

**Testimony on behalf of the
Population Association of America/ Association of Population Centers
Regarding the Fiscal Year 2015 Appropriations for the Census Bureau, National
Science Foundation and Bureau of Economic Analysis**

Submitted to the
House Committee on Appropriations
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies
The Honorable Frank Wolf, Chair and
The Honorable Chaka Fattah, Ranking Member
Submitted By: Mary Jo Hoeksema, Director, Government Affairs
Population Association of America/Association of Population Centers
202-341-7283, paaapc@crosslink.net

Thank you, Chairman Wolf, Ranking Member Fattah, and other distinguished members of the Subcommittee, for this opportunity to express support for the Census Bureau, the National Science Foundation (NSF), and the Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA). These agencies, which are under your Subcommittee's jurisdiction, are important to the Population Association of America (PAA) and Association of Population Centers (APC), because they provide direct and indirect support to population scientists and the field of population, or demographic, research overall. In FY 2015, we urge the Subcommittee to adopt the following funding recommendations: Census Bureau, \$1.2 billion, consistent with the Administration's request; National Science Foundation (NSF), \$7.5 billion, consistent with the Coalition for National Science Funding request; and, Bureau of Economic Analysis, \$107 million, consistent with the Administration's request.

The PAA and APC are two affiliated organizations that together represent almost 4,000 social and behavioral scientists and almost 40 population research centers nationwide that conduct research on the implications of population change. Our members, which include demographers, economists, sociologists, and statisticians, conduct scientific research, analyze changing demographic and socio-economic trends, develop policy

recommendations, and train undergraduate and graduate students. Their research expertise covers a wide range of issues, including adolescent health and development, aging, health disparities, immigration and migration, marriage and divorce, education, social networks, housing, retirement, and labor. Population scientists compete for funding from the NSF and rely on data produced by the nation's statistical agencies, including the Census Bureau and BEA, to support their research activities.

The Census Bureau

The Census Bureau is the premier source of demographic, socio-economic, and housing data about our nation. While PAA/APC members have diverse research expertise, they share a common need for access to accurate, timely data about the nation's changing socio-economic and demographic characteristics that only the U.S. Census Bureau can provide through its conduct of the decennial census, American Community Survey (ACS), and a variety of other surveys and programs.

We recognize that the FY 2015 request is \$270 million more than the agency's FY 2014 funding level. However, as you know, the Census Bureau's budget is cyclical, and FY2015 is a pivotal year in the 2020 Census planning cycle. The Census Bureau must complete primary research and select a design framework in order to develop and integrate new, cost-saving initiatives. The Administration's request is a wise investment in promising new enumeration methods that will save the taxpayer billions of dollars in overall census costs. Recent funding shortfalls and sequestration have caused delays, cutbacks, or elimination of numerous research projects and tests for the 2020 Census,

which heightens the risk of future methodological and operational failures, and cost overruns. The agency needs a funding “ramp up” next year to continue critical research and testing and to develop new technologies for a cost-efficient and accurate 2020 Census. In FY 2015, the agency will incorporate the results of its early research and development activities into major design decisions that will guide infrastructure and operational development in the next phase of the planning cycle.

The Administration’s request covers other statistical activities that are vital to the nation’s fiscal and social health and economic growth. For example, in FY 2015, the Census Bureau will tabulate and publish final data products from the 2012 Economic Census (completing the six-year cycle for this essential benchmark survey) and begin planning for the 2017 Economic Census; re-engineer and improve field operations for all household surveys; and complete a comprehensive review of ACS content and operations, in preparation for a national test in 2016.

National Science Foundation (NSF)

The mission of NSF is to promote the progress of science; to advance the national health, prosperity, and welfare; and to secure the national defense. Understanding the implications of population change is central to these tenants of the agency’s mission. The Directorate of Social, Behavioral and Economic (SBE) Sciences is the primary source of support for the population sciences within the NSF. The Directorate funds critical large-scale longitudinal surveys, such as the Panel Study of Income Dynamics, that inform pressing policy decisions and enable policy makers to make efficient

decisions. Other projects, such as the Social Observatory Coordinating Network, integrate social science and health research, linking community and national data to improve population health.

NSF is the funding source for over 20 percent of all federally supported basic research conducted by America's colleges and universities, including basic behavioral and social research. SBE funds more than half of the university-based social and behavioral sciences research in the nation.

PAA and APC, as members of the Coalition for National Science Funding, request that the committee provide the NSF with \$7.5 billion. This budget will enable the NSF SBE Directorate to continue its support of social science surveys and a rich portfolio of population research projects. Furthermore, this funding will enable NSF to continue funding the most promising grant applications that promote transformational and multidisciplinary research. Finally, steady and sustainable real growth will enhance the nation's capability to make new discoveries, leading to new innovations.

Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA)

While a relatively small agency, the BEA is enormously important to understanding our multitrillion dollar economy. BEA data are appreciated by a diverse range of data users: Federal, state and local government officials rely on BEA data to inform economic and fiscal policy; businesses use BEA data to guide investment decisions; and scientists use BEA data to understand and interpret trends in labor, employment, and national and

international economies. Despite its importance, since FY 2010, the BEA budget has not kept pace with inflation. The PAA and APC join other national organizations to urge the Subcommittee to provide BEA with \$107 million in FY 2015. This funding is necessary to both restore the agency's purchasing power and to launch new innovations, including "Big Data for Small Business," which would create a new Small Business GDP measure.

Thank you for considering our requests and for supporting federal programs that benefit the population sciences.