Support a Fair & Accurate Count in Michigan for the 2020 Census

Without a fair and accurate census, our communities are at risk of losing critical revenue for programs and services.

Public officials use census data and the number of people counted to determine distribution of federal funds. In 2014, Michigan was allocated $17.7 billion in federal funds; those funds are used to support vital programs and services, including:

- Head Start
- Food stamps
- Special education
- Free and reduced lunch programs
- WIC
- Medicaid
- The Children’s Health Insurance Program

We are asking the state to make an initial investment of $1 million for the Department of Technology, Management and Budget to support census activities.

An initial investment of $1 million for DTMB would be used to:

- Support staffing
- Establish the 2020 Michigan Complete Count Committee
- Support the State’s 2019 outreach strategy

Following these efforts, we hope the state will make another appropriation for FY2019-2020 to support outreach strategies that will be necessary though the summer of 2020. Strategies may include, but not be limited to: training for local officials; support of local complete count committees; and coordination with the Michigan Nonprofits Complete Count Committee.
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Predicting Low Responses to the Census
The Census Bureau has developed a statistical model that uses population data to predict census tracts that are highly likely not to respond to the 2020 census. Areas in red (shown at right) are expected to have the highest non-response rates.

The risk of an undercount is not limited to urban communities. Many of the hardest to count individuals live in rural areas where there has been a significant shift in the demographics that are at risk of being missed in the 2020 census count.

Under current funding figures, Michigan would lose $1,800 of federal funds per year for every person not counted.

Those with the most to lose from an undercount are the hardest to count, including communities of color, immigrants, young children, the homeless and others traditionally served by nonprofits. In Michigan, 10.8% of the population under the age of five lives in a hard to count community.

Philanthropy and an Accurate Census Count
The Council of Michigan Foundations (CMF) supports efforts at federal, state and local levels that ensure an accurate, reliable and thorough census count, as required by the U.S. Constitution.

Since 2016, CMF has been working to achieve the following three goals:
- Educate members on the importance of the 2020 census.
- Advocate for policy priorities for the 2020 census as indicated.
- Increase support for the 2020 Michigan Nonprofits Count Campaign.

Without government funding, communities would turn to philanthropy and nonprofits to fill the void, but philanthropy does not have the resources to replace lost government support. Recognizing this challenge, CMF is part of a national effort to engage philanthropy in the 2020 census. CMF has also partnered with the Michigan Nonprofit Association, leaders in developing and launching the 2020 Michigan Nonprofits Count Campaign, which aims to mobilize nonprofits across the state to achieve a fair and accurate count and build the capacity of nonprofits to address future issues that threaten the health and well-being of our communities. This initiative will provide trainings and materials for nonprofits on effective outreach tactics, award mini-grants, facilitate a statewide communications plan and coordinate with state and local government officials.