



Luke A. Bronin
Mayor

August 5, 2020

The Honorable Wilbur L. Ross, Jr.
Secretary
U.S. Department of Commerce
1401 Constitution Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20230

Dear Secretary Ross,

I am writing to request that the U.S. Census Bureau reverse its decision to end field data collection for the 2020 Census on September 30, 2020 rather than the previously announced date of October 31, 2020.

When the Census Bureau announced on August 3, 2020 that it would end field data collection on September 30, 2020, it said it would, "improve the speed of our count without sacrificing completeness" and that it, "intends to meet a similar level of household responses as collected in prior censuses."¹ There is simply no basis for the assertion that ending field data collection early, in the middle of a pandemic, will not sacrifice completeness and accuracy. The result will be a significant under-counting of hard-to-count communities.

I was grateful for the chance to speak with you on May 5th, 2020 regarding Hartford's self-response rate, and I was heartened by your commitment to do everything possible to ensure hard-to-count communities like Hartford receive the resources necessary to conduct a complete count. Since our discussion, we have worked closely with our local Census Bureau contacts to increase outreach. We have committed public and private funds to mount a digital advertising campaign, conducted census outreach at meal delivery sites, funded and organized census car parades, and more. Yet as in many cities, the count is still far from complete.

As you know, the census has a profound impact on both federal funding and political representation. At this moment when our nation is recognizing the vast disparities in political power, an inaccurate and disproportionate undercounting of communities of color would result in a further widening of the gap in opportunity, resources, and representation.

I strongly urge and respectfully request that you direct the Census Bureau to continue field data collection through the previously announced date of October 31st, 2020 and reverse this misguided decision to end collection early.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Luke A. Bronin", is written over a horizontal line.

Luke A. Bronin
Mayor

¹ U.S. Census Bureau, Statement from U.S. Census Bureau Director Steven Dillingham: Delivering a Complete and Accurate 2020 Census Count," [August 3, 2020](#).

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