Bob Sivinski
Chair, Interagency Technical Working Group on Race and Ethnicity Standards
1650 17th St. NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. Sivinski,

My name is Melissa Mares and I am the Director of Early Childhood Initiatives at the Colorado Children's Campaign. The Colorado Children's Campaign is a nonprofit, nonpartisan, research, policy, and advocacy organization. Together with our partner organizations and communities across Colorado, we advocate for the development and implementation of data-driven public policy that improves child and family well-being. We fight for a world in which, without exception, public policies and investments remove barriers for most impacted children and families and improve well-being for every child and family. The Colorado Children's Campaign is in strong support of the Office of Management and Budget's Initial Proposals for Updated Race and Ethnicity Statistical Standards.

These changes represent a significant improvement in how the federal government collects information on race and ethnicity, enabling state-level organizations such as the Colorado Children's Campaign to better represent, understand, and target potential policy solutions to improve child and family well-being.

The positive changes in the initial proposals include, but are not limited to:

- **Collecting information about race and ethnicity together in a single question that includes detailed categories,** reducing confusion and allowing for more detailed information to be gathered. This will help the federal government, state advocates, and others better report on smaller racial and ethnic groups that can currently be hidden in data.
- **Adding Hispanic/Latino as an option for a respondent's race**, removing longstanding difficulties many Hispanic/Latino respondents have faced in answering federal government surveys.
- **Adding "Middle Eastern or North African (MENA)" as a new response category,** recognizing that many people of MENA descent do not identify as white.
- **Removing outdated language from federal data policy** to ensure that these new standards best describe America's changing population.

These proposed changes represent the potential for significant, positive updates to the 2030 Census and federal government surveys. With these changes, we will have a much more accurate view of America's diversity. Organizations like the Colorado Children's Campaign will be able to significantly improve our data collection, analysis, and policy work, provided that these important changes come with guidance on how they will be reflected in trending data over time so that we can accurately bridge from the old racial/ethnic categories to the new ones.

I can speak from personal experience that these changes would be impactful to me and others in Colorado. The new options to report one's race and ethnicity would also allow more Coloradans to see their personal identities reflected in the categories on government forms.

Thank you for the significant time and effort you have already put in to improving how the federal government collects this information. We encourage you to immediately approve the Initial Proposals for Updated Race and Ethnicity Statistical Standards as soon as the public comment period has concluded.

Thank you,

Melissa Mares
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