

Common Cause Urges House to Pass the Ensuring a Fair and Accurate Census Act

September 14, 2022

Dear Member of Congress:

On behalf of Common Cause's 1.5 million members and supporters, we ask that Congress continue to help ensure that all people who call America home have an equal opportunity to be counted in the decennial census. The census is key to shaping our nation's government, public policy, and budgets for an entire decade. The data we gather determines everything from congressional district maps to local resource allocation — like school funding, the number of firehouses in our neighborhoods, and highway and road repair budgets. When our neighbors aren't represented and included in all counts, everyone loses out.

The Ensuring a Fair and Accurate Census Act (H.R. 8326) helps to secure future censuses by ensuring that they do not again see the unprecedented level of political malfeasance and politicization that plagued the 2020 Census count.

This bill equips the Census Bureau with creating two expert committees: one for reviewing statistical quality standards and another focused on the decennial census and the American Community Survey. We expect that these committees will tackle important questions ahead of the 2030 Census including how to reduce political interference by an administration; identify learning lessons from COVID-19 pandemic; and evaluate the level of transparency, public participation, and responsiveness on the part of the Census Bureau in making its policy decisions. In highlighting these problems and making recommendations to fix them, the committees established by the Ensuring a Fair and Accurate Census Act would help to further public confidence in the Census Bureau. Separately, the bill also aims to reduce political influence by limiting the number of political appointees that can be appointed at the Bureau.

The census plays a vital role in the health and wealth of our democracy and it must never be politicized. It is critical that we empower the Census Bureau to stop manipulation of the census for partisan political gain, and put in place safeguards to ensure nothing similar to the Trump Administration's sabotaging of the census is ever allowed to happen again.

In 2019, Common Cause helped to ensure that a citizenship question did not end up on the 2020 Census by sharing documents found in our lawsuit, *Common Cause v. Lewis*, directly with the Supreme Court that showed the government's [real intention](#) by adding a question on citizenship. The documents provided to the Court by Common Cause led to Chief Justice Roberts calling the Administration's reasoning to add a question on citizenship to the 2020 Census, "contrived."

It is crucial that we have a transparent and accurate count of everyone in the United States each decade as our Constitution requires. When our neighbors aren't represented and included in all counts, entire communities lose out on funding for hospitals, schools, roads, and the representation that they deserve.

We thank Chairwoman Carolyn Maloney for her leadership to help ensure all Americans are counted and can have their voices heard. We urge a “yes” vote on the Ensuring a Fair and Accurate Census Act and hope that the Senate will then expeditiously take up this bill.

Sincerely,



Karen Hobert Flynn
President
Common Cause