

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND GOVERNMENT REFORM

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<http://oversight.house.gov>

August 24, 2015

The Honorable Gene L. Dodaro
Comptroller General
U.S. Government Accountability Office
441 G Street NW
Washington, DC 20548

Dear Mr. Dodaro:

The U.S. Census Bureau (the Bureau) has initiated a major enterprise-wide IT program, referred to as Census Enterprise Data Collection and Processing (CEDCAP), which is expected to be the backbone of the 2020 Census. The purpose of the program is to modernize, integrate, and consolidate data collection and processing systems into a consistent and reusable solution for the Bureau's surveys and censuses.

The Bureau also started an effort to fundamentally redesign the decennial census to achieve cost savings. The Bureau plans to utilize CEDCAP as a vital part of its cost-saving measures.

The Bureau does not have a reliable track record for acquiring and implementing major IT solutions. As such, the U.S. Government Accountability Office highlighted CEDCAP among a handful of major government-wide IT investments considered to be at high-risk in its 2015 update of the GAO High Risk List.¹ The justification for GAO's decision to include CEDCAP on the high-risk list is clear because, prior to the 2010 Census, the Bureau experienced significant challenges in managing its IT systems. These challenges led to cost overruns and performance shortfalls which increased the cost of the 2010 Census by almost \$3 billion over initial projections.

The Bureau publicly announced its goal to conduct the 2020 Census at the same cost as the 2010 Census, accounting for inflation. Achieving this goal depends in large part on the success of the CEDCAP program. To assist the Committee in evaluating the Bureau's implementation of the CEDCAP program, we request that GAO:

1. Determine the extent to which the Bureau is adequately managing the dependencies among the CEDCAP and 2020 Census programs;

¹ U.S. Gov't Accountability Office, *High Risk Series: An Update* (Feb. 2015) (GAO-15-290) at 41.

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2. Evaluate the extent to which the Bureau is implementing best practices in monitoring and controlling CEDCAP costs, schedule, scope, and risks; and
3. Determine the extent to which the Bureau has addressed information security weaknesses previously identified by GAO.

If you have any questions about this request, please contact Jeffrey Post of the Committee staff at (202) 225-5074. Thank you for your assistance with this request.

Sincerely,



Jason Chaffetz
Chairman



Mark Meadows
Chairman
Subcommittee on
Government Operations



Will Hurd
Chairman
Subcommittee on
Information Technology

cc: The Honorable Elijah E. Cummings, Ranking Member

The Honorable Gerald E. Connolly, Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Government Operations

The Honorable Robin Kelly, Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Information Technology