

Accurate Census Data Matters to Alaska

A National Perspective



Resources

- The federal government allocates \$675 billion annually based on Census Bureau data.
- Alaska's economy depends on federal spending, which comprises 21.8% of state GDP.
- Census Bureau data affects the allocation of more than \$3.2 billion in Alaska each year.
- Alaska uses that federal funding to build/repair roads and bridges, operate our healthcare and education systems, provide nutrition assistance to low-income children and families, develop and operate affordable housing, support our foster care system, and much more.

Democratic process

- The Decennial Census determines apportionment in the U.S. House of Representatives.
- Census data is used to redraw state legislative boundaries.
- Local governments use census data to redraw their political subdivisions.

Knowledge

- Governments, businesses, nonprofits, and universities use census data in their planning.
- Entities like ISER analyze census data when making public policy recommendations

Justice

- Census data is used to enforce state and federal laws, including civil rights laws, voting rights requirements, and the obligation of financial institutions to serve minority populations.

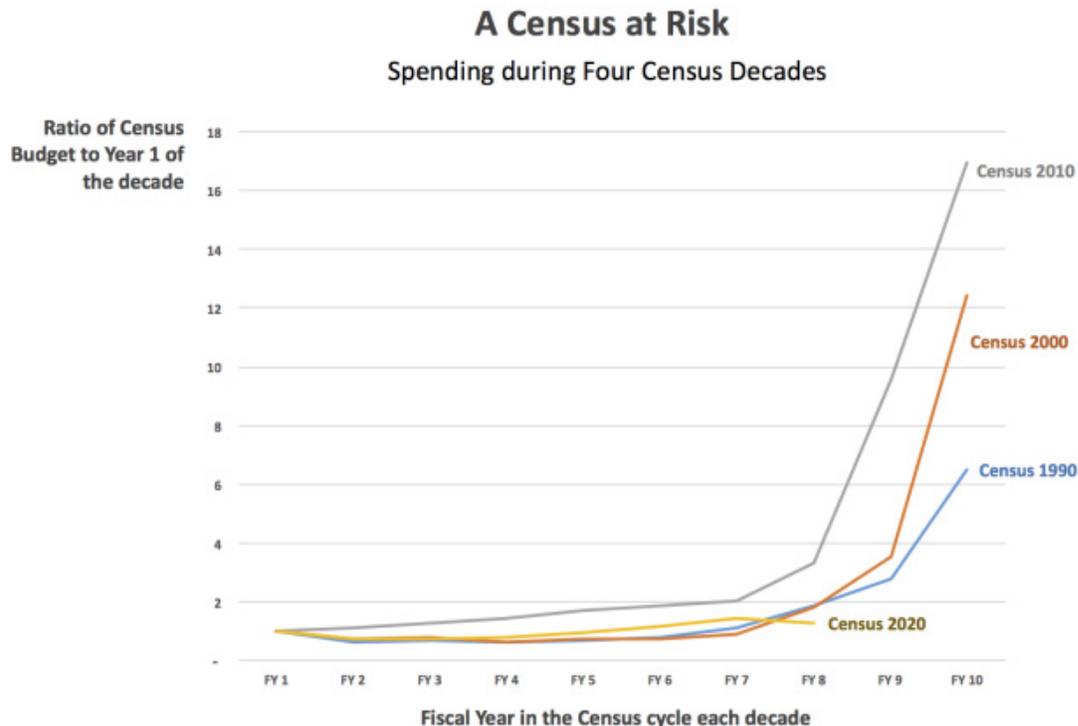
Impacts of inaccurate census data in Alaska

Many Alaska populations are disproportionately undercounted when resources are insufficient for the Census Bureau to properly gather accurate data. When this happens:

- The state receives less federal funding, making the current budget crisis even worse.
- All Alaska residents experience reductions in essential services like road repairs.
- Children and low-income Alaskans suffer disproportionately from decreases to education funding and programs that make up Alaska's social safety net.
- Redistricting may be inequitable because of poor data quality.
- Governments and organizations are less able to effectively plan for the future.
- Laws protecting vulnerable populations may not be properly enforced.

How can the delegation protect Alaska?

Alaska's congressional delegation should advocate for appropriations for Census Bureau programs that will maintain or improve the accuracy of data collections in Alaska. Minimally, Congress should appropriate \$4.735 billion for the Census Bureau's Periodic Censuses and Programs account in FY 2019, including \$3.928 billion for 2020 Census preparations. This appropriation request is consistent with the necessary ramp-up in Census Bureau appropriations that precedes each Decennial Census:



Sources
Congressional Research Service, Courtesy Congresswoman Carolyn B. Maloney, (D-NY)
*2018 figure from Office of Management & Budget (OMB), as reported by the Washington Post

Lower funding levels will prevent the Census Bureau from conducting the advance testing that is necessary to implement new, more efficient information technology systems and data collection methods. The potential results include lower participation and operational failures in 2020, undercounts in Alaska communities, and cost overruns into the billions of dollars.

Learn more

- **Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development**, *Census data and information for Alaska*
<http://live.laborstats.alaska.gov/cen/>
- **The Census Project**, *A network of national, state, and local organizations that supports a fair and accurate 2020 Census and comprehensive American Community Survey*
<https://thecensusproject.org/>
- **The Foraker Group**, *Alaska's statewide nonprofit association, nonprofit capacity building organization, and convener of the Alaska Census Working Group*
<http://www.forakergroup.org/>