

**Census Residence Rule Public Comments
Template Letter for Leagues (State and Local)**

Instructions: *This template is designed for state and local Leagues who are submitting comments on behalf of their organization. Be sure to fill in the customization fields and to check partner resources linked below for helpful guides to census data related topics, including, but not limited to, race and ethnicity data, SOGI (sexual orientation and gender identity) data collection, and census informed federal funding data.*

For submitting directly to the Federal Register website:

1. Proceed to the Federal Register website using [this link](#).
2. Click the green button at the top of the notice page: “SUBMIT A PUBLIC COMMENT”
3. In the “comments” field, type “Please find attached comments submitted on behalf of the League of Women Voters [STATE/LOCAL]”
4. Attach your letter in PDF format. **Make sure that the Docket No. is listed at the top of the letter, and that it is mentioned in your letter. This is required.**
5. Complete remaining fields and submit your comments.
6. Kindly send a copy of your comments in PDF format to advocacy@lww.org with “League Census Comments 2026” in the subject line so we can keep track of which Leagues have submitted comments.

Re: Decennial Census of the Population of Americans; Proposed Residence Criteria and Proposed Regulations for Demographic Questions (Docket No. 260903-0005; RIN 0607-AA75)

Dear Secretary Lutnick—

The League of Women Voters of [STATE/LOCAL LEAGUE] strongly opposes the proposed rules to the census and changes to its residence rule as outlined in Docket No. 260903-0005; RIN 0607-AA74, entitled “Decennial Census of the Population of Americans; Proposed Residence Criteria and Proposed Regulations for Demographic Questions.”

All persons in the United States have a right to be counted, as the 14th Amendment of the Constitution plainly tells us. This proposed rule will weaken our democracy, our systems of representation, and the doctrine of “one person, one vote.” Without an accurate count of who lives in my state, people will not be fairly represented in Congress or in our state legislatures. Simply put, this will be incredibly harmful to our democracy, and it flies in the face of representative government.

By generating inaccurate and unreliable data, this rule change would also make it harder for my state and local public officials to properly plan for the services we need and the emergencies we may face. [OPTION TO INCLUDE DESCRIPTION OF IMPACTS TO YOUR COMMUNITY'S REPRESENTATION THAT UNRELIABLE DATA WOULD HAVE]

Furthermore, the exclusion of questions about race and ethnicity will exacerbate this degradation of data quality, and it will lead to undercounts of Black and brown communities that are already undercounted in past censuses. If we don't know who is actually living in our community, we cannot prepare for the challenges we may face, and we will not receive adequate funds from federal programs.

[OPPORTUNITY TO TALK ABOUT RELIANCE ON DATA FOR FEDERAL FUNDING, STATE/LOCAL FUNDING HERE]

The League of Women Voters of [STATE/LOCAL LEAGUE] is also deeply concerned about the lack of transparency and sufficient time for the public to comment on this incredibly consequential rule. Fair and adequate access for offering public comment to our democratic institutions is critical to ensuring that people are informed of major rule changes which affect their lives and that their input is heard. While we welcome the recently provided extension until November 2nd, we respectfully urge the Department of Commerce and the US Census Bureau to extend the public comment period for Docket No. 260903-0005 to December 10th, **90 days** from the date of publication.

Our democracy, systems of representative government, and daily lives rely on the reliable and accurate data that the decennial census has long provided. The proposed changes to the residence rule, race and ethnicity, and SOGI data collection will undermine the reliability of our data. We therefore urge the Department of Commerce and Census Bureau to roll back this proposed rule.

Sincerely,

[NAME]

League of Women Voters of [STATE/LOCAL]