

Inspiring Personal Independence

SOUTHEAST ALASKA INDEPENDENT LIVING



3225 Hospital Dr, Suite 300, Juneau, Alaska 99801, 1-800-478-SAIL, ph/tty: 907-586-4920, fx: 907-586-4980

RESOLUTION OF SOUTHEAST ALASKA INDEPENDENT LIVING, INC.

January 9, 2018

A resolution recognizing the importance of U.S Census Bureau data collections and the unique challenges of Census data collection in Alaska, urging the United States Congress to appropriate sufficient federal resources to maintain or improve the accuracy of Census Bureau data collections in Alaska, and urging Governor Walker and the Alaska Legislature to prioritize the allocation of state resources to departments and agencies responsible for coordinating with the U.S. Census Bureau to ensure the accuracy of Census data for Alaska.

WHEREAS, **SOUTHEAST ALASKA INDEPENDENT LIVING, INC.**, a Center for Independent Living and Aging and Disability Resource Center and

WHEREAS, the mission of **SOUTHEAST ALASKA INDEPENDENT LIVING, INC.** is to Inspire Personal Independence; and

WHEREAS, United States Census Bureau data collections are fundamental to our country's democratic process, as they are used to determine apportionment in the U.S. House of Representatives, redraw state legislative boundaries, and redraw the political subdivisions of local governments; and

WHEREAS, The federal government allocates nearly \$600 billion annually based upon Census Bureau data, including more than \$2.8 billion within Alaska each year, providing critical funding to improve infrastructure, operate our health and education systems, develop and operate affordable housing, and much more; and

WHEREAS, Census Bureau data is used to enforce state and federal laws, including civil rights laws, voting rights requirements, and the obligation of financial institutions to serve minority populations; and

WHEREAS, Tribes, governments, private businesses, nonprofit organizations, and universities use Census Bureau data in their planning efforts and to develop critical public policy recommendations; and

WHEREAS, Adequate federal funding is essential to ensuring accuracy of Census Bureau data collections, including the 2020 Census and the annual American Community Survey; and

WHEREAS, Extremely low federal funding levels proposed for the U.S. Census Bureau for FY 2018, *which fail to ramp up federal funding as in past censuses*, jeopardize the accuracy of essential Census Bureau data collections; and

WHEREAS, Underfunding Census Bureau data collections significantly increases the risk that Alaskans will go uncounted, particularly in hard-to-count communities, including those with a high proportion of Alaska Native persons; and

WHEREAS, The consequences of undercounting Alaska Native persons include: inequitable redistricting, decreased federal funding that exacerbates Alaska's fiscal situation, reductions in essential services such as infrastructure repairs, decreased funding for education and programs that make up Alaska's social safety net, improper enforcement of laws that protect vulnerable populations, and less accurate data available for tribes and tribal organizations to effectively plan for the future; and

WHEREAS, The U.S. Census Bureau requires an appropriation of no less than \$1.8 billion for FY 2018 in order to properly administer its various programs and to conduct the advance testing necessary to implement new, more efficient information technology systems and data collection methods that will reduce the risk of an undercount in Alaska communities; and

WHEREAS, The likelihood of insufficient federal appropriations for Census Bureau data collections will require personnel from multiple state agencies, particularly the Department of Labor and Workforce Development, to engage directly with the U.S. Census Bureau on a frequent and ongoing basis to evaluate and recommend strategies to enhance the accuracy of Census Bureau data collections in Alaska;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that **SOUTHEAST ALASKA INDEPENDENT LIVING, INC.:**

1. Recognizes the critical importance of U.S. Census Bureau data collections to all Alaskans, as well as the unique challenges of Census data collection in Alaska;
2. Urges the United States Congress to appropriate sufficient federal resources to maintain or improve the accuracy of Census Bureau data collections in Alaska, including an appropriation of at least \$1.8 billion for FY 2018; and
3. Urges Governor Walker and the Alaska Legislature to prioritize the allocation of state resources to the departments and agencies responsible for coordinating with the U.S. Census Bureau in order to enhance the accuracy of Census Bureau data for Alaska.

SUBMITTED BY: **SOUTHEAST ALASKA INDEPENDENT LIVING, INC.**