

The Board of Supervisors

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Contra Costa County



David J. Twa
Clerk of the Board
And
County Administrator
(925) 335-1900

April 16, 2019

The Honorable Maria Elena Durazo
Chair, Senate Budget Subcommittee #4
State Capitol, Room 5019
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: 2019-2020 State Budget – Funding for Census 2020 Related Activities – **Support with increased funding**

Dear Chairperson Durazo:

On behalf of County of Contra Costa, I write to express our **support** for the Governor's budget proposal of \$54 million for FY 2019-2020 for Census 2020 statewide efforts as well as a **\$5 million increase** in funding to support the Region 3¹ local Complete Count Committees.

The Governor's current proposal includes \$50 million in General Funds to support Census 2020 outreach efforts statewide and \$4 million for the California Housing and Population Sample Enumeration. Although we support this proposal, it lacks additional funding for local, targeted Census 2020 efforts.

As mandated by the Constitution, Census is a decennial project. Each Census determines ten years of federal program funding allocations as well as apportionment for Congressional representation. This means that we get one chance every ten years to ensure every person is counted.

Former Governor Brown's FY 2018-2019 budget included \$90.3 million in General Funds for Census 2020 outreach; \$26.6 million was specified for counties. We are grateful for the State General Fund support for our Census 2020 efforts thus far, but the funding formula that focused on the hard-to-count populations left Northern California at a financial disadvantage compared to Southern California. The seven counties in Region 3 received a total of \$3,190,327. Additional funding is necessary in order to reach every person in our Region.

¹For California Complete Count, Region 3 is inclusive of Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin, San Francisco, San Mateo, Santa Clara, and Solano Counties.

Region 3 faces many obstacles in getting an accurate Census count:

- *Digital Divide* – Census 2020 will be the first attempt at collecting Census questionnaires online. Not every person has access to a reliable and secure source of internet.
- *Multigenerational Households and the Unstably Housed* – Due to the exorbitantly high cost of living in the Bay Area, households have an increased number of individuals living there. There is a fear that these families will be evicted or shunned due to the number of inhabitants. There are many individuals couch-surfing and staying in their cars because they are unable to make ends meet.
- *Fear and Uncertainty* – Like many communities throughout California, there is a cloud of fear associated with Census. There is uncertainty with privacy and security of information with the online Census questionnaire. There is also widespread fear about the sharing of information, especially with regard to immigration status. During World War II, the federal government used the Census information to locate Japanese and Japanese Americans for internment; therefore, there is a fear that Census data will be used to locate certain populations within our community. In the LGBTQ+ community, there is concern about the Bureau unilaterally changing one's gender to "match" their legal name.

The County of Contra Costa respectfully requests an additional \$5 million to be allocated among the Region 3 counties on a per-capita basis using 2017 American Community Survey population data. This additional funding will assist the counties in addressing the above-stated challenges as well as develop and disseminate targeted Census messages that reflect the unique needs of their communities to ensure that all residents are counted.

The County of Contra Costa respectfully requests your Budget Subcommittee approve the Governor's proposed funding for Census 2020 and to provide additional funding to support local Complete Count Committee efforts in Region 3.

Sincerely,

Supervisor John Gioia,
Chair Board of Supervisors

Supervisor Diane Burgis,
Chair, Contra Costa County 2020 Census Complete Count Steering Committee