



MINNESOTA COUNCIL
ON FOUNDATIONS

a community of grantmakers

February 27th, 2023

ATTN: Minnesota House Elections Finance and Policy Committee

Dear Chair Freiberg and members of the committee,

My name is May Yang and I am the Interim Public Policy Director with the [Minnesota Council on Foundations](#) (MCF). At MCF, one of our key advocacy priorities is strengthening democratic systems and civic participation. As part of this, we support state decisions and investments that will prepare Minnesota for a full 2030 census count. During the 2020 census, we convened [the Minnesota Census Mobilization Partnership](#) to promote participation in the 2020 census. Our community-based strategies to engage historically undercounted communities reached over 1.3 million people and helped Minnesota retain our eighth congressional seat.

I am writing to express our support for the passage of HF811 which would provide census enumerators access to multiunit facilities. Permitting census workers access to multiunit facilities such as apartments allows enumerators to reach one of the most historically undercounted populations in the census: renters. Data from the 2020 census revealed that [renters were significantly undercounted at -1.48%](#) compared to an overcount of homeowners at 0.43%. Renters make up 28% of all households in Minnesota, thus it is critical to allow enumerator access to ensure we are reaching a significant portion of our population.

Not only are renters historically undercounted, but the [Black and Hispanic populations that make up the vast majority of those who rent are also historically undercounted populations](#). 2020 census data revealed that [populations of color are the fastest growing groups in Minnesota](#). Black, Indigenous, and People of Color populations currently [make up 23.7% of the state's population](#) and are expected to continue to grow. Extending multiunit access to census employees is an easy and impactful way that we can ensure a fuller and more inclusive count of Minnesotans into the future.

The census is the cornerstone of American democracy, as it provides the basis for representation and reapportionment. All Minnesotans must be thoroughly counted to ensure every community has access and representation in state and federal policy and decision-making. Allowing census workers access to multiunit buildings promotes a full census count and ensures our ability to reach all of our undercounted communities, including our state's renters. It is imperative that Minnesota passes legislation that would allow greater opportunities for a full and accurate count in our census.



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We are heartened to see efforts to promote a full, accurate, and inclusive census count in Minnesota and are eager to see HF811 signed into law this year. Thank you for your leadership and the opportunity to submit testimony. I am happy to answer any questions or provide further information.

Sincerely,

May Yang

Interim Public Policy Director, Minnesota Council on Foundations

myang@mcf.org