

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-1804

October 28<sup>th</sup>, 2009

Dear Senator Vitter:

I am in receipt of your letter requesting that I withhold my support for the Commerce, Justice, and Science Appropriations bill until the Vitter-Bennett census amendment is granted floor consideration. I will not withhold my support for this bill, nor will I support your amendment. Your amendment, as currently drafted, would only do harm to our country by delaying the Census at cost of approximately \$1 billion to our already beleaguered taxpayers and to our state by stalling important projects, including law enforcement grants and \$500,000 for the New Orleans Crime Coalition, to name just a few.

While most Americans understand the value and purpose of counting all individuals living in the United States, I agree that many are surprised to find that non-citizens are included in the calculation that determines the allocation of seats in the House of Representatives. However, it is a fact that the Constitution, as amended by the Fourteenth Amendment, does require that "the whole number of persons" in the United States be counted, and that this data be used to apportion House seats and direct taxes among the states.

To correct this, Congress would need to pass a Constitutional Amendment and have it ratified by the prerequisite number of states. It is clear that your amendment would neither amend the Constitution nor garner accurate statistical data on the extent of the nation's population of legal or illegal immigrants. In addition, any demographer worth his salt (which would not be Elliott Stonecipher) would tell you that Louisiana's probable loss of a seat would occur even if there was not one illegal immigrant in the United States. Unfortunately, Louisiana is one of only two states in the union to lose population in the last decade.

If you are ever interested in setting aside political gamesmanship and working together with me on a serious initiative to reform the laws that govern illegal immigration and Congressional apportionment, I would welcome your support.

Sincerely,



Mary L. Landrieu  
United States Senator