

President
Joe Buscaino
Councilmember
Los Angeles, California

First Vice President
Kathy Maness
Councilmember
Lexington, South Carolina

Second Vice President
Vince Williams
Mayor
Union City, Georgia

Immediate Past President
Matt Zone
Councilmember
Cleveland, Ohio

Chief Executive Officer/
Executive Director
Clarence E. Anthony

September 25, 2020

United States Senator
Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator,

The National League of Cities (NLC) is the voice of America's 19,000 cities, towns and villages - representing more than 200 million people - and is a resource and advocate for the nation's municipal governments and their leaders. Our founding members, the nation's state municipal leagues (SML), are the strongest and most trusted advocates for local government at the state level. High among our common priorities, NLC and the 49 SML's are working in partnership to help the federal government achieve a fair and accurate count for the 2020 Census.

For the reasons outlined below, we write to urge you to support the bipartisan 2020 Census Deadline Extensions Act (S.4571). And to respectfully request you demonstrate your support by cosponsoring the bill and urging Senate leadership to schedule it for a vote before the shortened enumeration period ends on September 30th.

As you know, the Administration shortened the enumeration period by one month by moving the end date from October 31 to September 30, 2020. This unreasonable constraint is imposed as local officials are understandably directing immediate attention toward assisting residents impacted by extraordinary wildfires, hurricanes, the traditional flu seasons, and the unprecedented, lasting health and fiscal disruptions due to COVID-19.

Many of the households that ought to be counted, but have not yet responded, are in communities of color, indigenous communities, rural communities and other historically undercounted and hard-to-count communities. These communities frequently overlap with places suffering from the highest levels of health and fiscal decline because of COVID-19.

Moreover, a shortened timeline will force the Census Bureau to compress essential quality checks and data processing activities. These activities ensure that undercounts (people missed) do not occur and that overcounts are properly addressed.

As our nation faces historic obstacles and setbacks, now is the wrong time to attempt an expedited count. From wildfires in Western states to Gulf Coast hurricanes, these events combined with the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic have impeded census takers access to collect required information. And this is happening when accurate census data is so essential for effective disaster response over the coming decade.

A rushed census count for cities, towns and villages could mean the full share of \$1.5 trillion in federal funding across more than 300 federal programs in the next decade will not be properly distributed as Congress intended under those programs. These funds are allocated based on census data.

A rushed count now, one which may not accurately reflect the composition in character and numbers of our communities, may also compromise municipal response and services for a decade of economic recovery to come following the COVID-19 pandemic.

The National League of Cities and the undersigned state municipal leagues support the S.4571, the bipartisan 2020 Census Deadline Extensions Act cosponsored by Senators Lisa Murkowski (R-Alaska), Brian Schatz (D-Hawaii), David Perdue (R-Georgia), and Patrick Leahy (D-Vermont). We respectfully urge every Senator to join your colleagues to cosponsor S.4571, which will help ensure cities and towns receive annual funding and emergency aid at appropriate, fair, and equitable levels.

Thank you for considering our request, and we look forward to your response. If you have any questions regarding our concerns, I encourage you to reach out to Irma Esparza Diggs, Senior Executive and Director, Federal Advocacy, at diggs@nlc.org.

Sincerely,



Clarence Anthony
CEO and Executive Director
National League of Cities

Greg Cochran
Executive Director
Alabama League of Municipalities

Nils Andreassen
Executive Director
Alaska Municipal League

Tom Belshe
Executive Director
League of Arizona Cities and Towns

Mark Hayes
Executive Director
Arkansas Municipal League

Carolyn Coleman
Executive Director
League of California Cities

Kevin Bommer
Executive Director
Colorado Municipal League

Joe DeLong
Executive Director
Connecticut Conference of Municipalities

Carl Luft
Executive Director
Delaware League of Local Governments

Michael Sittig
Executive Director
Florida League of Cities

Larry Hanson
Executive Director
Georgia Municipal Association

Kelley Packer
Executive Director
Association of Idaho Cities

Matthew Greller
Chief Executive Officer
Accelerate Indiana Municipalities

Alan Kemp
Executive Director
Iowa League of Cities

Erik Sartorius
Executive Director
League of Kansas Municipalities

J.D. Chaney
Executive Director & CEO
Kentucky League of Cities

John Gallagher
Executive Director
Louisiana Municipal Association

Stephen Gove
Executive Director
Maine Municipal Association

Scott Hancock
Executive Director
Maryland Municipal League

Geoffrey Beckwith
Executive Director & CEO
Massachusetts Municipal Association

Daniel Gilmartin
Executive Director & CEO
Michigan Municipal Association

Dave Unmacht
Executive Director
League of Minnesota Cities

Shari Veazey
Executive Director
Mississippi Municipal League

Dan Ross
Executive Director
Missouri Municipal League

Tim Burton
Executive Director
Montana League of Cities and Towns

Lynn Rex
Executive Director
League of Nebraska Municipalities

Wesley Harper
Executive Director
Nevada League of Cities and Municipalities

Margaret Byrnes
Executive Director
New Hampshire Municipal Association

Mike Cerra
Executive Director
New Jersey State League of Municipalities

AJ Forte
Executive Director
New Mexico Municipal League

Peter Baynes
Executive Director
New York State Conference of Mayors and Municipal Officials

Paul Meyer
Executive Director
North Carolina League of Municipalities

Kent Scarrett
Executive Director
Ohio Municipal League

Mike Fina
Executive Director
Oklahoma Municipal League

Mike Cully
Executive Director
League of Oregon Cities

Rick Schuettler
Executive Director
Pennsylvania Municipal League

Brian Daniels
Executive Director
Rhode Island League of Cities and Towns

Todd Glover
Executive Director
Municipal Association of South Carolina

Yvonne Taylor
Executive Director
South Dakota Municipal League

Margaret Mahery
Executive Director
Tennessee Municipal League

Bennett Sandlin
Executive Director
Texas Municipal League

Cameron Diehl
Executive Director
Utah League of Cities and Towns

Maura Carroll
Executive Director
Vermont League of Cities and Towns

Michelle Gowdy
Executive Director
Virginia Municipal League

Peter King
Chief Executive Officer
Association of Washington Cities

Travis Blosser
Executive Director
West Virginia Municipal League

Jerry Deschane
Executive Director
League of Wisconsin Municipalities

David Fraser
Executive Director
Wyoming Association of Municipalities

