

Treating incarcerated people as regular constituents of the districts in which they are incarcerated, instead of in their actual home districts, is harmful in many ways. It distorts my vote as a citizen of the United States. It restricts the rights of incarcerated people. And it means that the Census represents inaccurate information about the people of the United States.

I am concerned about the harm that this practice poses to democracy:

"Because prisons are disproportionately built in rural areas but most incarcerated people call urban areas home, counting prisoners in the wrong place results in a systematic transfer of population and political clout from urban to rural areas." (prisonersofthecensus.org).

The Census Bureau is wrong to consider incarcerated people as residents of the correctional facility because the town where a prison is located is not the same as the home town of a prisoner.

The Bureau has chosen to continue counting people in the wrong place, ensuring an inaccurate 2020 Census. Counting incarcerated people as if they were "residents" of the correctional facility makes the Census less accurate for everyone: rural and urban communities; incarcerated persons and their families; governmental authorities trying to draw accurate redistricting plans; researchers trying to understand the demographics of local communities.

According to research collected by the Prison Policy Initiative, "When the Bureau asked for public comment on its residence rules last year, 96% of the comments regarding residence rules for incarcerated persons urged the Bureau to count incarcerated persons at their home address, which is almost always their legal address."

As a citizen of the United States interested in equity and accuracy in the Census and in our democracy, I am concerned by this disregard for public opinion. I urge the Census Bureau to reconsider the practice of counting prisoners as residents of the prison instead of the residents of their actual home town.

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