



A NALEO CAMPAIGN

RHODE ISLANDERS RELY UPON ACCURATE CENSUS DATA

ACCURATE CENSUS DATA ARE KEY for federal funding allocations to state and localities. Federal resources are divided up between jurisdictions according to what Census data tell us about various communities' demographic characteristics, needs, and assets. In order for Rhode Island to receive its fair share, the Census Bureau must master the difficult task of accurately counting the state's population.

Historically, certain hard-to-reach populations are more difficult to count than others. Rhode Island is home to disproportionate shares of populations that are most frequently undercounted, such as foreign-born residents and people who rent, rather than own, the home they live in. More than one in eight Rhode Islanders was born in another country, while over 15 percent of residents are native-born Americans who have at least one immigrant parent. The linguistic and cultural diversity these Rhode Islanders bring to the state make it economically and socially dynamic, but also complicate the process of counting the state's inhabitants.



Federal Census-directed programs that are particularly important to Rhode Islanders include:

Early Childhood Education

Rhode Island is home to many children who face educational challenges related to their parents' lack of English fluency and lower incomes. These young people benefit from access to Head Start classes, which supplement their early and consistent instruction in social and linguistic skills that will enable them to thrive as adults. Because of Census data, the state received more than \$28 million from the federal government to support this effort in FY15.

Low Income Home Energy Assistance

The Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program provides vital support to families struggling to pay for heating and cooling throughout the year. Thanks to Census data, in FY15 Rhode Island received more than \$27 million in funding for this program; in FY14, the state was able to serve more than 31,000 households.

Medicare Part B

Rhode Island has a significant elderly population that depends on Medicare, a program into which seniors have paid throughout their lives. Census data ensure that elderly residents receive the support they have earned through their hard work by allocating federal funding for senior health services to states in accordance with the size and needs of their populations. As a result of Census data, Rhode Island received nearly \$214 million in FY15 to distribute to medical providers to ensure seniors' continued access to healthcare and other vital services.

When it is adequately funded, the Census Bureau produces highly accurate, detailed data that enable us to direct a total of over \$3.1 billion to the Rhode Island communities where those resources are most needed.

But if the Census Bureau's hands are tied by declining appropriations or limitations that prevent it from conducting a sound decennial enumeration and accurate surveys, the quality of Census data similarly will decline, and many fewer Rhode Islanders will benefit from these and many other Census-directed federal programs.

Congress must adequately fund the Census Bureau by providing at least \$4.7 billion total for FY19. To control costs of the enumeration and safeguard the accuracy of data, Congress must also reject measures that would make last-minute changes to Census questionnaires and methodologies.