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July 26, 2019

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Senate Republican Majority Leader
U.S. Senate
S-230, The Capitol
Washington D.C. 20510

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker of The House
U.S. House of Representatives
H-232, The Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Charles Schumer
Senate Democratic Minority Leader
U.S. Senate
S-221, The Capitol
Washington D.C. 20510

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
House Republican Minority Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
H-222, The Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Senators McConnell and Schumer, Speaker Pelosi, and Minority leader McCarthy:

As congressional leaders negotiate the two-year budget deal, we write to express our full support for providing the Census Bureau with the \$7.5 billion exemption included in the Fiscal Year (FY) 2020 House Budget Resolution, called the "Investing for the People Act of 2019." The current two-year budget and debt ceiling deal consist of a lower \$2.5 billion cap exemption for the 2020 Census. The 2020 census count will be one of the most consequential counts in the 21st century, and it is an urgent civil rights issue facing our country. That's why we must invest the appropriate amount of funding to the Census Bureau to ensure a fair and accurate count of all residents in the United States.

The Urban Institute estimates that 1.7 million Black residents may be uncounted in 2020, leading to a misallocation of resources over the next ten years. An inaccurate count will hurt vulnerable populations access to health care services, housing, schools, and economic development plans among other priorities. Moreover, in states with high Black populations such as Georgia, 22 percent of the residents live in hard-to-count areas, causing the state to lose \$407 million in annual federal funding over the next decade.

The 55 members of the Congressional Black Caucus (CBC) represent 26 states and the District of Columbia. Of these, the highest expected undercounts for

Black populations are projected in California, Texas, Florida, New York, and Georgia. According to the Fair Count organization, undercounts of Black people in these 26 states and the District of Columbia are estimated to cost \$2.9 billion in missed funding every year for the next decade. Losing an estimated average of \$16.4 million per year in Delaware to nearly \$392.3 million per year in New York.

We must hold the Trump administration accountable during the 2020 Census rollout. The Census Bureau will rely more on technology and half of the number of offices from the last decennial census. Additionally, the administration has threatened to include a citizenship question to its questionnaire, which only promotes fear and stigma in immigrant communities and deters participation. Without proper oversight and funding, the Census Bureau's 2020 Census count will result in large undercounts of the Black population, and have unintended consequences for all communities of color, seniors, the incarcerated, and children.

The two-year budget agreement reached between congressional leaders and the Trump Administration is a positive development, as it raises the debt ceiling and removes the danger of a U.S. government default on its debt obligations. This budget deal clears a path for Congress to finish its legislative duty to pass appropriations legislation, without the risk of a government shutdown or the harmful sequestration cuts to critical domestic programs, which could be triggered under the Budget Control Act.

The Bipartisan Budget Act of 2019 provides essential resources over the next two fiscal years to make investments in schools, roads, bridges, public health, housing, research, national security, environmental protection, and in other critical areas that strengthen our communities. Keeping our government-funded and passing a budget is a Constitutional duty and a moral obligation to the American people we serve.

Members of the CBC are committed to the goal of increasing the participation of Black people in the census. With this goal in mind, the CBC launched the CBC Census 2020 Task Force this week to maximize the involvement of Black people in the census count.

Thank you for your consideration of this request, and we ask that the Census Bureau is appropriated all the funding resources it needs to count every resident.

Sincerely,



Rep. Karen Bass
Chair, CBC



Rep. Steven Horsford
Chair, CBC Census 2020 Task Force

CC: The Honorable Richard Shelby, Chairman, Senate Committee on Appropriations
The Honorable Patrick Leahy, Vice Chairman, Senate Committee on Appropriations
The Honorable Mike Enzi, Chairman, Senate Committee on The Budget
The Honorable Bernie Sander, Ranking Member, Senate Committee on The Budget
The Honorable Nita M. Lowey, Chairwoman, House Committee on Appropriations
The Honorable Kay Granger, Ranking member, House Committee on Appropriations
The Honorable John Yarmuth, Chairman, House Committee on The Budget
The Honorable Steve Womack, Ranking Member, House Committee on The Budget