



Jewish Federation
OF GREATER NEW ORLEANS

April 16, 2018
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

JEWISH FEDERATION OF GREATER NEW ORLEANS STATEMENT ON CITIZENSHIP QUESTION IN 2020 CENSUS

The Jewish Community Relations Council of the Jewish Federation of Greater New Orleans strongly disagrees with the United States Department of Commerce's decision to add a citizenship status question to the 2020 Census survey. We believe that this question undermines the integrity, accuracy, and fairness of the Census, with wide-ranging implications for our country.

Immigrant and other minority communities are already historically undercounted in the Census, and the Commerce Department's inclusion of a citizenship question greatly increases the likelihood that the response rate from these groups will be further depressed. Particularly at a time when immigrant communities are feeling increasingly vulnerable – due to the termination of DACA and the ban on entry of immigrants from Muslim-majority countries, among other actions – the new question will raise fears about the federal government now or in the future using citizenship information against them or their loved ones.

Depressed Census participation, in turn, will have far-reaching consequences, as the data gathered by the Census is utilized to both (1) allocate federal funding and (2) determine congressional representation. First, if communities with large immigrant populations are undercounted by the Census, the government's ability to meet the needs of the American people through the provision of essential services and aid dollars will be thwarted. Second, the interests of immigrant communities would not be accurately represented in Congress if the congressional apportionment process, a foundational aspect of our representative democracy, is based upon flawed data.

The citizenship question is costly and unnecessary, and adding it to the 2020 Census cannot be abided. We call on Congress and the courts to reject this question and enable the Census Bureau to obtain the most precise and full count possible.

Henry Miller | Chair, Board of Trustees
Arnie D. Fielkow | Chief Executive Officer
Bradley Bain | Chair, Jewish Community Relations Council