

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

May 31, 2019

The Honorable Peggy E. Gustafson
Inspector General
U.S. Department of Commerce
1401 Constitution Ave., NW
Washington, DC 20230-0001

The Honorable Michael E. Horowitz
Inspector General
U.S. Department of Justice
950 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, DC 20530-0001

Dear Inspectors General Gustafson and Horowitz:

We write to urge you to review the actions taken by both the Departments of Justice and Commerce to hide the contribution of a deeply partisan political operative in the addition of a citizenship question to the 2020 Census, as reported in the press.ⁱ Specifically, we urge you to review the following:

- (a) In depositions and congressional interviews, Justice and Commerce Department officials failed to disclose the substantive public policy role of a political operative, Dr. Thomas Hofeller, in adding the citizenship question to the 2020 Census; andⁱⁱ
- (b) In concealing the contribution of Dr. Hofeller, Justice and Commerce Department officials purposely obscured the impermissible racial and partisan motivations for adding a citizenship question—to be “advantageous to Republicans and Non-Hispanic Whites” and to “clearly be a disadvantage to the Democrats”—in both the Justice Department’s December 2017 letter requesting the citizenship question and the Commerce Department’s March 2018 memorandum adding the question.ⁱⁱⁱ

Taken together this new evidence not only contradicts Secretary Ross’s assertion that the addition of the citizenship question would assist in *Voting Rights Act* enforcement, but also implicates officials in the Justice and Commerce Departments in an effort to hide from the Congress and the public the true rationale for this question. This reported misconduct warrants an immediate review by your offices.

We appreciate your attention to this matter, and we look forward to your response.

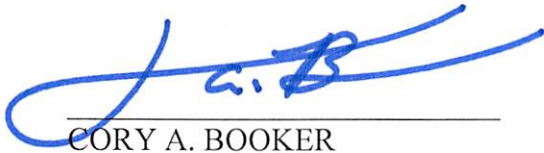
Sincerely,



BRIAN SCHATZ
United States Senator



CHARLES E. SCHUMER
United States Senator



CORY A. BOOKER
United States Senator



RICHARD BLUMENTHAL
United States Senator



PATTY MURRAY
United States Senator



ELIZABETH WARREN
United States Senator



MICHAEL F. BENNET
United States Senator



JACK REED
United States Senator



RON WYDEN
United States Senator



TAMMY DUCKWORTH
United States Senator



AMY KLOBUCHAR
United States Senator



KAMALA D. HARRIS
United States Senator



KIRSTEN GILLIBRAND
United States Senator

ⁱ Hansi Lo Wang, "GOP Redistricting Strategist Played Role In Push For Census Citizenship Question," NPR, 30 May 2019, <https://www.npr.org/2019/05/30/728232221/gop-redistricting-strategist-played-role-in-push-for-census-citizenship-question>.

ⁱⁱ Michael Wines, "Deceased G.O.P. Strategist's Hard Drives Reveal New Details on the Census Citizenship Question," The New York Times, 30 May 2019, <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/05/30/us/census-citizenship-question-hofeller.html>.

ⁱⁱⁱ "NYIC Plaintiffs' motion for an order to show cause in State of New York, et al. v. U.S. Dep't of Commerce, et al., 18-CV-2921 (JMF)," 30 May 2019, <https://www.documentcloud.org/documents/6077715-May-30-2019-Letter-to-Judge-Jesse-Furman.html>.