
**Testimony in Support of House Joint Resolution 6
Participation by Maryland Residents in the 2020 Census**

**House Rules and Executive Nominations Committee
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The Maryland State Education Association supports House Joint Resolution 6 that affirms that all practical efforts should be made to ensure that, for the 2020 census.

MSEA represents 75,000 educators and school employees who work in Maryland’s public schools, teaching and preparing our 896,837 students for careers and jobs of the future. MSEA also represents 39 local affiliates in every county across the state of Maryland, and our parent affiliate is the 3 million-member National Education Association (NEA).

The importance of the U.S. Census to the well-being of children and the strength of their public schools cannot be overstated. Using census data, the federal government allocates tens of billions of dollars in education funds to states and localities annually using formulas that factor in population and poverty levels.

An accurate census count is critical to helping educators address the needs of every child who walks through their doors. When children and their families go uncounted, it is unlikely that their schools and communities will receive the resources needed to help support their success and well-being.

Young children are at high risk of not being counted, research shows. The Annie E. Casey Foundation notes that the 2010 census “missed 10 percent of children under the age of five”—that’s more than 2 million kids. Why? Because, hard-to-count populations include some of our most vulnerable families: recent immigrants or English language learners; those without financial stability and stable housing; and children in shared custody arrangements, or those being raised by someone other than their parents. All of these Marylanders count and therefore, should be counted.

House Joint Resolution 6 shines an intentional light on counting these hard-to-count populations and that is why it earns our support. MSEA recommends a favorable report on HJ 6.