

**Statement by Former U.S. Census Bureau Directors
April 14, 2020**

**On the U.S. Census Bureau Decision to Extend the Start of
2020 Census Field Operations to June 1, 2020**

The Census Bureau has announced that it is adjusting 2020 Census operations to effectively deal with the COVID-19 outbreak. The Census Bureau will reactivate field offices on June 1, 2020, completing field data collection operations and self-response by October 31, 2020. Additional operations will then complete the census at a level of accuracy and coverage consistent with the demanding standards that have been met 23 times in American history. The genius of the census has always been finding a Plan B when conditions rule out Plan A. For 2020, Plan B includes a schedule adjustment. The Census Bureau has requested statutory relief from the Congress for an additional 120 days.

We have discussed these operational and schedule adjustments with the senior career leadership at the Census Bureau. Based on (1) our extensive experience in planning, executing and often adjusting operations of previous decennial censuses; and (2) our firm conclusion that the extension of the field operations reflect careful analysis by the technical, scientific and operational staff at the Census Bureau, we support the decision and urge Congress to act in concert with it.

The COVID-19 outbreak presents many challenges to our country, one of which is unique to the census already in process when the pandemic hit the country. The Bureau staff has put in long hours to: (1) protect the health and safety of the American public and their employees; (2) adhere to guidance from federal, state, and local authorities; and (3) finish a complete and accurate count of all communities in America. The best way to support the Census Bureau and our democracy in these difficult times is to be certain you have responded to the 2020 Census.

If you have not responded, you will soon receive a paper questionnaire in the mail that you can complete, or best, go to www.my2020census.gov and respond online.

Vincent Barabba (1973-76 & 1979-81)

Kenneth Prewitt (1998-2001)

Robert Groves (2009–2012)

John Thompson (2013-2017)