



**U.S. Census
Monitoring
Board**

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December 20, 2000

Honorable George W. Bush
President-elect of the United States
Governor's Office
State Capitol, Room 2S.1
P.O. Box 12428
Austin, Texas 78711

Dear President-elect Bush:

Congratulations on your hard-fought victory. We applaud your desire for bipartisanship, and we stand ready to help you achieve that end.

As you know, one of the first issues your Administration will face is how to handle the release of the 2000 Census results. While we were very encouraged to hear your senior adviser in Florida, Secretary James Baker, repeatedly endorse the "expertise" of statisticians, we were taken aback by a recent Roll Call article (December 7, 2000) that your Administration may block the release of statistically corrected census results to the 50 states.

As Members of the U.S. Census Monitoring Board, we urge you not to prematurely reject the release of corrected data and instead to await the Census Bureau's decision on this issue, expected in February. To do so would be patently unfair to people of color, children and others who have been undercounted at a disproportionately high rate. Just as all Americans deserve to have their votes counted, all Americans have a fundamental civil right to be included in our nation's decennial census.

Moreover, a fair and accurate census is needed to ensure that every state and local community receives its fair share of federal funds over the next decade. As you know, billions of dollars will be distributed during each year of your Administration based solely on census data. If the undercount is not corrected, these funds will not be distributed properly. In fact, nonpartisan studies have shown that states with the largest relative undercounts – including Texas and Florida - would be hit the hardest. For example, Florida would lose about \$500 million in federal funds over the next 10 years if all Floridians were not included in the official census count. Texans would lose more than \$1 billion.

For three years, we have been monitoring the 2000 Census. There is general bipartisan agreement that the Census Bureau has done a masterful job under difficult circumstances, including lawsuits designed to disrupt the count. Even with the Census Bureau's best efforts, history shows people of color and children are likely to be undercounted at a disproportionately high rate.

The upcoming analysis of the differential undercount is the final step in Census 2000 before the official numbers are released. Our hope is that the Census Bureau's experts will be allowed to do their job without interference and that the climate of bipartisanship now emerging will not evaporate as it surely would if such a political decision were made within weeks of your Inauguration.

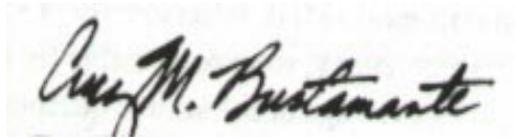
Sincerely,



Gilbert F. Casellas



Everett M. Ehrlich



Cruz M. Bustamante



Lorraine A. Green