January 28, 2014

The Honorable Barbara Mikulski Chairwoman  
Senate Appropriations Committee Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Richard Shelby Vice Chairman  
Senate Appropriations Committee Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Hal Rogers Chairman  
House Appropriations Committee Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Nita Lowey  
Ranking Democratic Member House Appropriations Committee Washington, DC 20515

Dear Senators Mikulski and Shelby and Representatives Rogers and Lowey,

On behalf of the Population Association of America/Association of Population Centers (PAA/APC), which together represent over 4,000 behavioral and social scientists and almost 40 population research centers nationwide (including 3 in Maryland and 6 in New York), we are writing to thank you for your leadership on the recently enacted Fiscal Year 2014 omnibus appropriations bill, H.R. 3547.

Our members are population scientists, primarily demographers, economists, sociologists, and statisticians, in the public and private sectors who conduct research on the implications of population change and whose wide range of research interests includes adolescent health, immigration and migration, population aging, health disparities, marriage, divorce, and social networks. Our members rely on a diverse range of federal agencies to support their work directly and indirectly. In particular, PAA and APC members compete for funding from the National Institutes of Health (NIH), National Science Foundation (NSF), and the United States Agency for International Development to support grants, contracts, research centers, and research training activities. They also rely on indirect support from all of the federal statistical agencies, including the Census Bureau, Bureau of Labor Statistics, and National Center for Health Statistics, to conduct objective, timely, and accurate research.

We are grateful for the necessary, sufficient funding H.R. 3547 restored to our federal agencies of primary interest. We recognize that this bill was negotiated under challenging circumstances and adhered to strict overall funding totals. Given these circumstances, we are especially grateful that bill provided NIH with $29.9 billion, a $1 billion increase over the FY 2013; NSF with $7.2 billion, a $287 million increase over FY 2013; and the Census Bureau with $945 million, a $57.6 million increase above FY2013. We also pleased that the final agreement did not contain overly prescriptive policy riders, affecting the nation’s scientific peer review system or altering the nature of seminal federal surveys, such as the American Community Survey.
Your bipartisan leadership and willingness to cooperate and compromise has restored stability and faith in the appropriations process—a process that affects all facets of our members work: research, teaching, policy evaluation, and translation. We are pleased that federal agencies can operate in Fiscal Year 2014 without the threat of delays or shutdowns. We look forward to working with you as the Fiscal Year 2015 appropriations process proceeds. Please do not hesitate to contact us if we can ever be of assistance to you and your staffs.

Once again, thank you for your hard work and perseverance to deliver a FY 2014 omnibus appropriations bill.

Respectfully,

Pamela J. Smock, Ph.D.       Robert A. Moffitt, Ph.D.
APC President, 2013-2014       PAA President, 2014

cc:
The Honorable Tom Harkin
The Honorable Jerry Moran
The Honorable Jack Kingston
The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
The Honorable Frank Wolf
The Honorable Chaka Fattah