



OKLAHOMANS 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 Oklahoma 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. Oklahoma is home to disproportionate shares of populations that are most frequently undercounted, such as Native Americans, those with disabilities, and lower-income Americans. For example, Oklahoma has the second largest population of Native Americans of all the states, including a significant number of individuals from the Cherokee, Choctaw, Muscogee and Chickasaw Nations.



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

Substance Abuse and Prevention Treatment

Unfortunately, parts of Oklahoma have been as severely and negatively affected as any place in the country by recent increases in opioid-related addiction and deaths. In 2015 alone, there were roughly 1,000 prescription drug and drug overdose deaths in the state. Thanks to Census data, the state's efforts to turn the tide against addiction were bolstered by more than \$7 million awarded to Oklahoma in FY17 through the 21st Century Cures Act.

Community Development Block Grants

Over the course of recent decades, Oklahoma's population has shifted from rural towards urban areas: by 2010, about twice as many Oklahomans lived in cities and small towns as lived in rural areas. 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, Oklahoma received more than \$24 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.

State Children's Health Insurance Program

The state of Oklahoma has consistently encouraged its eligible low-income youth population to take part in the Children's Health Insurance Program and, in FY2014 enrollment in Sooner-Care totaled over 164,000 children. As a result of Census data, in FY16 Oklahoma received more than \$189 million for its CHIP program from the federal Department of Health and Human Services.

When it is adequately funded, the Census Bureau produces highly accurate, detailed data that enable us to direct a total of over \$9.3 billion to the Oklahoma 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 Oklahomans 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.