



June 20, 2018

VIA E-MAIL

Nancy Potok, Chief Statistician
Office of Management and Budget
725 17th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20503

Re: 2020 Appeals Process

Dear Ms. Potok:

On behalf of Philanthropy California and our members, we are pleased to respond to the May 21, 2018 Federal Register Notice, requesting comments on the procedures for participating in the appeals process for the 2020 Census Local Updates of Census Addresses (LUCA) program. In the interest of a fair and accurate appeals process and complete census enumeration, we oppose requiring LUCA participants to provide supporting documentation for each individual appealed address and encourage the adoption of the 2010 Census standard that emphasizes “a preponderance of evidence” as described below.

Philanthropy California is an alliance of Northern California Grantmakers, San Diego Grantmakers, and Southern California Grantmakers. Our combined membership represents more than 500 foundations, corporate funders, philanthropy individuals and families, giving circles, and government agencies. Our members invest more than \$7 billion every year to support communities across California, the country, and worldwide. Philanthropy California members are actively engaged in supporting a fair and accurate 2020 Census count in California, including working closely with governmental jurisdictions on LUCA.

Philanthropy California believes that local input provided through the LUCA program is an essential step in ensuring that the Census Bureau has an accurate Master Address File (MAF) to conduct a complete enumeration. The State of California and local governments have prioritized LUCA as a critical part of ensuring a complete and accurate count in California. To that end, philanthropy has made significant investments to support local governments in community-based address canvassing for LUCA in many counties with high numbers of hard-to-count census tracts including Los Angeles, Fresno, San Joaquin, Santa Clara, San Mateo, and Contra Costa counties.

The Proposed LUCA Appeals Process Creates an Undue Burden on Local Governments

Since an accurate MAF is fundamental for a complete enumeration, it is imperative that the appeals process be conducted with the utmost care, in order to ensure that all addresses in a locality are provided with an opportunity to be enumerated. We have strong concerns that the LUCA appeals process, as proposed, would create a substantial and onerous burden on local governments, hinder the complete update of the MAF, and increase the likelihood of an inaccurate 2020 Census.

Under the proposed LUCA appeals process, LUCA participants may appeal “address additions and corrections they provided...that the Census Bureau did not accept” or “the Census Bureau’s deletion of

an address during a previous operation that was not previously commented on by the participant during its initial LUCA review.” When filing an appeal, LUCA participants must provide “supporting documentation that substantiates the existence and location of *each* appealed address,” including “a reference to the *exact* location in the supporting documentation where the Appeals Staff can find specific evidence” of each address (emphasis added). Furthermore, LUCA participants must file appeals within 45 calendar days of receipt of their LUCA Feedback materials.

Requiring LUCA participants to provide documentation for each appealed address constitutes an undue burden on larger localities where appealed addresses could number in the tens-of-thousands, smaller localities with limited resources, and the Appeals Staff itself. For example, during the 2010 Census, more than 1.8 million addresses were appealed during the LUCA appeals process. Requiring localities to provide documentation for each appealed address will, undoubtedly, prevent many large and small localities from appealing the Census Bureau’s LUCA Feedback materials and ultimately result in an inaccurate 2020 Census.

The LUCA Appeals Process Should Adopt the 2010 Census “Preponderance of the Evidence” Approach

We encourage the Office of Management and Budget to adopt the “preponderance of the evidence” approach for the LUCA appeals process, as was used during the 2010 Census. In 2010, in order to cope with the deluge of address appeals – more than 1.8 million as noted above – the Appeals Staff adopted a *de facto* standard, based on the “preponderance of the evidence” for the existence of residential addresses, with most of the appealed addresses accepted for inclusion in the census.

Using the “preponderance of evidence” approach, LUCA participants filing an appeal submitted a detailed, written explanation of the methods and materials they used to conduct their review of the addresses rejected or deleted by the Census Bureau, and the participants’ position for why the Appeals Staff should adopt their recommendations. The explanations were required to demonstrate the quality and accuracy of the supporting materials and the rigor of the methods used in the analysis. The explanation also included representative examples of valid addresses with supporting documentation, rather than supporting documentation for each individual address. We strongly believe that the “preponderance of evidence” approach would significantly improve the accuracy of the MAF while, at the same time, enhance the efficiency and timeliness of the appeal process for both LUCA participants and the Appeals Staff.

It is unrealistic to expect LUCA participants to produce and submit individual documentation for each individual address with an appeals window of just 45 days. It is equally unrealistic to expect the Appeals Staff to be able to manage and review individual documentation for each address in the time available to complete the appeals process. Therefore, in order to ensure a complete and accurate 2020 Census, we oppose requiring supporting documentation for each individual appealed address and encourage the adoption of the more practical “preponderance of evidence” approach.

Thank you for your consideration. If you have any questions, please contact Cecilia Chen, Northern California Grantmakers, at (415) 872-1016 or cchen@ncg.org. Thank you for your time and consideration.



Yours truly,

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