



NEWS RELEASE

Educational Fund National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials (NALEO) Educational Fund

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NALEO Educational Fund Executive Director to Brief Congressional Caucuses on Importance of Accurate Census 2020

Vargas urges Members of Congress to make investments now that could save up to five billion dollars and ensure better count of Latinos and all communities of color in Census 2020

Washington, D.C. – The National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials (NALEO) Educational Fund announced that Executive Director Arturo Vargas today will brief Members of Congress from the Congressional Hispanic Caucus, Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus, Congressional Black Caucus, Congressional Native American Caucus and the Congressional Progressive Caucus on the importance of a fair and accurate count of Latinos (including their ethnic, racial and national origin identification) and all communities of color.

Our nation's future prosperity is shaped in part by the accuracy of the data collected by the United States Census Bureau on the nation's population, and on its racial, ethnic and national origin groups. These data help ensure fair and representative reapportionment and redistricting, and guide a wide range of decisions made in the public and private sectors that affect the lives of all Americans. Census data also play an indispensable role in the monitoring and implementation of civil rights policies, and they are used to ensure the effective allocation of billions of dollars in federal, state and local funding.

“With Latinos now the nation's second largest population group and one out of every six Americans, full and accurate data about the Latino community are critical for our country's economic, social and civic well-being,” stated Arturo Vargas, NALEO Educational Fund Executive Director. “An undercount of the nation's Latino population in 2020 would mean a failed census. The time is now for Congress to ensure that the Census Bureau has the necessary funding to carry out research and testing that will enable our nation to capture an accurate and cost-efficient portrait of the Latino community and all communities of color in Census 2020.”

In a [letter](#) to the Subcommittee on Justice, Science and Related Agencies Chairman John Culberson and Ranking Member Chaka Fattah, NALEO Educational Fund has urged Congress to allocate \$1.5 billion for Fiscal Year 2016 to the United States Census Bureau. This level of funding is necessary if the Bureau is to develop and test innovations that could save up to \$5 billion on the cost of conducting the decennial Census in 2020. These approaches include changes to the questions on Hispanic origin and race; language and telephone assistance

infrastructures and materials; a communications campaign; outreach and promotion; testing of internet response options; the use of administrative records to reduce non-response follow-up; and innovations in address canvassing. This funding level will also ensure that the Census Bureau can effectively conduct the American Community Survey (ACS), the annual survey that produces data that are critically important to the business, non-profit and public sectors alike.

Among the new approaches adequate funding would support is the assessment of new approaches to obtain greater participation in and more accurate responses to the decennial Census, like changes to the Hispanic race and ethnicity questions. Ultimately, the format of the Census questions on race and ethnicity will have a critical impact on the accuracy of the Census Bureau's data on racial, ethnic and national origin population groups. Any changes in those questions must maintain or improve the historical response rates to these questions and the accuracy of the data collected.

As the nation's leading nonprofit organization that facilitates the full participation of Latinos in the American political process, from citizenship to public service, NALEO Educational Fund is committed to ensuring that the Census provides the most accurate portrayal possible of the Latino community and the entire population. Our organization's constituency encompasses the nation's more than 6,000 Latino elected and appointed officials, and includes Republicans, Democrats and Independents.

The letter sent to the leadership of the Subcommittee on Justice, Science and Related Agencies can be found at www.naleo.org/downloads/2015/NALEOCensusFY16fin.pdf.

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About NALEO Educational Fund

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