



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

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## **Maps built on an undercount won't serve Illinoisans**

CHICAGO--Good government groups and community advocates strongly reject the attempt by Illinois lawmakers to introduce and pass maps that are built on an undercount of Illinoisans across the state. The proposed maps use American Community Survey (ACS) 5-year sampling data as the foundation, **which undercounts Illinoisans by 41,877 people.**

To exclude those people would be equivalent to excluding cities the size of Oak Park, Buffalo Grove, Quincy, or Rock Island.

The undercount is likely to have a greater effect on people of color. Black communities have historically been underrepresented, under-resourced, and targeted by large-scale misinformation campaigns designed to further disenfranchise them. The ACS data collection did not have the benefit of the historic, people-powered effort and state funding that the census did to ensure communities were counted, particularly Black communities. The ACS sampling process lacks the trusted community partnerships that are needed for an accurate count in historically disenfranchised communities.

Our state's fastest growing populations, Asian American and Latinx communities, as well as the fastest growing counties of Kendall, Kane, Champaign, and Monroe, also are highly likely to be undercounted in the ACS sampling.

While the delay from the U.S. Census Bureau was unprecedented, the current predicament is manufactured by lawmakers for partisan advantage. **Using ACS data was not lawmakers' only option.** The U.S. Census Bureau made the delays known more than a year ago when operations were severely hampered due to pandemic lockdowns, civil unrest and natural disasters in the West. In response, California and Oregon sought and were granted relief from constitutional redistricting deadlines by their state supreme courts. In Illinois, despite being given advice and options to do the same by National Conference of State Legislatures' experts, lawmakers rejected the recommendation and even attempted to drum up fears of an undercount to discredit arguments to wait for census data.

Instead, due to the extraordinary investment by the state and efforts of hundreds of organizations, Illinois' 2020 census count -- and actual population -- was much higher than the projected population from the ACS. Illinois

was a leader in the nation, investing \$47.5 million dollars for an accurate count and engaged more than 400 organizations to ensure residents were counted and represented.

**The decisions by our current lawmakers will disenfranchise tens of thousands of voices for a decade by creating representative maps that do not include them. How is this equity for Illinois?** We owe it to the people of this state and the community organizations that overcame incredible challenges to ensure an accurate Census count to wait for the census results. We owe it to vulnerable people who were hesitant to fill out the census and did so, despite concerns for their personal safety, to make sure they are counted. We owe it to the taxpayers who made a \$47.5 million investment to secure an accurate count and accurate representation. Lawmakers should not settle for using the very undercount they railed against months earlier.

**Everyone should count. Everyone deserves representation. Illinois deserves equitable redistricting.**

We urge Illinois lawmakers to seek relief from the courts and halt current attempts to pass maps that erase thousands of Illinoisans. We urge Gov. J.B. Pritzker to fulfill his repeated pledges to veto any partisan map, but especially one built from an undercount of Illinoisans. It's time to live up to your pledge to veto a partisan map, Governor. As repeated scientific surveys have shown, Illinoisans want independent mapping and fair representation. Illinoisans deserve better than to be erased by politicians who refuse to keep their campaign promises.

AARP Illinois

Asian Americans Advancing Justice | Chicago

Better Government Association

Blackroots Alliance

CHANGE Illinois

Coalition for a Better Chinese American Community

Common Cause Illinois

Cook County Black Chamber of Commerce

Garfield Park Chamber of Commerce

Illinois Black Chamber of Commerce

Illinois Chamber of Commerce

Illinois Muslim Civic Coalition

IVI-IPO

Latino Policy Forum

League of Women Voters Illinois

League of Women Voters Chicago

NAACP South Side Branch

NWSOFA-Indivisible

One Health Englewood

Reform for Illinois

RepresentUs - Illinois

SAAPRI

The Decalogue Society of Lawyers

The National Council of Jewish Women (NCJW) North Shore

United Nations Association of Greater Chicago

Workers Center for Racial Justice

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