



# SOUTH DAKOTANS 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 South Dakotans 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. South Dakota is home to disproportionate shares of populations that are most frequently undercounted such as lower-income individuals and those living in rural areas. Currently, at around 43 percent, the percentage of South Dakota's population that lives in rural area significantly exceeds the national average.



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

### Highway Planning and Construction

South Dakota's 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 FY16, thanks to Census data, South Dakota received nearly \$300 million in funding for maintenance of national highways and construction and repair of bridges and other highway facilities.

### Substance Abuse and Prevention Treatment

Unfortunately, parts of the South Dakota have been as severely and negatively affected as any place in the country by recent increases in opioid-related addiction and deaths. Thanks to Census data, South Dakota's efforts to turn the tide against addiction were bolstered nearly \$6 million in funding from Block Grants for the Prevention and Treatment of Substance Abuse in FY16 for the prevention and treatment of substance abuse.

### 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 South Dakota 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 South Dakota received more than \$18 million.

**When it is adequately funded, the Census Bureau produces highly accurate, detailed data that enable us to direct a total of over \$2.3 billion to South Dakotans 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 South Dakotans 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.