



# TENNESSEANS 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 Tennessee 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. Tennessee is home to disproportionate shares of populations that are most frequently undercounted, such as African Americans, lower-income individuals, and people living in rural areas. For example, the percentage of the state's population that identifies as African American has increased since the 2010 Census, and is nearly one quarter higher than the national average.



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

### Highway Planning and Construction

Tennessee's geographic size and rural spaces mean it has a significant number of miles of road to maintain. In FY17, thanks to Census data, Tennessee received more than \$869 million in funding authorized by the 2015 Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act, the largest portion of it designated for maintenance of national highways and construction and repair of bridges and other highway facilities.

### Medicare Part B

Tennessee is home to a significant number of older Americans, especially those who are enrolled in a Medicare Part B supplemental insurance plan. As a result of Census data, over \$1.4 billion was distributed to providers within the state during FY16 to ensure that this population maintained continued access to healthcare and other vital services.

### Rural Utilities and Telecommunications

According to 2010 Census data, 33.6% of Tennessee's population lives in rural areas, which are often underdeveloped with insufficient infrastructure. Census data have ensured that the state receives significant shares of federal Rural Electrification and Rural Broadband Access loans to help rural Tennessee communities stay safe, healthy, and connected. In February 2017 the Tennessee's Tri-County Electric Cooperative was selected to receive a \$20 million USDA loan to modernize its electric lines, following Chattanooga's success with a similar \$116 million loan in 2010.

**When it is adequately funded, the Census Bureau produces highly accurate, detailed data that enable us to direct a total of over \$17.2 billion to the Tennessee 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 Tennesseans 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.