

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND GOVERNMENT REFORM

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November 6, 2015

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

Dear Comptroller General Dodaro:

The U.S. Census Bureau (Bureau) is now more than halfway through its decade-long preparation for the next decennial census. This month, the Bureau will release the preliminary design for the 2020 Census. The design will include the Bureau's plan to achieve cost savings as well as research and testing efforts. Effective management will be necessary to avoid schedule slippages and cost overruns that have hampered decennial efforts in prior decades, including the 2010 Census.

To help ensure preparations for the 2020 Census are focused and on track, we request the GAO regularly report the Bureau's progress to the Committee. Each report should include the status, fiscal management, and risks associated with the 2020 Census, and make recommendations as appropriate, with a focus on the following areas:

1. Efforts to reengineer field operations, including reliance on technology and workflow changes.
2. Efforts to limit in-field door-to-door address canvassing to only those areas determined to be most in need of updating.
3. Accuracy of the Bureau's lifecycle cost estimates and cost models.
4. Reliability of the Bureau's integrated master schedule.
5. Other aspects of the Bureau's management and planning that may require the Committee's attention.

We look forward to working with your staff and receiving regular updates on this work. Please contact Jeffrey Post or Olivia Lee of the Majority staff at (202) 225-5074 or Portia Bamiduro at (202) 226-1890 of the Minority staff if you have any questions.

Sincerely,



Jason Chaffetz
Chairman



Elijah E. Cummings
Ranking Member