

115TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 5292

To establish a task force to review new decennial census questions and their impact on response rates for minorities, the accuracy of the census, redistricting, costs and funding distribution, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MARCH 15, 2018

Mr. SOTO (for himself, Mr. VELA, Mrs. TORRES, Mr. PAYNE, Ms. ROSEN, Ms. SÁNCHEZ, Ms. BARRAGÁN, Mr. AGUILAR, Mr. VARGAS, Mr. CORREA, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. SABLAN, Mr. LAWSON of Florida, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Mr. CÁRDENAS, Mr. CARBAJAL, Ms. JUDY CHU of California, Mr. COSTA, Ms. NORTON, and Ms. CLARKE of New York) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform

A BILL

To establish a task force to review new decennial census questions and their impact on response rates for minorities, the accuracy of the census, redistricting, costs and funding distribution, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “2020 Census Account-
5 ability Act”.

1 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

2 Congress finds the following:

3 (1) Since the adoption of the 14th Amendment,
4 the Constitution has mandated that all persons—re-
5 gardless of race, citizenship, or legal status—be in-
6 cluded in a count of the United States that is con-
7 ducted every 10 years.

8 (2) The addition of questions to the 2020 de-
9 cennial census questionnaire, less than three months
10 before the Bureau of the Census must submit final
11 questionnaire wording to Congress, is ill-timed and
12 divides resources without fair consideration.

13 (3) Lack of sufficient funding and resources for
14 the 2020 decennial census further hinders the high-
15 tech enumeration strategy preparations.

16 (4) Untested questions, whether related to citi-
17 zenship or any other topics, would result in millions
18 of wasted taxpayer funds and depressed response
19 rates thereby discrediting the accuracy of the decen-
20 nial census.

21 **SEC. 3. PURPOSE.**

22 The purpose of this Act is to create a task force of
23 census experts to—

24 (1) ensure that questions added to the 2020 de-
25 cennial census do not negatively impact the accuracy
26 or integrity of the decennial census; and

1 (2) to assess how changes to questions on the
2 decennial census proposed by Federal operations,
3 programs, policies, and initiatives affect participa-
4 tion in and the integrity of the decennial census be-
5 fore submitting such changes to Congress on March
6 31, 2018.

7 **SEC. 4. TASK FORCE ON THE 2020 DECENNIAL CENSUS.**

8 (a) ESTABLISHMENT.—Not later than 90 days after
9 the date of enactment of this Act, the Director of the Bu-
10 reau of the Census shall establish the “Task Force on the
11 2020 Census” (referred to in this section as the “Task
12 Force”).

13 (b) DUTIES.—Not later than 90 days after the date
14 of establishment of the Task Force, the Task Force shall
15 report to Congress on—

16 (1) existing and potential policies and measures
17 that promote full participation in the decennial cen-
18 sus by all residents of the United States;

19 (2) potential negative impacts on minority pop-
20 ulations resulting from the addition of a citizenship
21 question to the decennial census, including potential
22 impacts on—

23 (A) congressional reapportionment;

24 (B) legislative redistricting; and

25 (C) distribution of Federal funds;

1 (3) civil rights issues that could be affected
2 with the addition of a citizenship question to the
3 2020 decennial census; and

4 (4) a potential decrease in participation related
5 to the addition of citizenship questions.

6 (c) MEMBERS.—The Task Force established under
7 subsection (a) shall include representatives of—

8 (1) State, local, and tribal governments or asso-
9 ciations;

10 (2) academic and nongovernmental organiza-
11 tions with expertise in the decennial census; and

12 (3) relevant organizations, including nonprofit
13 organizations, representing effective data and re-
14 search related to the decennial census, minority pop-
15 ulations, and civil or human rights advocacy.

16 **SEC. 5. SUNSET PROVISION.**

17 The Task Force shall terminate following the decen-
18 nial census.

19 **SEC. 6. DEFINITION.**

20 In this Act, the term “State” means each of the sev-
21 eral States, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth
22 of Puerto Rico, the United States Virgin Islands, Guam,
23 American Samoa, and the Commonwealth of the Northern
24 Mariana Islands.

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