



WASHINGTON LEGISLATIVE OFFICE
Caroline Fredrickson
Director

915 15th Street, NW Washington, D.C. 20005

July 23, 2007

U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Ensure a Full and Accurate Census Count

Dear Representative:

On behalf of the American Civil Liberties Union, a non-partisan organization with hundreds of thousands of activists and members and 53 affiliates nationwide, we write to urge you to support full funding of the United States Census Bureau in Fiscal Year 2008 as requested by the president, plus the additional funding earmarked by the Appropriations Committee to launch the 2010 Census Partnership Program. We also urge you to restore the funding that was diverted from the Census Bureau budget during the Committee markup.

The ACLU believes that an accurate census count, which ensures fair, proportionate representation for all Americans, is a vital civil rights objective. Maintaining adequate funding for the Census Bureau is not only necessary to achieve an accurate count, but vitally important to advance the Census Bureau's role in providing data to help government agencies advance their civil rights missions. For example, census data assists the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission in monitoring workplace discrimination.

The Partnership Program is especially important for counting individuals in minority communities. The Partnership Program, which calls on community leaders to impart the importance of the census form to their constituents, has improved census participation in these historically undercounted communities – by helping census takers overcome language barriers, cultural differences, complex household arrangements, and civic disengagement. It is imperative that the Census Bureau receives adequate funding for the Partnership Program for the coming Fiscal Year because advance preparations begin immediately in order for the Program to be effective for the 2010 census.

To ensure a full and accurate census count in 2010 and the continued success of the Census Bureau's mission, we urge you to support full funding of the Census Bureau for Fiscal Year 2008, the additional funding appropriated for the Partnership Program, and the restoration of funding stripped during markup. As always, the ACLU also continues to stress the need for the security and confidentiality of census records, which is essential to protecting the integrity and success of the Census itself. If you have any questions, please contact Deborah Vagins, e-mail: dvagins@dcaclu.org or phone: (202) 715-0816.

Sincerely,

Caroline Fredrickson
Director

Deborah J. Vagins
Policy Counsel for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties