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U.S. House of Representatives  
Committee on Oversight and Reform  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Representative:

On behalf of the 3 million members of the National Education Association, who rely on census data to ensure that public schools and colleges have the resources to educate and support students, we appreciate this opportunity to submit comments for the record for tomorrow's hearing, "Counting Every Person: Safeguarding the 2020 Census Against the Trump Administration's Unconstitutional Attacks." Census data help the federal government to determine how to allocate billions of dollars to states and local communities for education, hospitals and health care, transportation, and other crucial public services. An accurate census count is critical in helping educators address the needs of every student. Unfortunately, the Trump administration's efforts are intended to decrease, rather than increase, participation.

Earlier this month the White House issued a memorandum to exclude undocumented immigrants from the data used for congressional apportionment. Although this does not carry the weight of an executive order, the ploy sows confusion, and on top of earlier attempts to create a climate of fear about the census in these communities. The Trump administration attempted to add an unlawful citizenship question to the 2020 Census, a maneuver that was rejected last year by the U.S. Supreme Court. Yet, the White House has continued trying to undercut the census; just last month, the administration created two new senior positions at the Census Bureau that were filled not by career appointees, but by political operatives hired to do the president's bidding. These cynical schemes are especially harmful during a census that has been delayed and disrupted by the COVID-19 epidemic.

As you examine this issue, consider that educators are in a unique position to explain the census and reassure students and families that being counted is not only safe, but necessary. The NEA has created materials to this end, including:

- Launching a [webpage](http://www.nea.org/census) ([www.nea.org/census](http://www.nea.org/census)) to provide educators with resources to ensure their communities are counted; and
- Creating digital ads encouraging participation in the 2020 Census and a toolkit that provides lesson plans in several subjects and flyers in several languages, as well as shareable graphics highlighting census facts.

Having an accurate census count can change the trajectory of life in our most impoverished communities and help to foster the educational opportunities that all students, no matter where they live, deserve. For this reason, NEA members are grateful to submit these comments for this committee's hearing.

Sincerely,

Marc Egan  
Director of Government Relations  
National Education Association