



Census



NARC

Building Regional Communities

National Association of Regional Councils

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REGIONAL COUNCILS

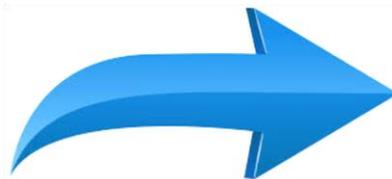
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The National Association of Regional Councils (NARC) believes that a decennial census that accurately counts the U.S. population is more important than ever. As U.S. regions continue to grow, they are becoming increasingly more diverse.

The importance of the census cannot be understated. The census provides important demographic information that is used to determine and inform:

- ✓ The annual dispersal of over \$600 billion in federal financial assistance to states, regions, and local governments for programs and services;
- ✓ The number of representatives needed to accurately represent our regions in the U.S. House of Representatives; and
- ✓ Key decisions regional leaders make regarding long-term planning initiatives.

The U.S. Census Bureau's lifecycle cost estimate of the 2020 Census is approximately \$15.6 billion. However, Congress has directed the agency to spend approximately \$13 billion – the amount spent on the 2010 decennial census. This limitation on spending has contributed to several budget shortfalls and delays, resulting in cancelled field tests, a pared down "dress rehearsal," delayed outreach development, and limited use of new and innovative data-collection methods.

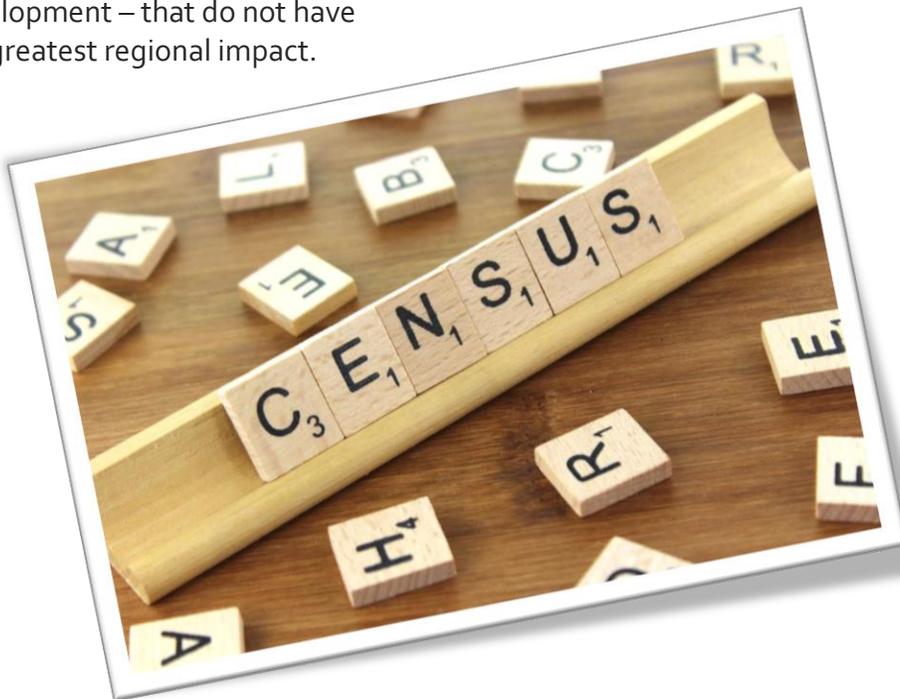


Regional councils are concerned that these limitations will reduce the accuracy of the overall count and the count of certain population subgroups, including Latinos, African Americans, and transient populations such as migrant workers, specifically.

State, regional, and local governments may be forced to spend more of their own resources for activities that were supposed to be funded by the federal government. Budgets may be placed under significant pressure if states, regions, and localities are forced to use their own funds to meet the needs of residents. Moreover, an inaccurate count could also lead regional leaders to plan and approve projects and services – including those related to infrastructure, human services, and community and economic development – that do not have the greatest regional impact.

For these reasons, NARC urges Congress and the president to support an accurate 2020 Census by passing legislation that provides:

- ✓ \$187 million in additional funding requested by Commerce Secretary Wilbur Ross for the Census Bureau in FY 2018 to support planning and buildout of 2020 Census IT systems;
- ✓ No less than \$300 million above the current funding level for the Census Bureau in FY 2018 (\$1.507 billion) without offsets to ramp up preparations two years ahead of the 2020 Census;
- ✓ FY 2019 funding that ensures the Census Bureau is able to accurately count historically hard-to-reach populations; and
- ✓ Accurate demographic data so that the federal government can accurately determine the state-by-state distribution of congressional representatives and the allocation of federal fiscal resources to states, regions, and localities.



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