

Dear Ms. Humes,

I am writing to urge the Census Bureau to revise its residence rules in order to count incarcerated individuals as residents of their home communities, not of the communities where prisons are located. I have worked in criminal justice for 10 years and have been an advocate for policies that reduce over-incarceration while supporting public safety, and resolutely believe that accurately counting incarcerated individuals is good public and social policy.

The Census Bureau is wrong to consider incarcerated people as residents of the correctional facility because it results in extra representation to the communities that host the prisons. It is extremely harmful to urban communities by not crediting them with the incarcerated population whose legal residence never changed. It particularly reduces the accuracy of Census data about communities of color, whose members are disproportionately incarcerated. This is harmful to the schools, social services, and other resources in urban communities - particularly like the neighborhoods of Oakland, CA, where I live. Additionally, since 95% of incarcerated people will return to the communities they came from, it contributes to leaving these communities under-resourced to assist returning citizens in their reentry to society. This is bad for public safety and promotes the intergenerational cycle of incarceration.

Thank you for your time.

Best,  
Becky LoDolce  
Oakland, CA