



July 27, 2021

The Honorable Gary C. Peters

Chairman

Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs

340 Dirksen Senate Office Building

Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Rob Portman

Ranking Member

Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs

340 Dirksen Senate Office Building

Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Peters and Ranking Member Portman:

On behalf of The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights and the undersigned organizations, we write to convey our strong support for the nomination of Robert Santos to be director of the U.S. Census Bureau. We urge the committee to report the nomination to the full Senate favorably and promptly. The Leadership Conference, alongside other civil rights organizations, has been engaged in advocacy and outreach in support of the decennial census and other Census Bureau programs for decades. It is important for the bureau to be led by a Senate-confirmed director who can speak with the level of authority needed to build widespread confidence in the results of a difficult and controversial census. Mr. Santos' deep expertise in survey methodology, his decades of research to inform policies to improve the lives of disadvantaged populations, and his unwavering commitment to a fair and accurate census demonstrate that he is an ideal leader who deserves bipartisan support in the U.S. Senate. If confirmed, Mr. Santos would be the first person of color to serve as a permanent Census Bureau director.

The Census Bureau is the nation's foremost and largest federal statistical agency. The data collected and published by the bureau, through the decennial census and other surveys, inform decisions made in both the public and private sectors. The importance of the data was thrown into sharp relief as Congress worked to address coronavirus pandemic-driven social and economic upheaval. Additionally, Census Bureau data help guide the distribution of at least \$1.5 trillion in federal funding annually, help determine political representation through the redistricting process, and play an instrumental role in the enforcement of civil rights protections. Through the American Community Survey — which Mr. Santos called a “national treasure” at his confirmation hearing — and other ongoing statistical programs, Congress and stakeholders can fully understand the needs of our nation's population and communities, thus providing objective measures to support policy decisions.

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Mr. Santos would bring many qualities to the role that would make him a successful Census Bureau director. He has the technical expertise borne of 40 years of experience in data, statistics, and social science research. His leadership and managerial experience can help restore morale and a positive working environment for all employees at the Census Bureau. In addition to currently serving as vice president and chief methodologist at the Urban Institute, Mr. Santos has held executive-level positions at the University of Michigan Survey Research Center and the National Opinion Research Center at the University of Chicago. He has also served as president of the American Statistical Association, the American Association for Public Opinion Research, and the Washington Statistical Society. Notably, nearly 40 nonpartisan scientific professional and other data user organizations have endorsed Mr. Santos, citing his expertise and strong leadership skills.

Mr. Santos has proven both his deep knowledge of statistical and survey methods and his commitment to data integrity, outreach to disadvantaged populations, and collaboration with a wide range of census stakeholders. For these reasons, the Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs should move quickly to report Mr. Santos' nomination favorably to the full Senate. Should you have any questions, please contact Corrine Yu, interim EVP of campaigns and programs, at yu@civilrights.org.

Sincerely,

The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights
AltaMed Health Services
American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees
American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee (ADC)
Arab American Institute (AAI)
Asian American Federation
Asian Americans Advancing Justice | AAJC
Association of Asian Pacific Community Health Organizations (AAPCHO)
Autistic Self Advocacy Network
California Complete Count
Casa de Esperanza: National Latin@ Network
Center for Civic Policy
Center for Popular Democracy
Center for Urban Research, CUNY Graduate Center
Central American Resource Center
Clearinghouse on Women's Issues
Colorado Latino Leadership, Advocacy, & Research Organization (CLLARO)
Community Change
Demos
End Citizens United / Let America Vote Action Fund
Equality California
Fair Count
Fair Immigration Reform Movement (FIRM)
Feeding Texas

Government Information Watch
GreenLatinos
Houston Immigration Legal Services Collaborative
LatinoJustice PRLDEF
Louisiana Advocates for Immigrants in Detention
MALDEF (Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund)
MANA, A National Latina Organization
Michigan Nonprofit Association
NALEO Educational Fund
National Association of Human Rights Workers
National Association of Social Workers
National Black Justice Coalition
National Coalition for Asian Pacific American Community Development
National Coalition for Literacy
National Congress of American Indians
National Disability Rights Network (NDRN)
National Hispanic Media Coalition
National Latinx Psychological Association
National Organization for Women
National Urban League
New York Immigration Coalition
Oklahoma Policy Institute
PolicyLink
Population Connection Action Fund
Power Coalition
SER Jobs for Progress National Inc.
Service Employees International Union (SEIU)
St. Francis Community Services
Voto Latino

cc: Committee Members