



MONTANANS 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 Montanans to receive their fair share, the Census Bureau must master the difficult task of accurately counting the state's dynamic, diverse population.

Historically, certain hard-to-reach populations are more difficult to count than others. Montana is home to disproportionate shares of populations that are most frequently undercounted, such as lower-income Americans, those with disabilities, children, and those living in rural areas. For example, 44 percent of Montanans live in rural areas, compared to the national average of 21 percent.



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

Head Start

Montana is home to many children who face educational challenges related to their families' lower incomes. These young people benefit from access to Head Start classes. Because of Census data, the state received more than \$49 million from the federal government to support this effort in FY16.

Water and Waste Disposal Systems for Rural Communities

This program provides funding for clean and reliable drinking water systems, sanitary sewage disposal, sanitary solid waste disposal, and storm water drainage to households and businesses in eligible rural areas. Because of Census data, the state of Montana received more than \$47 million from the federal government to support this effort in FY16.

Highway Planning and Construction

Montana's terrain and rural spaces mean it has a significant number of miles of road to maintain that are crucial to ensuring residents' access to economic and social opportunity. In FY16, thanks to Census data, Montana received more than \$441 million in funding.

When it is adequately funded, the Census Bureau produces highly accurate, detailed data that enable us to direct a total of over \$2.9 billion to Montanans 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 Montanans 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.