

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

January 5, 2023

Robert Santos
Director
U.S. Census Bureau
4600 Silver Hill Road
Washington, DC 20233

Dear Director Santos:

In light of last month's Census Bureau announcement concerning population estimates, I'm writing to express my ongoing concerns surrounding the repeated undercounting of the population of Illinois in the American Community Survey (ACS) and the 2020 Census, as assessed by the Post-Enumeration Survey (PES).¹ Fundamentally, this latest release's claim that Illinois lost a substantial number of residents in 2022 appears to closely echo the previous ACS and Census results that fueled misleading rhetoric surrounding purported population losses in Illinois which were later revealed to be unfounded by the PES.²

In my repeated letters sent last year, I requested information on the ACS and Census data which showed Illinois population losses of substantially different orders, only for the May PES to conclude that 14 states had an undercount or overcount in the Census and that Illinois was among them with an undercount of hundreds of thousands of people. Beyond discrediting years of false rhetoric about Illinois population losses driven by Census Bureau products, these findings also raise serious public questions in my state over the credibility of the Census Bureau's results more broadly because of the substantially different conclusions of its recent releases regarding our state. Census Bureau undercounting of our state poses potentially enormous financial consequences for Illinois because over the next decade, Census Bureau data will be utilized to allocate roughly \$1.5 trillion through approximately 100 programs, including Medicaid, SNAP, Medicare, Highway Planning and Construction, and Pell grants.

In your June response to my letters with colleagues on this matter, you wrote that regarding incorporating PES findings into data products that inform funding allocations that, "the Census Bureau has established a team of experts tasked with researching the feasibility of taking coverage measures from the Demographic Analysis and Post-Enumeration Survey into account in the development of the official population estimates." Additionally, in response to the question of whether the Bureau would commit to utilizing the PES in deriving Population Estimates from the Decennial Census, you wrote, "While too early to commit to incorporating PES into the population estimates, the Census Bureau is researching the feasibility of taking coverage measures from both the Demographic Analysis and Post-Enumeration Survey into account in the development of the official population estimates."³

¹2019 ACS 5-Year Estimate Data Profile; <https://www.census.gov/newsroom/press-releases/2021/2021-population-estimates.html>

² Census Bureau Press Release, "Growth in U.S. Population Shows Early Indication of Recovery Amid COVID-19 Pandemic", December 22, 2022

³U.S. Census Bureau Director Santos Letter To Senator Durbin And The Illinois Congressional Delegation, June 16, 2022

Last month, I wrote to request clarity on the implementation of PES findings into population estimates, the timeline for doing so, and related efforts to address the repeated undercounting of Illinois. In addition to renewing my request for that information, I request answers to these additional questions by January 20th:

1. Were coverage measures from the May 2022 Demographic Analysis and Post-Enumeration Survey results which showed Illinois' population growth accounted for in the December 2022 population estimates, or did the methodology omit these considerations while following the previous ACS and Census approaches. which led to the undercounting of Illinois' population?
2. If coverage measures from last year's Demographic Analysis and Post-Enumeration Survey have not yet been incorporated into annual population estimates, when will they be?
3. Were any other new efforts undertaken to address the consistent undercounting of the population of Illinois in producing the December 2022 population estimates?
4. Have any new factors been identified as contributing to the repeated undercounting of Illinois?

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Raja Krishnamoorthi", with a stylized, flowing script.

Raja Krishnamoorthi
Member of Congress-Elect

Enclosure