



NEWS RELEASE

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Contact: Kevin Perez-Allen, kperezallen@naleo.org
(714) 499-4481

Marcus Silva, msilva@naleo.org
(510) 456-5444

NALEO Educational Fund Responds to Census Bureau's Operations Update

*While additional, bilingual paper forms are critical,
Congress must extend statutory deadlines for the Bureau*

WASHINGTON, D.C. – The National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials (NALEO) Educational Fund released a statement from CEO Arturo Vargas in response to the Census Bureau Director's Congressional testimony announcing plans to mail an additional paper form and the Senate Republican (HEALS Act) bill's failure to include provisions to extend statutory reporting deadlines for apportionment and redistricting data:

"We are pleased to learn that the Census Bureau is planning to send an additional paper form in September to households in areas with low self-response rates. These forms, however, must be the bilingual version, particularly for heavily Latino areas with low self-response rates. As our [research](#) shows that Latinos prefer paper forms, providing an additional form in English and Spanish is a necessary and expedient way to help maximize Latino participation in the 2020 Census.

"Yet, despite the good news of the additional paper form, we are deeply concerned over the Senate Republican COVID-19 stimulus bill's failure to extend statutory deadlines for the delivery of census data. The Senate bill should follow the House's HEROES Act (H.R. 6800), which does extend these deadlines as formally requested by the Trump Administration in May. Since the COVID-19 pandemic began, census professionals have been planning around an extended census timeline that will ensure the Bureau has enough time to do its job right. In May, the Bureau's Associate Director of Field Operations, Timothy P. Olson, stated that 'We have passed the point where we could even meet the current legislative requirement of December 31. We can't do that anymore.' The Bureau's Associate Director for Decennial Census Programs, Albert E. Fontenot Jr., echoed this sentiment in a press briefing on July 8 when he said in reference to completing the count by the end of 2020, 'We are past the window of being able to get those counts.' This is why the Bureau's recent operational update on its [website](#) revealing that it is 'working to complete data collection as soon as possible, as it strives to comply with the law and statutory deadlines,' is alarming.

"We are concerned over what seems to be an abandonment of the request for the additional time that both the White House and Census Bureau have already acknowledged is required for a full and accurate census. The national response rate as of July 29 of 62.6 percent is only slightly higher than the Bureau's April 30 self-response goal of 60.1 percent, revealing that it has an unexpectedly more difficult challenge in completing its mission of achieving a 100

percent count. Census operations must be able to continue without being rushed and without political interference. It is too late now for the Bureau to change course, and the next COVID-19 relief legislation should reflect that reality.

“Our nation will use data from Census 2020 to apportion Congressional seats and for redistricting at all levels of government. The accuracy of these data will determine the contours of our representative democracy for the next 10 years. NALEO Educational Fund remains committed to promoting a complete count that is both fair and accurate, with everyone, including all Latinos, completing their census forms sooner than later.”

Residents can self-respond to the census online at <https://my2020census.gov/> or over the phone in English by dialing 844-330-2020 or in Spanish at 844-468-2020.

Individuals with questions about the census can call NALEO Educational Fund’s toll-free national census bilingual hotline at 877-EL-CENSO (877-352-3676) – Monday-Friday from 8:30 a.m.– 8:30 p.m. ET to get additional information.

Partners can stay up to date on tools to continue to get out the count in Latino communities by visiting www.hagasecontar.org/resources, texting CENSUS to 97779, or by subscribing to our e-mail list [here](#).

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About NALEO Educational Fund

NALEO Educational Fund is the nation’s leading non-partisan, non-profit organization that facilitates the full participation of Latinos in the American political process, from citizenship to public service.