

**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**

COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND GOVERNMENT REFORM

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April 4, 2018

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

Dr. Ron Jarmin, Ph.D.  
Acting Director  
U.S. Census Bureau  
4600 Silver Hill Road  
Washington, D.C. 20233

Dear Secretary Ross and Acting Director Jarmin:

On March 26, 2018, the Department of Commerce announced that the Census Bureau would be adding a question on citizenship to the 2020 Decennial Census. In a memo outlining the rationale for this decision, Secretary Ross wrote that the Census Bureau “expressed concern” that adding a citizenship question to the census “would negatively impact the response rate for non-citizens.”<sup>1</sup>

We understand that officials from the Department of Commerce and the Census Bureau will be briefing Committee Members on this issue on April 11, 2018. In order to more fully understand the concerns raised by the Census Bureau with this decision, we request that both of your agencies provide the following documents before our briefing on April 11, 2018:

- (1) all documents and communications relating to any concerns expressed by the Census Bureau regarding the addition of a citizenship question;
- (2) all analyses, including drafts, relating to the potential impact that adding a citizenship question would have on response rates;
- (3) all communications between or among officials from the Department of Commerce, the Census Bureau, and any other office or entity inside or outside of the government regarding the addition of a citizenship question; and
- (3) all documents, communications, and analyses relating to cost increases that could result from the addition of a citizenship question.

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<sup>1</sup> Memorandum from Secretary Wilbur Ross, Department of Commerce, to Karen Dunn Kelley, Under Secretary for Economic Affairs, Department of Commerce, *Reinstatement of a Citizenship Question on the 2020 Decennial Census Questionnaire* (Mar. 26, 2018) (online at [www.commerce.gov/sites/commerce.gov/files/2018-03-26\\_2.pdf](http://www.commerce.gov/sites/commerce.gov/files/2018-03-26_2.pdf)).

If you have any questions about this request, please contact [REDACTED] with the Committee staff at [REDACTED]. Thank you for your prompt attention to this request.

Sincerely,



Elijah E. Cummings  
Ranking Member



Carolyn B. Maloney  
Member



Eleanor Holmes Norton  
Member



William Lacy Clay  
Member



Gerald E. Connolly  
Vice-Ranking Member



Jimmy Gomez  
Member

cc: The Honorable Trey Gowdy, Chairman,  
Committee on Oversight and Government Reform