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Women & Families
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Reform Judaism
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Sikh Coalition
UnidosUS

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Maya Wiley

May 7, 2025

Honorable Howard Lutnick
Secretary of Commerce
U.S. Department of Commerce
1401 Constitution Avenue NW
Washington, D.C. 20230

Dear Secretary Lutnick,

On behalf of The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights, a coalition charged by its diverse membership of more than 240 national organizations to promote and protect the rights of all persons in the United States; our Census Task Force co-chairs, Asian Americans Advancing Justice | AAJC and NALEO Educational Fund; and the undersigned organizations, we write to express our deep concern and strong opposition to your decision to terminate the 2030 Census Advisory Committee, the Census Scientific Advisory Committee, and the National Advisory Committee on Racial, Ethnic, and Other Populations.

This decision to terminate the Census Bureau's three advisory committees is a major setback at a pivotal moment for the bureau, both in its planning for the 2030 Census and its extensive efforts to streamline and modernize other data collection activities to eliminate duplication, contain costs, and improve data accuracy and usefulness. These advisory committees have long served as essential mechanisms through which the Census Bureau has engaged scientific and technical experts and trusted community leaders to provide input on data collection methodologies, community engagement strategies, research projects, emerging technologies, and survey content. Eliminating these committees—especially as preparations for the next decennial census are intensifying and the next quinquennial Economic Census is approaching—threatens the bureau's ability to collect accurate, comprehensive demographic and economic data.

We strongly disagree with the conclusion that the purposes of these committees have been fulfilled. Their work is far from over; their usefulness is evergreen. These bodies were set to meet over this spring to provide feedback on innovations and field tests already underway for the 2030 Census, the status of American Community Survey (ACS) content revisions, changes to the household pulse survey, and development of a disclosure avoidance system for the next decade, among other important topics. With the bureau scheduled to release the 2030 Census design and baseline operational plan at any time, and as the bureau prepares to test and then refine promising new operations and methodologies in 2026, this is a critical time for collaboration with external experts and stakeholders. Further, without these committees, the bureau loses valuable infrastructure to receive timely, community-informed input, and the public loses a vital avenue to engage with and trust in the census process.

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The advisory committees (in various iterations) have served through Republican and Democratic administrations, consistently providing critical insights that improved the bureau's effectiveness, fairness, and transparency across a range of important demographic and economic data collection activities. Their termination dismantles a longstanding, bipartisan tradition of collaboration and accountability. Moreover, this troubling development could reduce the Census Bureau's ability to cost-effectively address persistent undercounts in historically marginalized populations—communities that continue to face disproportionate barriers to being counted and measured in the census, ACS, and other surveys.

The elimination of these committees both undermines transparency for the American public and threatens the ability of the Census Bureau to serve communities that have historically been undercounted in the census and under-represented in other surveys—including very young children, Black, Latino, Asian American, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander, Native American and Alaska Native, immigrant, low-income, rural, disabled, and Middle Eastern/North African populations. It also disregards the decades of nonpartisan precedent through which civil rights and community-based organizations have worked in partnership with the federal government to ensure a fair and accurate census and comprehensive demographic and economic data collection activities.

We urge you to reverse this decision or, at minimum, commit to immediately establishing a robust, transparent, and inclusive alternative structure that preserves the value these committees brought to the Census Bureau's work.

Our coalition stands ready to work alongside the Department of Commerce, the Census Bureau, and Congress to ensure the 2030 Census meets the mandate of counting everyone and is fair, accurate and worthy of the public trust. If you have any questions, please contact Meeta Anand, senior program director of census and data equity at The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights, at anand@civilrights.org.

Sincerely,

The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights
Asian Americans Advancing Justice | AAJC
NALEO Educational Fund

Actionable Intelligence for Social Policy
Arab American Institute (AAI)
Asian & Pacific Islander American Health Forum (APIAHF)
Asian American Federation
Asian American Legal Defense and Education Fund
Asian American Organizing Project
Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders of New Jersey (AAPI NJ)
Asian and Pacific Islander American Vote (APIAVote)
Asian Community Development Corporation
Asian Counseling and Referral Service
Asian Law Alliance

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Asian Pacific American Labor Alliance-AFL-CIO (APALA)
Association of Population Centers
Association of Public Data Users
Beyond Our Status Congolese Alliance, Inc.
Black Researchers Collective
California - U.S. Census Bureau Federal-State Co-operative for Population Estimates and for Population Projections
California Pan-Ethnic Health Network
California State Census Data Center
California State Demographer
CAPI
Catalyst California
Center for Urban Research, CUNY Graduate Center
Center on Budget and Policy Priorities
Citizens' Committee for Children
Clean Elections Minnesota
Coalition for a Healthier Frederick County
Coalition for Asian American Children and Families
Coalition on Human Needs
Colorado Health Foundation
Columbus Public Health
Common Cause
CommunicationFIRST
Consortium of Social Science Associations
Council of Professional Associations on Federal Statistics
Deaf Equity
Decision Demographics, LLC
Demographic Analytics Advisors
Dēmos
Disability Rights Education and Defense Fund (DREDF)
East Metro Strong
Empowering Pacific Islander Communities (EPIC)
Equality California
Fair Count
Florida Philanthropic Network
Forefront (Illinois)
Funders' Committee for Civic Participation (FCCP)
Gerontological Society of America
Hispanic and Immigrant Center of Alabama
Hispanic and Immigrant Center of Alabama (¡HICA!)
Hispanic Federation
IPUMS
Japanese American Citizens League

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Jerome Foundation
Kentucky Nonprofit Network
Kentucky State Data Center
Labor Council for Latin American Advancement
Latino Community Foundation
League of Women Voters of Minnesota
League of Women Voters of the United States
MACS 2030 - Minnesotans for the ACS & 2030 Census
MALDEF (Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund)
Massachusetts Voter Table
Michigan Association of Planning, A Chapter of the American Planning Association
Michigan League for Public Policy
Minneapolis Foundation
Minnesota Council on Foundations
Minnesota Council on Latino Affairs (MCLA)
Minnesota State Demographic Center
Missouri Asian American Youth Foundation
Movement Advancement Project
National Coalition on Black Civic Participation
National Council of Asian Pacific Americans (NCAPA)
National Partnership for Women & Families
National Redistricting Foundation
National Women's Law Center
NC Counts Coalition
NETWORK Lobby for Catholic Social Justice
New York Civic Engagement Table
North Carolina Asian Americans Together
Oklahoma Institute for Child Advocacy
One Arizona
Our Children Oregon
Pennsylvania Partnerships for Children
Pflag National
PFLAG National
Philadelphia Health Partnership
Philanthropy California
Population Association of America
Prentice Foundation Inc.
Prison Policy Initiative
Project 70Forward
Project On Government Oversight
Santa Barbara Foundation
Silver State Equality
Simply Put

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Southeast Asia Resource Action Center (SEARAC)

Steering Committee Federal State Cooperative on Population Estimates (FSCPE)

The California Endowment

The Children's Agenda

The Children's Partnership

The Institute for Health Research & Policy at Whitman-Walker

Twin Cities Research Group

United Way of Salt Lake

Urban and Regional Information Systems Association

Vermont's Census State Data Center

VOICES for Alabama's Children

Voices for Racial Justice

Washington State Commission of Asian Pacific American Affairs

Woori Juntos

ZERO TO THREE