



August 10, 2020

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Majority Leader
United States Senate

The Honorable Charles Schumer
Minority Leader
United States Senate

Dear Senators McConnell and Schumer,

As a business membership organization with a network of more than 2,700 business leaders across the United States, we urge you to extend the statutory reporting deadlines for the 2020 Census by four months so that the U.S. Census Bureau has the necessary time to count all residents given the challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The U.S. Constitution mandates a count of all residents every ten years. The data that the census produces is critical to informing decision-making in both the public and private sectors. Specifically, it provides businesses with vital demographic information about customers, the workforce, and the economic landscape used by companies of all sizes across industries. Population data from the census helps companies assess concentrations of skilled workers, neighborhoods in which to open a new store or office, and what products or services to offer in a particular location. Census data also guides the efficient allocation of hundreds of billions of taxpayer dollars to states and localities that contribute to a strong economy, such as education, workforce development, transportation, and housing.

The COVID-19 pandemic severely disrupted U.S. Census Bureau operational plans, and delayed many activities including the non-response follow-up operation in order to protect the safety of staff and residents. This critical activity reaches hard-to-count households and communities by deploying enumerators to knock on the doors of residents who have not yet completed their census questionnaires. Only 63 percent of households nationwide have currently responded to the census, and providing a reasonable time frame for the Census Bureau to connect with remaining residents is vital to help ensure a complete count.

An unreliable 2020 Census would have harmful effects on businesses and the American economy that would persist into the future. We respectfully request that you extend the statutory reporting deadlines for the 2020 Census so that the U.S. Census Bureau can achieve a complete count.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,

Nancy Fishman
Co-Global Director
ReadyNation

Daniel Frank
Co-Global Director
ReadyNation