

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND GOVERNMENT REFORM

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May 15, 2018

The Honorable Trey Gowdy
Chairman
Committee on Oversight and Government Reform
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Mr. Chairman:

We are writing to respectfully request that you issue a subpoena to compel the Department of Justice to produce documents relating to its request for a citizenship question to be added to the 2020 Census and the process by which that request was made. We ask that you issue this subpoena immediately so Committee Members can have the benefit of reviewing these documents prior to a representative of the Department testifying before our Committee on May 18, 2018.

On May 1, 2018, all Democratic Members of the Oversight Committee sent a letter to the Department of Justice requesting documents relating to its sudden request to add a citizenship question to the decennial census. Members requested the following categories of documents:

1. all documents and communications relating or referring to the addition of a citizenship question to the census;
2. documents and communications sufficient to show who was involved in this request and the role of each individual who was involved;
3. all documents and communications within the Department of Justice and with outside entities regarding the request to add a citizenship question to the census, including but not limited to the White House, the Commerce Department, the Republican National Committee, the Trump Campaign, or Members of Congress;
4. all documents and communications relating or referring to the need to add a citizenship question to the census in order to enforce the Voting Rights Act;
5. a list of all instances in which the lack of a citizenship question on the decennial census negatively impacted the Department of Justice's Voting Rights Act enforcement efforts; and

6. a list of all voting rights enforcement actions taken by the Department of Justice since January 20, 2017.

Members requested these documents by May 7, 2018, in order to have the opportunity to review them before John Gore, Acting Assistant Attorney General for the Civil Rights Division at the Department, was scheduled to testify before the Committee. Mr. Gore chose not to appear before the Committee on that date, and the Department has not provided any of the documents Members requested.

We understand that you declined to join our request for documents on May 1, 2018, but these documents are critical to our Committee's understanding of why the Department of Justice wanted this information and who directed the Department's request.

For these reasons, and to adequately prepare for the upcoming continuation of the May 8 hearing on May 18, 2018, we request that you issue a subpoena to compel the Department of Justice to produce, by May 17, 2018, all of the documents requested in the letter on May 1, 2018. If you decide not to issue this subpoena, we ask that you bring this matter before the Committee at a business meeting so all Committee Members can have the opportunity to debate and vote on a motion to issue the subpoenas.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

Eliza E. Turing

Raja Krishnamoorthi

Stacey E. Plaskoff

Bonnie Watson Coleman

Jimmy Gomez

Cecilya B. Hylton
Jamie Raski

Blumen

Robert D. Kelly

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