

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

February 4, 2016

The Honorable John Thompson
Director
U.S. Census Bureau
4600 Silver Hill Road
Washington, DC 20233

Dear Director Thompson,

I am writing to ask you to consider whether the Census Bureau may have overestimated the number of public high school students residing within the attendance area of the Grossmont Union High School District (GUHSD) for the 2014-15 school year. This significantly affects the district's Title I allocation from the Department of Education.

The district indicates that it has gone through the appropriate steps of requesting an official challenge, yet the routine review conducted by the Census Bureau has been insufficient in its scope. I respectfully ask the Census Bureau to further examine the demographics of the area to resolve this issue. The low-income students of San Diego County deserve their fair share of educational resources. Any cooperation from the Census Bureau toward finding a solution on this matter would be incredibly appreciated.

For 2014 the Department of Education has determined that a poverty percentage of 16.8 percent applies to the GUHSD based upon its estimation of 4,454 poverty students divided by the Census Bureau estimation of 26,511 public high school students residing in the GUHSD's attendance area.

The GUHSD has conducted a thorough and comprehensive count of high school students attending public and public charter schools residing in its attendance area based on student address information and very limited estimations, and has counted 23,272 students for the 2014/15 school year. This is 12.2 percent less than the Census Bureau estimation. If this count were applied to the Title I formula, the District's poverty percentage should be 19.1 percent and the allocation of Title I funds would increase correspondingly.

The current formula for Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates (SAIPE) puts school districts such as GUHSD at a disadvantage. The Census Bureau currently utilizes data from the postcensal population estimates, the American Community Survey, and administrative records to determine their estimates. These data entry points are not capturing an accurate picture of GUHSD.

I acknowledge that the Census Bureau has limited capacity to audit the personalized data provided by each specific school district that requests a challenge. Yet, when such a large discrepancy involving thousands of students exists between what is reported and what the

district discovers, it is incumbent to explore the discrepancies further and discuss ways to improve the overall process. I also recommend that the Census Bureau explore how GUHSD unique demographics may be contributing to an inaccurate count.

GUHSD needs this funding for academic interventions, tutorial supports, classroom aides for second language learners, class size reductions, and more. The administrators, faculty, parents, and students of GUHSD would greatly benefit from a comprehensive response to their Title I funding challenge.

Thank you for your time in addressing this important issue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Susan A. Davis". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent initial "S".

Susan A. Davis
Member of Congress