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# Special Joint Statement on Restoring the Long-Form Census

January 27, 2015

## Canadians have a right to information
## It's time to reinstate the long-form census

In 2010, the federal government ended the long-form census that had informed critical business, policy and research decisions across the country. As information becomes an increasingly valuable commodity in today's world, Canada made a conscious decision to blindly walk away from vital data about our culture and society.

It's time to bring the long-form census back.

Bill C-626, An Act to Amend the Statistics Act, would reinstate the mandatory long-form census. **We, the undersigned organizations, call on the federal government to support the passage of Bill C-626.**

The mandatory long-form census provided critical information about demographics, commuting patterns, skills shortages and other economic data that helped to determine public policy, guide researchers, and give businesses a leg up. It allowed for historical comparisons that let us know how our society is changing. The loss of this data represents a blow to free expression that hampers the ability of Canadians to participate in our democracy in an informed way.

### Why do we need a mandatory long-form census?

- Response rates to the current voluntary survey have plummeted — 25% of cities and towns in Canada didn't publish any data, because so little was collected.
- The voluntary survey costs $85 million more than the long-form version, as the low response rates require so many more to be distributed.
- The loss of statistical information means businesses lose important marketing data, hurting our economy.

- We lack crucial information on skills shortages, temporary foreign workers and other economic data that help Canadian businesses.
- Prominent researchers all over the country call the current voluntary survey “useless.”
- Rural residents, the poor, youth, Aboriginals, disabled persons and other vulnerable groups are being undercounted in the voluntary census, as are the rich, which makes it difficult for other surveys to correct their data with census information.
- From public transit to traffic patterns, social welfare programs to labour shortages, government and researchers have a fundamental loss of data. This makes service delivery difficult and less effective
- The census information is needed to properly design social programs – without adequate information, needed services may be cut.

## What can you do to help?

- **Share your views on social media.** Tweet to @pmharper, @edHolder_MP and @JamesMoore_org using #ItMakesCensus and tell them why you want the long-form census restored.
- **Let your MP and federal party leaders know that you support Bill C-626.** Send a letter using Evidence 4 Democracy’s simple tool: https://evidencefordemocracy.ca/census
- **Talk about this with your friends and family.** We need an engaged discussion on this issue, and you can help start it!

At a time when information has become one of the world’s most important commodities, Canada is willfully marching toward ignorance. There is broad support for reinstatement, from the undersigned to the Canadian Chamber of Commerce to the Canadian Medical Association. Reinstating the Long-Form Census will be an important step back in the right direction.

After all, as Prime Minister Stephen Harper said himself, “vital statistics are critical. You can’t manage what you can’t measure.”

**Bill C-626 is up for its second reading on Thursday, January 29. Join us in telling the federal government that this is an issue that matters – to all Canadians.**

Without the census, Canada is simply flying blind.

Signed,

Canadian Association of University Teachers
Canadian Journalists for Free Expression (CJFE)
Centre for Science in the Public Interest
Council of Canadians
Democracy Watch
Evidence for Democracy
Politics of Evidence Working Group at York University
Science for Peace
Scientists for the Right to Know
University of Toronto Faculty Association
York University Faculty Association

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