WHAT THE PROPOSED RULE SAYS Published Sept. 10, 2026 (91 FR 57524). Comments closed Nov. 2, 2026.

Who is counted, and where (Part 60). People who are not U.S. citizens or green card holders, including students, workers on visas, refugees, and asylum seekers, would not be counted for apportionment (§ 60.4). Everyone else would be counted where they spent the most days from Jan. 3 to April 1, matched to tax records (§ 60.2, § 60.6).

What the census asks (Part 70). The form could not ask about race, ethnicity, or sexual orientation, and only sex, date of birth, and household relationship would be required (§ 70.2). Demographic data could not be published if privacy protection would add any uncertainty to state or national counts (§ 70.3).

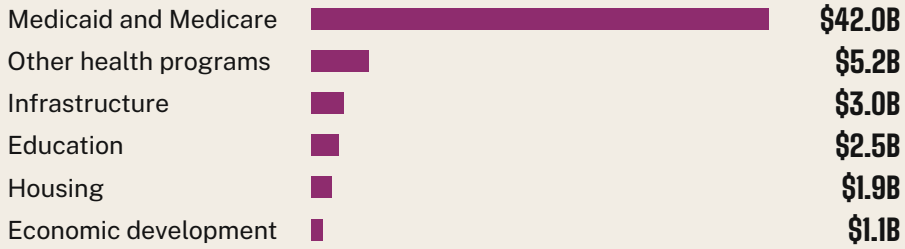
What it would mean: less accurate, less usable census data across the country.

WHAT IS AT STAKE FOR VIRGINIA

$54.2 billion

of federal spending guided by census data went to Virginia in fiscal year 2023, through 371 programs. That is the 13th largest of 50 states and DC.

WHERE THAT MONEY WENT



POGO's rough rule of thumb: missing 1% of Virginia's residents could shift about **$542 million a year** until the next census. The real effect varies by program and by who is missed. Some programs count in more than one category. **SOURCES:** Sean Moulton and Janice Luong, "Census Matters: Why an Accurate Count Is Essential to Funding Our Communities" (POGO, Oct. 28, 2025) and its Virginia fact sheet; Janice Luong and Sean Moulton, "How to Use POGO's Census Funding Data" (POGO, Mar. 19, 2026).

WHAT VIRGINIA TOLD THE CENSUS BUREAU

2,050 comments came from Virginia. **97% opposed the rule**. Of all comments that name a state, 97% opposed; of all comments, 88%.

2,050
COMMENTS
18th most of 50 states and DC

97%
OPPOSED THE RULE
1,989 comments opposed; 60 supported

23
PER 100,000 RESIDENTS
19th lowest of 50 states and DC; the median is 28

367
ASKED FOR MORE TIME
to comment on the rule

ISSUES VIRGINIA COMMENTERS RAISED MOST

Share of comments raising each issue. Virginia All comments that name a state



HOW TO READ THESE NUMBERS
Every published comment counts once, including each copy of a form letter. Position is inferred from each comment by the comment analysis. State is inferred from the comment text and is subject to error. About 62% of all 148,532 comments name a state, so state totals undercount. Most comments that support the rule (85%) name no state, so Virginia is compared with all comments that name a state. The government and organization lists on page 2 are a sample, not everyone who commented; each was checked by reading the comment. Quotes are exact; individuals are described as they describe themselves.

A SAMPLE OF VIRGINIA GOVERNMENTS AND OFFICIALS WITH OPPOSING COMMENTS

ATTORNEY GENERAL

Signed multistate letters asking for more time (Sept. 21) and opposing the rule (Nov. 2)

TRIBAL NATIONS

Pamunkey Indian Tribe

Rappahannock Tribe

ASSOCIATIONS OF LOCAL GOVERNMENTS

Virginia Municipal League

LOCAL GOVERNMENTS AND REGIONAL AGENCIES

Arlington County

City of Falls Church (mayor, for the city council)

City of Harrisonburg (city manager)

City of Lynchburg (community development department)

City of Manassas (city manager)

City of Manassas Park (city manager)

City of Norfolk (city manager)

City of Portsmouth

City of Richmond

Fairfax County

Hampton Roads Planning District Commission (17 localities)

Loudoun County (county administrator)

Prince William County supervisor and county demographer

Richmond City Council member (6th District)

A SAMPLE OF VIRGINIA ORGANIZATIONS WITH OPPOSING COMMENTS

Voices for Virginia's Children

Housing Opportunities Made Equal of Virginia, with other groups

League of Women Voters of Virginia

Hampton Roads Military and Federal Facilities Alliance

ACT for Alexandria

Virginia Funders Network (asked for more time)

OCA Central Virginia

Agua Fund

Delta Sigma Theta chapters in Henrico, Newport News, Petersburg, and the Eastern Shore

National groups based in Virginia also wrote in: Meals on Wheels America, American Council of the Blind, and American Society of Pediatric Nephrology.

IN THEIR WORDS: OPPOSING COMMENTS FROM VIRGINIA

> *"An accurate count of our citizens is not a matter of preference for us."*

Pamunkey Indian Tribe
federally recognized tribe, King William County · Comment 145901

> *"Nearly all local government services cannot be restricted to only serve those with U.S. Citizenship or lawful permanent residency"*

City of Harrisonburg, city manager
two universities; a refugee resettlement community since 1988 · Comment 119742

> *"Children do not file taxes or receive W-2s."*

Virginia resident who works to protect missing and exploited children
writing as an individual · Comment 144368

> *"military service creates circumstances that cannot reliably be captured by a general physical-presence test or tax-address records"*

Hampton Roads Military and Federal Facilities Alliance
16 communities that host 18 military installations · Comment 131878

> *"About 118,000 U.S. citizen children in Virginia live with an undocumented parent"*

Voices for Virginia's Children
statewide child advocacy group, Virginia's KIDS COUNT grantee · Comment 120465

> *"If some residents are not counted, a neighborhood may look wealthier than it really is and could lose eligibility for CDBG funding."*

City of Lynchburg, Department of Community Development
uses CDBG funds to support low- and moderate-income residents · Comment 113203

> *"The census is the denominator for the entire country, and this rule would deliberately make it wrong."*

Public middle school math teacher in Virginia
writing as an individual · Comment 144332

> *"When residents are miscounted or counted in the wrong location, the need for services does not change"*

Northern Virginia Regional Commission
13 counties, cities, and towns, about 2.6 million residents · Comment 45465

Sources: public comments on docket USBC-2026-0628 at regulations.gov, as read and labeled by the analysts' comment analysis; position and state are inferred from each comment's text and are subject to error. Federal funding: Project On Government Oversight (POGO), Census Matters, Oct. 28, 2025 (fiscal year 2023 data). Prepared by Hands Off Our Census. Run Nov 23, 2026, 11:20 AM ET.

CITE THIS BRIEF: handsoffourcens.us. (2026, November 23). *Virginia state brief: Public comments on the proposed census rule, Docket USBC-2026-0628*. Analysis by Chris Marcum and Abigail Haddad. https://handsoffourcens.us