



NEWS RELEASE

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NALEO Educational Fund Responds to Census Bureau Director's Announcement that Operations Will End a Month Early

*Despite asking for a four-month extension in May,
Census Bureau succumbs to White House political pressure*

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 announcement that Census 2020 data collection will end on September 30:

"For decades, the U.S. Census Bureau has enjoyed the well-earned global reputation as a respected statistical agency, independent of political agendas; sadly for our nation, that tradition ended. Census Bureau Director Steven Dillingham has announced that despite asking for a four-month extension in May to complete the 2020 Census given the extraordinary circumstances of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Census Bureau will stop collecting household data on September 30 instead of October 31 as previously announced. The Bureau will now rush to complete the census by the current deadline, a task that professional staff at the Census Bureau have repeatedly indicated was unachievable and would lead to an unacceptable census count.

"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, 'We are past the window of being able to get those counts' by the end of 2020.

"The Secretary of Commerce acknowledged this reality and formally requested that Congress extend the deadline for delivering the apportionment counts by four months. The Secretary has now abandoned that position in order to comply with President Trump's July 21 policy memorandum requesting that the apportionment counts be delivered to him by December 31, upon which he seeks to produce different apportionment numbers that exclude undocumented immigrants, despite their inclusion being required by the U.S. Constitution.

"Congress can stop the political hijacking of the census by asserting its constitutional authority over the decennial count. The Senate COVID-19 stimulus bill should follow the House's HEROES Act (H.R. 6800), which extends the December 31, 2020 deadline to deliver the apportionment counts, to April 30, 2021.

“Despite months of millions of American households sheltering at home due to the pandemic, the national response rate as of August 2 was only 62.9 percent, barely higher than the Bureau’s April 30 self-response goal of 60.1 percent. The Census Bureau has an unexpectedly more difficult challenge in achieving a 100 percent count, which includes numerous operations and data processing procedures in addition to the data collection. Forcing the Bureau to meet the current deadlines will sacrifice the accuracy of the census, and waste \$16 billion in taxpayer dollars for an incomplete count. The groups most likely to be excluded from the census now are historically undercounted populations, including Latinos, African Americans, Native Americans, rural populations, low-income households, and children.

“Despite this political sabotaging of the census, NALEO Educational Fund remains committed to promoting a complete count that is both fair and accurate. NALEO Educational Fund will continue its *iHagase Contar!* campaign with vigor. Our respect for the U.S. Constitution requires nothing less.”

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.