

IL Count Me In 2020 SCOTUS Response Toolkit

Sample press release if Court rules for citizenship question:

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

CONTACT: INFO

{YOUR ORG LOGO}

Supreme Court dangerously OKs untested citizenship question

Even 1% undercount in IL would cost the state +\$120 million

WASHINGTON (June XX, 2019) – Today, in a X-X decision, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that the untested citizenship question would be allowed to go onto the 2020 Census.

The addition of the citizenship question will disproportionately discourage census participation from immigrant communities and communities of color out of fear that the data collected could be used to target and deport family members. Lower response rates from these communities will almost certainly cause an undercount in Illinois, costing the state millions of dollars and causing communities of color to lose electoral power and representation in state and congressional office.

“{YOUR ORG QUOTE} We all lose as a state if we don't get everyone counted in 2020,” said Jeff Raines, Communications Director at CHANGE Illinois. “The Supreme Court’s decision to allow the citizenship question onto the census is shortsighted and will penalize Illinois, financially and politically, for its demographic diversity.”

How an undercount would impact for Illinois:

Without a full and accurate Census count, hundreds of millions of dollars in federal funding is in jeopardy – funding that supports for key state programs such as Medicaid, Head Start, and infrastructure funds to fix Illinois' highways and bridges.

- A [George Washington University study](#) found that if Illinois misses even one percent of its residents in the 2020 Census count, the state will lose at least \$120 million annually in federal grants.
- The Chicago Urban League [estimates](#) even higher financial losses for Illinois, stating in their report that a one percent undercount would amount to a \$1.2 billion cut (over the next decade) for Medicaid funding alone.
- Any significant loss in funding from the federal government would make Illinois' financial status even more fragile than it currently is and would likely cause additional

budget and pension crises in Springfield as state lawmakers would be forced to try and make up for the lost federal dollars.

Exacerbation of gerrymandering and unrepresentative government

- The citizenship question will negatively impact immigrant communities and other communities of color throughout the state. Because legislative and congressional districts require equal population across each district, communities that are undercounted on paper inevitably will be packed into a fewer number of districts than they should be in reality.
- Illinois has lost one congressional seat after every census since 1950. This trend is almost certain to continue after the 2020 Census because of considerable population loss over the course of the last nine years. An undercount would cost our state a second congressional seat, shrinking Illinois' congressional delegation from its current 18 seats to 16 in 2021.

What the state is doing to prepare for the 2020 Census:

The state budget recently signed by Gov. J.B. Pritzker contains a \$29 million appropriation for census outreach. The appropriation, housed in the Illinois Department of Human Services, would establish a grant-making process for community organizations and local units of government to apply to engage Illinois' hard-to-count communities and educate them about the importance of the census.

The addition of the citizenship question makes the efficient and equitable distribution of these state funds even more important so that community groups, schools and universities, and local government can coordinate "get out the count" efforts before Census Day (next April 1, 2020).

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Sample press release if Court rules against citizenship question:

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Supreme Court rejects citizenship question, keeps partisanship away from the 2020 Census

WASHINGTON (June XX, 2019) – Today, in a X-X decision, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that the untested citizenship question would not be allowed onto the 2020 Census.

The addition of the citizenship question would have disproportionately discouraged census participation from immigrant communities and communities of color out of fear that the data collected could be used to target and deport family members. Lower response rates from these communities, because of a citizenship question, would have increased the likelihood of a severe undercount in Illinois, costing the state millions of dollars and causing communities of color to lose electoral power and representation in state and congressional office.

Despite the barring of the citizenship question from the census, Illinois is still at risk of an undercount in 2020.

“{ YOUR ORG QUOTE } We all lose as a state if we don't get everyone counted in 2020,” said Jeff Raines, Communications Director at CHANGE Illinois. “The Supreme Court’s decision to bar the citizenship question from the census is great news, but it’s far from the only issue our hard-to-count communities face ahead of the 2020 Census. Every level of government must actively encourage participation and educate their residents about the importance of the census.”

The 2020 Census marks the first census that will be primarily online, which will negatively impact the responses from communities in rural areas and poor, urban communities without access to broadband.

The Census Bureau has also been massively underfunded and under-capacity ahead of next year’s census count, which could also discourage census response rates.

How an undercount would impact for Illinois:

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- A [George Washington University study](#) found that if Illinois misses even one percent of its residents in the 2020 Census count, the state will lose at least \$120 million annually in federal grants.
- The Chicago Urban League [estimates](#) even higher financial losses for Illinois, stating in their report that a one percent undercount would amount to a \$1.2 billion cut (over the next decade) for Medicaid funding alone.
- Any significant loss in funding from the federal government would make Illinois' financial status even more fragile than it currently is and would likely cause additional budget and pension crises in Springfield as state lawmakers would be forced to try and make up for the lost federal dollars.

Exacerbation of gerrymandering and unrepresentative government

- Because legislative and congressional districts require equal population across each district, communities that are undercounted on paper inevitably will be packed into a fewer number of districts than they should be in reality.
- Illinois has lost one congressional seat after every census since 1950. This trend is almost certain to continue after the 2020 Census because of considerable population loss over the course of the last nine years. An undercount would cost our state a second congressional seat, shrinking Illinois' congressional delegation from its current 18 seats to 16 in 2021.

What the state is doing to prepare for the 2020 Census:

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Sample Social Media Posts

General:

- This is more than one person filling out a form and being counted in the Census, this is about entire communities declaring that #WeCount! Participating in the Census demonstrates our collective power! Sign the pledge that you'll fill out the 2020 Census: <http://ilcountmein2020.org/pledge/> #ILCountMeIn2020
- The 2020 Census will help the government allocate \$800 billion in federal resources like schools and hospitals. 💰 🏠 🏥 Our communities must participate to get our share! Sign the pledge that you'll fill out the 2020 Census: <http://ilcountmein2020.org/pledge/> #ILCountMeIn2020
- We will not allow our families, friends, and neighbors to be erased during the 2020 Census. Participating in the Census is a demonstration of our collective power! Sign the pledge that you'll fill out the 2020 Census 🤝 <http://ilcountmein2020.org/pledge/> #ILCountMeIn2020

Court rules against citizenship question:

- The Supreme Court just ruled against the citizenship question! This is a huge win to ensure every single resident of Illinois is counted in 2020. To prevent an undercount in Illinois, we will continue our work to "get out the count" to ensure that no one in our communities is left behind #ILCountMeIn2020
- Even without the citizenship question on the 2020 Census, we have a lot of work to get everyone counted next year. Will you sign our pledge to fill out the 2020 Census? <http://ilcountmein2020.org/pledge/> #ILCountMeIn2020
- The citizenship question was only one big concern with the 2020 Census. An undercount will cost Illinois +\$120M/annually and will hurt our representation in congress. Pledge to fill out the 2020 Census: <http://ilcountmein2020.org/pledge/> #ILCountMeIn2020

Court rules for citizenship question:

- SCOTUS allowing the citizenship question on the 2020 Census is shortsighted and will have a disproportionate effect on our hard-to-count communities. Our work to "get out the count" just got that much more important. #ILCountMeIn2020
- Too much is stake with the 2020, everyone must be counted! We will continue our work to "get out the count" to ensure that no one in our communities is intimidated or left behind #ILCountMeIn2020
- The Supreme Court has issued a ruling to add an untested citizenship question to the 2020 Census. While this was not the decision we hoped for, it only validates the need to reach every community across Illinois to get every person counted #ILCountMeIn2020

- SCOTUS' decision to OK the citizenship question makes it even more significant that Illinois budgeted \$29M for census outreach this year. We all must work together to everyone counted in 2020. #ILCountMeIn2020
- We all lose if everyone in Illinois isn't counted. The Court's misguided decision to OK the citizenship question reinforcing that we'll need your help to "get out the count" for the 2020 Census. Are you in? #ILCountMeIn2020

Graphics



EVERY PERSON COUNTS

Support a full 2020 Census count



EVERY PERSON COUNTS

Fill out the 2020 Census today

