

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

August 6, 2020

The Honorable Wilbur L. Ross
Secretary
U.S. Department of Commerce
1401 Constitution Ave., N.W.
Washington, DC 20230

Dear Secretary Ross:

We write to express our deep concern and opposition to the Administration's decision to end Census field data collection activities by September 30 – one month earlier than previously planned. This self-imposed curtailment of operations will have a devastating impact on the accuracy and completeness of the Decennial Census.

The Decennial Census has faced unique challenges due to the novel coronavirus (COVID-19). With field operations delayed and reduced significantly in order to help ensure the safety of respondents and Census employees, ending operations early will make an accurate and complete count impossible.

This appears to be yet another effort to sabotage a successful Census, which include the Administration's earlier attempts to add an unnecessary and divisive citizenship question and the recent issuance of a memorandum seeking to exclude undocumented immigrants for apportionment purposes. Ending operations early, especially Nonresponse Follow Up, will disproportionately disadvantage hard-to-count communities.

A full accounting of everyone present in the United States is required by the Constitution and is critical to the allocation of trillions of dollars of federal funding and proper Congressional apportionment. Data derived from the Decennial Census influences decisions made across all levels of government and by businesses of all sizes. Rushing the completion of the Census, distorting response rates, and short-circuiting data assurance activities will have disastrous consequences that will reverberate for years to come.


As such, we urge you to immediately reverse this decision and take all necessary steps to ensure a full, fair, and accurate Decennial Census.

Thank you for your prompt attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,



Jack Reed
United States Senator



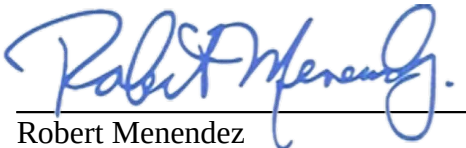
Kamala D. Harris
United States Senator



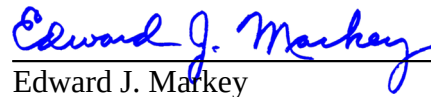
Sheldon Whitehouse
United States Senator



Sherrod Brown
United States Senator



Robert Menendez
United States Senator



Edward J. Markey
United States Senator



Kirsten Gillibrand
United States Senator



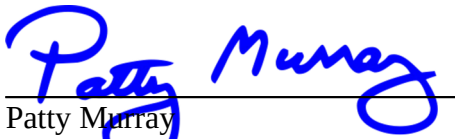
Mazie K. Hirono
United States Senator



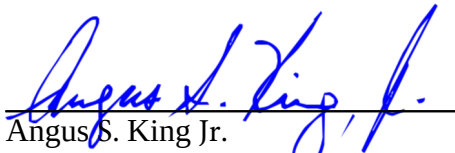
Joe Manchin III
United States Senator




Richard J. Durbin
United States Senator



Patty Murray
United States Senator

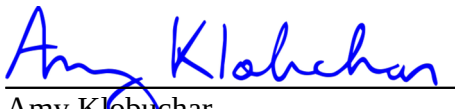
/s/
Cory A. Booker
United States Senator



Angus S. King Jr.
United States Senator



Chris Van Hollen
United States Senator



Tina Smith
United States Senator

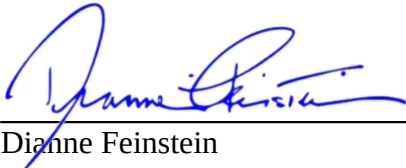

Ron Wyden
United States Senator


Amy Klobuchar
United States Senator

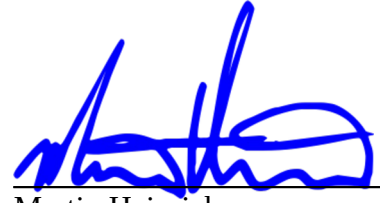

Catherine Cortez Masto
United States Senator


Tammy Baldwin
United States Senator


Elizabeth Warren
United States Senator



Dianne Feinstein
United States Senator



Martin Heinrich
United States Senator



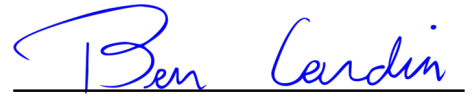
Thomas R. Carper
United States Senator

/s/

Richard Blumenthal
United States Senator



Christopher A. Coons
United States Senator



Benjamin L. Cardin
United States Senator