



July 14, 2010

The Honourable Tony Clement
Minister of Industry
C.D. Howe Building
235 Queen Street
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0H5

Dear Minister Clement:

I am writing to you in response to the recent Government of Canada announcement that the Census long form questionnaire will be discontinued as of the upcoming 2011 Census, and that the source of this information will be replaced with the voluntary National Household Survey (NHS). This decision raises serious concerns and consequences that must be reviewed and reconsidered.

The mandatory Census long form questionnaire has long provided local decision-makers with detailed, rigorous demographic profiles of Canadians at national, provincial, regional, community and neighbourhood levels. This information has been fundamental to informing policy and program planning for key social issues related to employment and income, education, immigration and ethnicity. The same high quality data cannot be expected from the proposed NHS that would likely result in far fewer responses (by the very fact that it is voluntary) and skewed data that under reports vulnerable groups (i.e.: recent immigrants and those in lower socio-economic groups would be unlikely to complete the voluntary survey, the very groups that rely most on local-level programs and services).

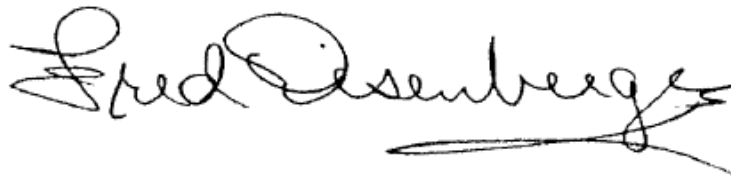
Without the Census long form data, it will be difficult for our local government to monitor the changing needs of our population making it even more difficult to make sound decisions and identify priority needs. The decision to discontinue the Census long form will severely limit our ability to plan programs and services, meet growth management targets, appropriately address legislative requirements and responsibly account for local, provincial and federal funding received to meet the needs of our citizens. This is a serious matter that puts citizens, programs, services and the credibility of our work at risk.

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On behalf of the City of Hamilton, I urge the Government of Canada to reinstate the Census long form questionnaire for the 2011 Census and subsequent censuses to ensure that a solid foundation of reliable, consistent information is available for evidenced-based public policy and program planning that contributes to the health and well-being of our citizens.

Thank you for your consideration of this important matter and I look forward to your reply.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Fred Eisenberger". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending from the end of the name.

Fred Eisenberger
Mayor

Copies:

David Sweet, MP Ancaster, Dundas, Flamborough, Westdale
Dean Allison, MP Niagara West-Glanbrook
David Christopherson, MP Hamilton Centre
Chris Charlton, MP Hamilton Mountain
Wayne Marston, MP Hamilton East-Stoney Creek
Carl Zehr, Mayor of Kitchener, ON, Chair Big City Mayors' Caucus, Federation of
Canadian Municipalities
Joe-Anne Priel, General Manager, Community Services – City of Hamilton