Brooke E. Lierman
Comptroller of Maryland

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News Release

Comptroller Lierman Warns Census Bureau Proposal Would Undercount Marylanders and Put Federal Funding at Risk

Proposed rule would reduce the accuracy of the decennial census, shift costs to state and local governments, and eliminate key demographic data

ANNAPOLIS, Md. (November 2, 2026) — Comptroller Brooke E. Lierman today submitted formal comments to the U.S. Census Bureau urging the agency to withdraw its proposed rulemaking on the decennial census, warning that the proposal would undermine the Fourteenth Amendment, jeopardize Maryland's share of federal funding, and weaken the data state and local governments rely on.

In her comments, Comptroller Lierman emphasized that every census since 1790 has counted noncitizens and that the Bureau has identified no historical practice of excluding lawfully present residents from the apportionment base. She noted that in fiscal year 2023, Maryland received $49.1 billion through federal programs that use census data, and that because Maryland operates under a constitutional balanced budget requirement, any lost federal dollars would have to be replaced with state revenue or cuts to essential services.

“The decennial census is the common denominator that federal, state, and local governments across the country use to make public and policy decisions,” said **Comptroller Brooke E. Lierman**. “This proposal would reduce accuracy, create confusion about what the count means, and shift costs to states, all without a real

analysis of the consequences. The Bureau should withdraw this rule, count every resident where they live, and maintain its key demographic questions."

The Comptroller also cautioned that using tax records to determine residency would introduce additional errors, since many residents, including low-income workers and older adults on fixed incomes, do not file returns. She warned that if residents fear their tax information will be used to determine legal status, filing could decline, reducing state and local revenue and increasing enforcement burdens on her office. She also noted that eliminating questions on race and ethnicity would end a longstanding census practice and remove data Maryland uses for redistricting, Voting Rights Act compliance, and civil-rights monitoring.

Read the Comptroller's full comment.

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