



## NEWS RELEASE

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### **NALEO Educational Fund Urges House of Representatives to Reject H.R. 7109**

*"The bill undermines a core pillar of our representative democracy and sabotages the possibility of a fair and accurate census."  
— NALEO Educational Fund CEO Arturo Vargas*

**WASHINGTON, D.C.** – The National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials (NALEO) Educational Fund today released the following statement from Chief Executive Officer Arturo Vargas on the upcoming House of Representatives floor vote on H.R. 7109:

"We strongly oppose H.R. 7109 and urge the House of Representatives to vote against this unconstitutional bill because it would violate the constitutional mandate to count every person in the decennial census for congressional apportionment. The bill undermines a core pillar of our representative democracy and sabotages the possibility of a fair and accurate census.

"Both Republican and Democratic administrations have historically rejected the misguided approach of H.R. 7109, which would require the Census Bureau to ask about citizenship status in the decennial census so as to exclude noncitizens from the apportionment count, despite the unequivocal constitutional requirement that all 'persons' be included in this tally.

"The 14<sup>th</sup> Amendment of the U.S. Constitution is clear: the apportionment of the U.S. House of Representatives is based on a count of 'the whole number of persons in each State'—regardless of age, race, ethnicity, gender, citizenship, or immigration status. H.R. 7109 evokes the nation's legacy before the adoption of the 14<sup>th</sup> Amendment, when enslaved people were counted as only three-fifths of a person for apportionment purposes.

"Furthermore, this bill would seriously undermine public confidence in the confidentiality and safety of responding to the census. Research and experience show that using the decennial census to obtain information on the citizenship status of household members, as H.R. 7109 would require, will lead to fears among respondents that the information they provide on the census questionnaire would be used against them, their families, and their neighborhoods. This would scare the public from answering a question on citizenship status or from answering the census at all, resulting in a flawed census count.

"Data from the decennial census also guide the allocation of more than \$2.8 trillion annually in federal funding to states and localities for a range of vital services. H.R. 7109 would make an accurate census impossible, depriving states and localities of their fair share of federal support for education, health care, economic development, and other opportunities for America's

families and their communities. Congress must reject any attempt to enact policies that would jeopardize the quality of census data.

“Our organization will continue to be at the forefront of efforts to ensure a fair, accurate, and complete count of Latinos and all residents of our nation and oppose any attempt to undermine our constitutionally mandated decennial count. We strongly urge members of Congress to do the same by rejecting H.R. 7109, and instead working to ensure an accurate census that paints a true picture of our nation’s population.”

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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.*