THE GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

WASHINGTON, DC

Counting for Dollars

16 Largest Federal Assistance Programs that Distribute Funds on Basis of Decennial Census-derived Statistics (Fiscal Year 2015)

New York

Total Program Obligations: $53,194,672,345
Per Capita: $2,687

CFDA #	Program Name	Dept.	Type	Recipients	Obligations
93.778	Medical Assistance Program (Medicaid)	HHS	Grants	States	$32,147,147,368
10.551	Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)	USDA	Direct Pay	House-holds	$5,046,486,639
93.774	Medicare Part B (Supplemental Medical Insurance) – Physicians Fee Schedule Services	HHS	Direct Pay	Providers	$4,840,634,947
14.871	Section 8 Housing Choice Vouchers	HUD	Direct Pay	Owners	$2,444,859,000
20.205	Highway Planning and Construction	DOT	Grants	States	$1,668,466,958
14.195	Section 8 Housing Assistance Payments Program (Project-based)	HUD	Direct Pay	Owners	$1,265,756,712
84.010	Title I Grants to Local Education Agencies	ED	Grants	LEAs	$1,093,856,656
93.767	State Children's Health Insurance Program (S-CHIP)	HHS	Grants	States	$972,787,000
84.027	Special Education Grants (IDEA)	ED	Grants	States	$750,705,898
10.555	National School Lunch Program	USDA	Grants	States	$674,380,535
93.600	Head Start/Early Head Start	HHS	Grants	Providers	$591,919,016
10.557	Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC)	USDA	Grants	States	$476,760,910
93.658	Foster Care (Title IV-E)	HHS	Grants	States	$404,848,000
93.568	Low Income Home Energy Assistance (LIHEAP)	HHS	Grants	States	$381,987,692
93.527/ 93.224	Health Center Programs (Community, Migrant, Homeless, Public Housing)	HHS	Grants	Providers	$235,772,014
93.596	Child Care and Development Fund-Entitlement	HHS	Grants	States	$198,303,000

Notes and Findings:

- The Counting for Dollars Project is identifying all federal financial assistance programs that rely on Decennial Census-derived data to guide the geographic distribution of funds.
- As an initial product, the project is publishing tables on the distribution, by state, of FY2015 funds from the 16 largest Census-guided programs.
- For every program except the National School Lunch Program, the fair and equitable distribution of funds to a state depends on the accurate measurement of its population count and characteristics.
- There is not a simple linear relationship between state population count and federal funds flow. The per capita figure allows cross-state comparisons of fiscal reliance on census-guided programs. *It does not indicate the amount by which federal funding increases for each additional person counted.*

Definitions:

- Census-derived statistics – federal datasets that are extensions of or otherwise rely on the Decennial Census (list available on project website)
- Census-guided financial assistance programs – programs that rely on Census-derived statistics to determine program eligibility and/or allocate funds to states and localities
- Per capita – total FY2015 obligations for the 16 programs divided by population as of July 1, 2015 (per the Census Bureau)

Abbreviations:

- CFDA – Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance
- USDA – U.S. Department of Agriculture
- ED – U.S. Department of Education
- HHS – U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
- HUD – U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
- DOT – U.S. Department of Transportation

Sources:

- USAspending.gov (20.050, 84.010, 84.027, 93.224/93.527, 93.568, 93.600, 93.778)
- President's Budget Request for FY2017 or program agency (10.511, 10.555, 10.557, 14.871, 93.596, 93.658, 93.767)
- Center on Budget and Policy Priorities (14.195)
- Centers for Medicare & Medicaid, HHS (Physicians Fee Schedule Services of 93.774)

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The Leadership Conference Education Fund

Counting for Dollars: Why It Matters

A fair and accurate 2020 Census is important for many reasons. The census is the basis for equal political representation under the Constitution. Policymakers use census data to identify community needs and to distribute federal program dollars to states and localities based on population numbers or other community characteristics that the census and related American Community Survey measure. Business and industry decide where to locate new plants and services based on census data, creating new jobs and promoting economic growth.

Sometimes, federal dollars are allotted to the states based on the number of people counted in the census; Medicaid is an example. In other cases, census numbers determine if a community is eligible for critical federal program dollars. Examples include city and county population thresholds (50,000 or 200,000) for Community Development Block Grants, and rural area designations for Rural Electrification loans. Still other programs allocate funds based on certain household characteristics, such as average or median income levels. Therefore, each person counted may directly determine funding levels for a few programs, and will influence funding levels for many others.

Unfortunately, certain groups—referred to as "hard-to-count"—are at higher risk of not being fully counted in the decennial census. Some of these groups have been historically underrepresented in the decennial census for decades; some may experience new or increased vulnerability due to major changes in methodology, such as relying on the internet as the primary way for households to respond to the 2020 Census; and some may be reluctant to respond due to current concerns about how their data may be used. Being left out of the census can deprive these groups and their communities of vital public and private resources.

While ***we cannot say that each person counted in the census would increase federal program dollars to a state or locality by a certain amount***, census results are of utmost importance to distributing federal funding — and doing so equitably and prudently.

Counting for Dollars: The Role of the Decennial Census in the Geographic Distribution of Federal Funds is an analysis of the geographic distribution of funds from the 16 largest census-guided programs and is designed to help stakeholders and policymakers understand the extent to which federal financial assistance is distributed on the basis of census-derived data.

As this analysis makes clear, a more accurate census will: (1) ensure that every community, as well as people and households in need, receive the federal resources to which they are entitled under all census-guided programs; and (2) ensure that lawmakers can make more informed decisions about how to allocate federal dollars fairly, prudently, and effectively.

We hope this analysis is helpful in raising awareness of the value of a fair and accurate decennial census, and the dire consequences of failing to achieve that goal.

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