



NEWS RELEASE

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New Changes Announced by U.S. Census Bureau Put Fair and Accurate Census 2020 at Risk

*Announcements regarding changes required by insufficient funding from Congress
will have a significant impact on Census 2020 testing and operations*

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Two days after the U.S. Census Bureau announced major decisions to revise Census 2020 testing, operations and procedures during a quarterly update meeting, the National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials (NALEO) Educational Fund today released a response to how these new modifications are poised to affect the success of Census 2020 and a full and accurate count of the Latino community.

“The changes announced this week are a direct result of the failure by Congress to ramp up the funding the Census Bureau needs for a sound enumeration, and the Administration’s funding request for the next fiscal year which is far below what the Bureau requires,” stated Arturo Vargas, National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials (NALEO) Educational Fund executive director. “The good men and women of the U.S. Census Bureau are doing their best to work toward a full and accurate count of the nation in 2020, but current funding levels have essentially left the agency without the capacity it needs to prepare for the federal government’s largest civilian mobilization in years.”

Due to current funding levels and other factors, the Census Bureau announced a number of significant changes to Census 2020 testing, operations and procedures that place its success in jeopardy. Several of these changes are set to have a significant impact on capturing a full count of the Latino community, including the following:

- **Counting more than 12 million hard-to-count households will be even more difficult:** The Census Bureau will use a different approach for counting residents in as many as 12 million housing units, which are located in remote or rural areas, including homes which do not have traditional “city-style” addresses. The Bureau had initially planned to count these residents through an approach where an enumerator would attempt to interview a resident of the household, rather than mailing materials to the household. Under the newly-announced approach, the enumerator will leave behind a packet of Census materials at the household. Many of the areas where the Bureau will adopt this approach include communities with significant Latino populations in the Southwest, Puerto Rico, and rural Northwest, Northeast and Southeast. This represents a lost

opportunity to get the most accurate count possible in communities with some of the hardest-to-reach residents.

- **Census 2020 testing to no longer include site with sizable Latino rural population:** The Census Bureau is eliminating the testing of crucial components of its 2018 End-to-End Test (also known as the “dress rehearsal”) at two sites, one of which has a significant Latino rural population (Pierce County, WA). The dress rehearsal will no longer provide a “real world” opportunity to assess some of the most significant changes the Bureau hopes to implement in Census 2020, including the internet response option, in rural areas which may lack internet connections. The Bureau will also lose the opportunity to test how to effectively use field staff to reach people who do not initially respond to the Census in such areas, including Latinos who may live in remote communities with non-traditional housing.
- **Communications and outreach strategies will not be tested in the field:** An assessment of the Census Bureau’s communications and partnership programs will not be conducted in any site during the “dress rehearsal.” The partnership program has been particularly critical for Latino participation in the Census, because it brings national and local government together with community leaders, non-profit organizations and businesses for Census outreach and education.

Vargas went on to say, “The entire nation will suffer if Census 2020 operations continue at this perilous pace, with Latinos, immigrants, children and other hard-to-count groups the most likely to be left uncounted and invisible if swift action is not taken by Congress and the White House to provide the U.S. Census Bureau with the critical funding it needs today.”

“We are facing a hard road ahead of us. Recent online hackings and the Trump Administration’s aggressive immigration enforcement policies have poisoned the trust and confidence of Latino families to participate in the Census, making the work of organizations like NALEO Educational Fund and our partners more vital than ever if we hope to effectively reach out to the community and secure their participation in Census 2020,” concluded Vargas.

The House Appropriations Committee is set to vote today on the fiscal year 2018 Commerce, Justice, Science appropriations bill which includes funding for the Census Bureau.

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About NALEO Educational Fund

NALEO Educational Fund is the nation's leading non-partisan, non-profit organization that facilitates the full participation of Latinos in the American political process, from citizenship to public service.