

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HJM 4015

As Reported by House Committee On:
State Government, Elections & Information Technology

Brief Description: Concerning census funding.

Sponsors: Representatives Senn, McDonald, Hudgins, Eslick, Gregerson, Valdez, Kagi, Graves, Ormsby, Riccelli, Goodman, Frame, Stanford, Chapman, Stonier, Bergquist, Tarleton, Santos, Doglio, Macri and Slatter.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

State Government, Elections & Information Technology: 1/30/18, 1/31/18 [DP].

Brief Summary of Bill

- Requests Congress to provide adequate funding for the 2020 decennial census and that a new director of the federal Census Bureau is appointed.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON STATE GOVERNMENT, ELECTIONS & INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 8 members: Representatives Hudgins, Chair; Dolan, Vice Chair; McDonald, Ranking Minority Member; Appleton, Gregerson, Irwin, Johnson and Pellicciotti.

Minority Report: Do not pass. Signed by 1 member: Representative Kraft, Assistant Ranking Minority Member.

Staff: Sean Flynn (786-7124).

Background:

The United States Constitution, Article I, Section 2, mandates the government to conduct a national census every 10 years. The census data determines the proportional representation of each state in the House of Representatives. The census data is also provided to the states to redistrict congressional and legislative districts and is used to allocate federal funding,

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including grants and services provided to the states. In Washington the census data is submitted to the state Redistricting Commission to create the state's redistricting plan.

The federal Census Bureau administers the decennial census and conducts ongoing planning in preparation for each census. The Census Bureau is currently planning to conduct a comprehensive test run before the official census counting begins in April 2020. The Director of the Census Bureau resigned in June 2017.

The Census Bureau receives funding for the census from the United States Department of Commerce through congressional appropriation. In October 2017 the Secretary of the Department of Commerce testified before Congress to request additional funding for the 2020 census.

Summary of Bill:

The Legislature urges Congress to immediately provide adequate funding for the 2020 census and appoint a new Director of the Census Bureau.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) This joint memorial would send a strong message to the federal government to administer a fair and accurate complete census. The federal census is essential for our state because it provides the necessary data for the state redistricting process. The data must be accurate in order to ensure fair representation in government. Incomplete or inaccurate data is critical and crippling to state government function.

Our state is one of fastest growing states in the country, which needs to be reflected in the 2020 census in order to ensure the state's fair proportion and representation in the federal government. Washington added a congressional member to its representation in Congress due to the results of the last census, and by 2020 our state will have grown by almost 1 million more people. The state could lose about \$4,800 in federal funds for each household missed in the census count.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Representative Senn, prime sponsor; Kim Wyman, Office of the Secretary of State; and Melissa Taylor, League of Women Voters of Washington.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.