



A NALEO CAMPAIGN

ALABAMIANS RELY UPON ACCURATE CENSUS DATA

ACCURATE CENSUS DATA ARE KEY for federal funding allocations to state and localities. Federal resources are divided up between jurisdictions according to what Census data tell us about various communities' demographic characteristics, needs, and assets. In order for Alabama to receive its fair share, the Census Bureau must master the difficult task of accurately counting the state's diverse population.

Historically, certain hard-to-reach populations are more difficult to count than others. Alabama is home to disproportionate shares of populations that are most frequently undercounted, such as African Americans, lower-income Americans, and those living in rural areas. For example, 41 percent of Alabamians live in rural areas, compared to 21 percent of people nationally, and the percentage of Alabamians who are African American is nearly double the national average.



Federal Census-directed programs that are particularly important to Alabamians include:

Community Development Block Grants

Over the course of recent decades, Alabama's population has shifted from rural towards urban areas: by 2010, 59% of Alabamians lived in cities and small towns. Such changes in residential patterns and preferences place extra burden on housing and infrastructure. Because of Census data that document the density and needs of urban populations, Alabama received more than \$50 million in Community Development Block Grants in FY16. This funding helps ensure the availability of decent affordable housing, and creates jobs through the expansion and retention of businesses.

Low Income Home Energy Assistance

The Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program provides vital support to families struggling to pay for heating and cooling throughout the year. Thanks to Census data, from FY2010 through FY15, Alabama received over \$317 million in federal funding for this program, and served nearly 90,000 households in FY14 alone.

Highway Planning and Construction

Alabama's geographic size and rural spaces mean it has a significant number of miles of road to maintain, upon which Alabamians rely for access to economic and social opportunity. In FY17, thanks to Census data, Alabama received more than \$797 million in funding authorized by the 2015 Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act, the largest portion of it designated for maintenance of national highways and construction and repair of bridges and other highway facilities.

When it is adequately funded, the Census Bureau produces highly accurate, detailed data that enable us to direct a total of over \$13 billion to the Alabama communities where those resources are most needed.

But if the Census Bureau's hands are tied by declining appropriations or limitations that prevent it from conducting a sound decennial enumeration and accurate surveys, the quality of Census data similarly will decline, and many fewer Alabamians will benefit from these and many other Census-directed federal programs.

Congress must adequately fund the Census Bureau by providing it with no less than \$8 billion for the decennial Census in FY20. It is critical that Congress secure this funding by the start of the fiscal year, when address canvassing, advertising, and other key activities will already be underway. Any funding delay or uncertainty would disrupt the conduct of the survey and imperil the accuracy of Census data for a decade to come.