



October 27, 2011

The Honorable Frank Wolf  
Chairman  
Appropriations Subcommittee on  
Commerce, Justice, and Science  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Wolf:

Collectively we have led the Census Bureau across more than four decades, serving six Presidents from both political parties.

Over that time, as required by Congress, every five years the Census Bureau has conducted an Economic Census - the cornerstone of the nation's economic measurements. The Economic Census provides core information on virtually all private, non-farm businesses. It is a fundamental building block of Gross Domestic Product, national income and product accounts, measures of industrial productivity, price indices, and annual and quarterly indicators of business activity – essential tools for intelligent, responsive national economic policy, especially policy relevant to the job-creating results of entrepreneurship. Businesses large and small rely on Economic Census data to guide investment decisions. State and local governments use it for accurate forecasting of revenues and employment of proposed economic development projects. For decades, the Economic Census has been the core metric helping entrepreneurs and government grow the U.S. economy into the world's strongest and most vibrant engine of economic activity.

The origins of the economic census date to the 1810 Decennial Census. The Congresses of the early 1800s were visionary in seeing the necessity of collecting data from all businesses and industries in order to paint a comprehensive portrait of our nation's economy, on the basis of which the Congress has made wise public policy decisions and businesses sound investment decisions.

Today this distinguished record is at risk. The Fiscal Year 2012 budget for the Census Bureau could lead to cancellation of the 2012 Economic Census. The current state of fiscal affairs in the country is daunting, and every agency of government must find efficiencies. However, going without a 2012 Economic Census in the midst of the worst recession in half a century is akin to turning off the country's economic GPS at the very moment it is critically

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needed. Without the Economic Census, public and private decision-makers would have available a 2007 model of our economy until 2022.

As the Appropriations bill for the Census Bureau makes its way through Congress, we strongly urge you and colleagues to ensure the funding needed by the Bureau to carry out a robust and timely 2012 Economic Census.

This Congress should not be the first in history to deny itself, the executive, state and local governments and the nation's business community information that the Founders and every Congress since have judged essential for a growing nation.

Sincerely,

Vincent P. Barabba (1973-1976; 1979–1981)

Barbara Everitt Bryant (1989–1993)

Martha Farnsworth Riche (1994-1998)

Kenneth Prewitt (1998–2001)

Charles Louis Kincannon (2002-2008)

Steven H. Murdock (2008-2009)



October 27, 2011

The Honorable Chaka Fattah  
Ranking Member  
Appropriations Subcommittee on  
Commerce, Justice, and Science  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Fattah:

Collectively we have led the Census Bureau across more than four decades, serving six Presidents from both political parties.

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