

September xx, 2026

The Honorable Howard Lutnick
Secretary
Department of Commerce
Washington, DC 20230

Dear Secretary Lutnick,

As members and affiliates of [The Census Project](#) coalition, we are writing to express our concerns about an [indefinite delay](#) in the release of data from the American Community Survey (ACS) that the Census Bureau announced on August 4, 2026.¹

The Census Project is a broad coalition comprised of over 800 national, state, and local organizations representing thousands of data users and census stakeholders in the public, private, non-profit, and research sectors. Our members depend on reliable, high-quality census data to analyze changing U.S. economic and demographic trends. ACS data are especially critical to their planning, investment decisions, market strategies, and public services, for example, on behalf of businesses, state and local governments, consumers, veterans, and children.

The release of the 2025 1-year ACS estimates is being delayed as a direct result of a new order that the Department of Commerce issued in June.² As you know, this order, [“Disclosure Avoidance for Statistical Products” \(DAO 216-26\)](#), limits the types of privacy protection methods that the Census Bureau and Bureau of Economic Analysis can use for their data products. By barring the use of “noise infusion” methods, the family of modern privacy protection techniques that federal statistical agencies have used for years, the Census Bureau is being forced to rework their approaches to safeguarding the confidentiality of the sensitive data they have on every person, household, and business in the United States.

We urge the Department of Commerce to work with the Census Bureau to resolve the issues affecting the scheduled release of the 1-year ACS estimates. Timely release of ACS data is imperative if communities, service providers, policymakers, businesses and others are expected to responsibly assess the public’s needs, allocate taxpayer dollars, and make informed decisions.

Thank you for considering our views.

¹ Census Bureau Releases Schedule for Income, Poverty and Health Insurance Statistics and Updates About the American Community Survey Estimates. August 4, 2026. <https://www.census.gov/newsroom/press-releases/2026/iphi-acs-media-advisory.html>

² Per the Aug. 4 press release, “The release date for the 2025 ACS 1-year estimates is being determined. The Census Bureau is assessing the impact of the new departmental administrative order (DAO), Department of Commerce Disclosure Avoidance for Statistical Products, and seeking DAO-compliant solutions to allow the release of the ACS 1-year tables later this year.”