



# MINNESOTANS 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 Minnesota 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. Minnesota is home to disproportionate shares of populations that are most frequently undercounted, such as individuals living in rural areas, foreign-born individuals and people who speak a language other than English at home. The state is particularly linguistically diverse: more than 11% of Minnesota residents speak a language other than English at home.



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

### English Language Learning

According to the Minnesota Department of Education, the number of students in the state who are English language learners increased by 300% between 1996 and 2016. The task of educating these children is complicated by the fact that they are native speakers of several different languages including Spanish, Somali, and Hmong. Thanks to Census data, in FY17 the state received an estimated \$9.8 million to help its young people develop English fluency.

### Community Development Block Grants

Between 1990 and 2013, Minnesota's population grew by about 1 million people, mostly in its urban areas, but during the same time period, more than half of the state's most rural counties saw their populations decline by at least 10%. 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, Minnesota received nearly \$48 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.

### Nutritional Support for Families

It is critical that children whose families face poverty and related challenges have their basic needs met, and achieve the healthy physical and mental development that will contribute to their success later in life. One of the key federal programs that provides food, and nutritional counseling and education, to pregnant and breastfeeding mothers in Minnesota is the Women, Infants and Children (WIC) benefits program. WIC allocations among states are determined with Census data, and for FY16, these data ensured that Minnesota received more than \$102 million.

**When it is adequately funded, the Census Bureau produces highly accurate, detailed data that enable us to direct a total of over \$15.4 billion to the Minnesota 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 Minnesotans 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.