf of the over 3,000 behavioral and social scientists who are members of the Population Association of America (PAA) (www.populationassociation.org) and the 40 population research centers nationwide, comprising the Association of Population Centers (APC), we urge members of the U.S. House of Representatives to oppose HR 2578, the Fiscal Year 2016 Commerce, Science, Justice Appropriations bill.

The bill, which funds three agencies important to the PAA and APC, the National Science Foundation (NSF), Census Bureau, and Bureau of Economic Analysis, includes a number of deeply troubling provisions:

- It restricts the amount of funding that could be allocated to the NSF's Social, Behavioral, and Economic Sciences (SBE) and Geosciences (GEO) directorates, politicizing the use of NSF grant funding and likely resulting in substantial cuts to social and behavioral science supported by NSF.
- It underfunds the Census Bureau by almost \$400 million, jeopardizing preparations for the 2020 Census and precluding the Bureau from saving \$5 billion over the life cycle costs of the next decennial census.
- It contains language critical of the Bureau's American Community Survey (ACS) and undermines its funding level.

Further, we urge members of the House of Representatives to oppose amendments that maybe offered during floor debate that would do any of the following:

- Cut funding for the Census Bureau to support other programs funded in the bill.
- Make ACS response voluntary.
- Eliminate or curtail ACS funding.
- Preclude NSF from supporting social, behavioral and economic research.

Investing in both a rigorous, interdisciplinary scientific enterprise as well as the federal infrastructure that gathers, produces and disseminates high quality demographic data is of critical importance. It is squarely in our nation's interest to maintain our innovation edge and economic competitiveness, and threatening these programs will only serve to undermine both of these goals.