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September 4, 2020

The Honorable Wilbur Ross
Secretary
U.S. Department of Commerce
1401 Constitution Ave NW
Washington, DC 20230

Dear Secretary Ross,

I am writing with grave concern regarding the U.S. Department of Commerce's recent decision to cut the U.S. Census Bureau's enumeration process by one month. Estimates show that over 50 percent of Arizona's 1st Congressional District remains uncounted, and it appears no plan has been put in place by the Administration to ensure that all Americans are properly counted and recorded. A full and total Census enumerate is critical.

COVID-19 has presented significant challenges with the enumeration process. As you know, face-to-face contact increases the risk that the virus will be transmitted, and consequently, individuals are less likely to respond to in-person visits. However, this is no reason to shorten the enumeration deadline from October 31 to September 30. In Arizona, entire communities, including many Tribal communities, remain undercounted or even uncounted because of the pandemic.

Additionally, there are reports that the U.S. Census Bureau is having a difficult time recruiting and retaining enumerators who are willing to go door-to-door. Likewise, stay-at-home orders to protect public health and prevent the spread of COVID-19 have limited on-the-ground enumeration efforts.

Therefore, I request answers to the following questions no later than Monday, September 14:

- 1) What data, statistics, analysis, and other information went into the decision to shorten the enumeration deadline from October 31 to September 30?
- 2) Did any individuals at the White House, Department of Commerce, or other Executive Branch departments have any influence over this decision? If so, please provide copies of all correspondence between the Department of Commerce, U.S. Census Bureau, other Executive Branch departments, and the Administration.
- 3) Did your Department consult with Tribal governments while determining how to properly enumerate Tribal populations?
- 4) Why was the timeline shortened when it was well-known that these communities were difficult to enumerate, especially considering the challenges associated with COVID-19?

- 5) How has the Census Bureau adjusted its hiring practices to quickly scale and hire enough enumerators to properly ensure an accurate enumeration?
- 6) If there is difficulty in hiring enumerators, has the U.S. Census Bureau made requests to Congress to increase pay or benefits for enumerators?
- 7) What additional ideas are being considered and deployed to ensure that communities, especially Tribal communities, will be properly enumerated?

Thank you for your immediate attention to these important questions. Americans deserve transparency behind important decisions that will have impact on their communities for the next decade.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Tom O'Halleran". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Tom O'Halleran
Member of Congress