



LOUISIANANS RELY UPON ACCURATE CENSUS DATA

A NALEO CAMPAIGN

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 Louisiana to receive its fair share, the Census Bureau must master the difficult task of accurately counting the state's population.

Historically, certain hard-to-reach populations are more difficult to count than others. Louisiana is home to disproportionate shares of populations that are most frequently undercounted, such as African Americans and young children who are below the age of five. For example, as of 2010, Louisiana had the second-largest population share of African Americans of any state in the nation. In addition, in comparison to other states, a larger share than average of Louisianans were young children as of 2016, and these young people were disproportionately likely to live in economically vulnerable households that are themselves undercounted compared to more well-off counterparts: children under five suffered from a poverty rate more than 10 percentage points higher than the state average, according to the Child Welfare League of America.



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

State Children's Health Insurance

Given their disproportionate likelihood of living in households in poverty, Louisiana's children depend upon public health insurance programs to ensure their consistent access to care, and their ability to grow up healthy and prepared to succeed as adults. In FY15 enrollment in Louisiana's CHIP program totaled over 135,000 children. As a result of Census data, in FY16 Louisiana received nearly \$239 million for its CHIP program from the federal Department of Health and Human Services.

Coastal Zone Management

Louisiana's Department of Natural Resources manages approximately 400 miles of shoreline, around which numerous activities crucial to the state's economy are centered. While this region is crucially important to the state and its residents, it is also under threat from erosion and environmental contamination. Under the Coastal Zone Management Act, which relies on Census data to allocate funds, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration provided the state with over \$2.6 million in FY16 for the management and enhancement of the state's coastline.

Rural Community Development

While repair and recovery efforts in some of Louisiana's biggest cities in the wake of recent natural disasters have dominated headlines, the state's rural communities are also in significant need of infrastructural improvement. The Community Development Block Grant program provides states with flexible funding to carry out a wide range of activities directed toward neighborhood revitalization, economic development, and improved community facilities and services in cities with populations of less than 50,000, and counties with populations of less than 200,000. Thanks to Census data that determine allocation of this funding among the states, Louisiana was able to provide more than \$12 million to 22 rural jurisdictions in FY17 for improvements to potable water and sewage systems and local streets.

When it is adequately funded, the Census Bureau produces highly accurate, detailed data that enable us to direct an annual total of over \$14.4 billion to the Louisiana 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 Louisianans 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.