



NEWS RELEASE

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NALEO Educational Fund Calls for Urgent Action from Newly Confirmed U.S. Census Bureau Director Steven Dillingham

Washington, D.C. – *The National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials (NALEO) Educational Fund today released a statement from Chief Executive Officer Arturo Vargas on the confirmation of Dr. Steven Dillingham to serve as Director of the U.S. Census Bureau:*

"We congratulate Dr. Steven Dillingham on his confirmation to serve as Director of the U.S. Census Bureau and look forward to working with him closely. With the nation's largest peacetime mobilization less than 15 months away, Director Dillingham must quickly get to work to ensure that the Bureau is able to fulfill its constitutional mandate of counting every person living in the United States.

"Census 2020 is in crisis and facing unprecedented challenges that could thwart a full and accurate count of Latinos and all Americans. A lack of adequate funding from Congress, concerns about privacy and confidentiality, and the last-minute addition of an untested citizenship question during a time of increased fear and mistrust in the government are all significant obstacles that have placed the success of Census 2020 in jeopardy. Recent analysis from both the [Government Accountability Office](#) and [NALEO Educational Fund](#) has also raised serious concerns about the Bureau's readiness to count Latinos and other communities who are more likely to participate in the decennial count by mail or in-person instead of online.

"Given the importance of Census 2020 in distributing billions of dollars in federal funding and the allocation of political power to communities across the country, we cannot afford to have millions of Latinos and other Americans missed in the nation's decennial count. Make no mistake, an inaccurate count of Latinos, who are the nation's second largest population group, would mean a failed Census 2020 for the country.

"It is not too late to save the Census, but action from the top is needed now. Director Dillingham will need to develop a sound plan and strategy, and fast, for following-up with Latinos, immigrants and other hard-to-count communities who prefer to participate through non-online options if we want a successful count of the nation. He will also need to guarantee that the personal information collected during Census 2020 cannot be shared with any person or agency outside the U.S. Census Bureau.

"In addition, Director Dillingham will need to make investments in hiring a diverse, culturally competent workforce and expand the Communications and Partnership program so that the Bureau and its partners can begin to do the hard work necessary to reach hard-to-count households (including those with very young children who historically are undercounted at very

high rates) and address the significant confidentiality concerns of Latinos and immigrants. These changes will be even more important if the citizenship question is allowed to stand in the coming weeks, making it vital that Director Dillingham move on these urgently needed actions now."

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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.