

APRIL 6, 2001

**SCHAKOWSKY CALLS ON BUSH ADMINISTRATION  
NOT TO SHORTCHANGE CHICAGOLAND OF MILLIONS IN FEDERAL DOLLARS**

**JOINS EFFORT TO FORCE COMMERCE DEPARTMENT TO RELEASE ADJUSTED  
CENSUS DATA**

WASHINGTON, D.C. - U.S. Representative Jan Schakowsky (D-IL) today called on the Bush Administration to release adjusted census data that would ensure that her district and Chicago are not shortchanged millions in federal dollars.□

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In a letter to Secretary of Commerce Donald Evans, Schakowsky joined her Democratic colleagues on the House Government Reform Committee in demanding that he release statistically adjusted census figures.□ This information is vital since Congress allocates \$185 billion in population-based federal grant funds each year. According to news reports, the unadjusted numbers released this year missed at least 6.4 million people and counted at least 3.1 million people twice.

Below is the letter to Secretary of Commerce Evans.□

*April 6, 2001*

*By Hand Delivery*

*The Honorable Donald L. Evans  
Secretary of Commerce  
Fourteenth Street and Constitution Ave., NW  
Washington, DC 20230*

*Dear Secretary Evans:*

*Pursuant to the "Seven Member Rule" (5 U.S.C. § 2954), we write to request that the Commerce Department provide us the adjusted census data produced as part of the 2000 Decennial Census.□*

*As part of its work on the 2000 Decennial Census, the Census Bureau compiled two sets of data.□ One is a population count determined through the use of census forms returned by mail and interviews conducted at addresses for which no census form was returned.□ Recognizing that the raw population count is not entirely accurate, the Bureau prepares a second set of data.□ The population count enhanced using statistical techniques designed to correct for errors in the census count.□ The Commerce Department has released the first set of data.□ On March 6, 2001, however, you announced your decision not to use or publicly release the second set of data.*

***There are substantial questions about the accuracy of the 2000 census data that you have chosen to release. According to news reports, the unadjusted numbers you released missed at least 6.4 million people and counted at least 3.1 million people twice.***

***On March 1, 2001, the Census Bureau's Executive Steering Committee for Accuracy and Coverage Evaluation Policy made a recommendation as to which set of data should be released by April 1, 2001, to the public and to the states for purposes of redistricting. Although the steering committee concluded that the adjusted numbers should not be released at that time for redistricting purposes, it reached this decision only because the impending April 1, 2001, statutory deadline prevented a full analysis of the accuracy of the adjusted data. In fact, the steering committee expressly found that "the majority of the evidence indicates . . . the superior accuracy of the adjusted numbers." The committee also found that "[q]uality measures indicate the adjusted data are more accurate overall."***

***We are requesting the adjusted data that the Census Bureau has already compiled but that you decided not to release. Specifically, we request that you provide to us the 2000 census data required under 13 U.S.C. § 141(c), adjusted using the Accuracy and Coverage Evaluation.***

***We are making this request under the Seven Member Rule, which expressly provides that "[a]n Executive agency, on request of the Committee on Government Operations of the House of Representatives, or of any seven members thereof . . . shall submit any information requested of it relating to any matter within the jurisdiction of the committee." Under the rules of the House of Representatives, our Committee has both legislative and oversight jurisdiction over matters relating to population and demography, including the census.***

***We are seeking this information for several reasons. First, our Committee has legislative jurisdiction over the census. We are actively considering whether to amend the law regarding the timing and release of adjusted and unadjusted census data. Concerns have been raised that the existing provisions of the Census Act effectively prevent the most accurate data from being used for redistricting and other purposes. Review of the adjusted data will enable us to evaluate the need for legislation in this area.***

***Second, this information could have an enormous impact on the allocation by Congress of more than \$185 billion in population-based federal grant funds. The General Accounting Office, using data from the 1990 census and a statistical method similar to the one used for the 2000 census, analyzed how the use of adjusted census data would have affected the distribution of federal resources. Examining a sample of 15 major programs that administer \$138 billion in federal funds, GAO concluded that the use of adjusted population counts would have reallocated nearly \$450 million among the 50 states and the District of Columbia. This study concluded that California alone would have received over \$200 million annually in additional funds if adjusted data had been***

*used.*

*Third, this information could have a significant bearing on the appropriateness of congressional redistricting efforts currently being undertaken by state governments. The reports that the Census Bureau missed 6.4 million people in its most recent count raise serious questions about whether all of our citizens will have an equal voice in government. As members of the Committee on Government Reform, which has oversight jurisdiction over redistricting, we need to investigate these important questions, and if need be, develop legislation that assures fairness in the redistricting process.*

*The budget and appropriations process for fiscal year 2002 is now underway, as is the redistricting process in states. Consequently, we need this information as expeditiously as possible to fulfill our legislative and oversight responsibilities. For this reason, we request that you provide the adjusted data on or before April 20, 2001.*