



A NALEO CAMPAIGN

# ARKANSANS 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 Arkansas 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. Arkansas is home to disproportionate shares of populations that are most frequently undercounted, such as African Americans, people with disabilities, and lower-income Americans. Currently, Arkansas has the fifth highest rate of poverty in the country at 19.1 percent.



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

### 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, Arkansas received over \$183 million in federal funding for this program, and served nearly 90,000 households in FY14 alone.

### Highway Planning and Construction

Arkansas' geographic size and rural spaces mean it has a significant number of miles of road to maintain, which ensure its residents' access to economic and social opportunity. In FY17, thanks to Census data, Arkansas received more than \$532 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.

### Children's Health Insurances

The state of Arkansas has consistently encouraged its eligible low-income youth population to take part in the Children's Health Insurance Program, and Arkansas currently has the highest percentage of rural children enrolled in Medicaid of any state. Currently, almost two-thirds of this population is enrolled in the ARKids program. As a result of Census data, in FY15 Arkansas received nearly \$5 billion in federal funding through Medicaid and the State Children's Health Insurance Program (S-CHIP), both of which help to fund the ARKids programs.

**When it is adequately funded, the Census Bureau produces highly accurate, detailed data that enable us to direct a total of over \$9.8 billion to the Arkansas 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 Arkansans will benefit from these and many other Census-directed federal programs.

Congress must adequately fund the Census Bureau by providing at least \$4.7 billion total for FY19. To control costs of the enumeration and safeguard the accuracy of data, Congress must also reject measures that would make last-minute changes to Census questionnaires and methodologies.