

MEMO

From: Jarren Santos

To: Daniel Lathrop

Subject: The Census 2020 Citizenship Question and its Implications in Resource Allocation

Date: April 21, 2018 (orig. due April 20, 2018; extension granted by Daniel Lathrop)

The story basics

[A memo by Wilbur Ross](#), secretary of the Commerce Department that overlooks the Census Bureau, was found to include the return of the citizenship question in the upcoming 2020 Census.

The question has not appeared in the national census since 1950 and is now being cited as a way to determine possible violations of the Voting Rights Act.

A great deal of controversy has sparked because of its implications; although referenced as an enforcement tool, it can have the potential to disturb the allocation of resources, such as Medicaid and redistricting. The question has the potential to a variety of states; not only will states with higher immigrant numbers and non-U.S. citizenship estimates decrease, but states with much lower numbers may virtually have no representation after 2020.

The nexus at which immigration and politics collide calls for such a story like this, which could bring insight regarding the inclusion of such a sensitive question onto the national census.

Working headline

How to Take Away Health Insurance and Bias Redistricting Lines: The Census 2020 Citizenship Question

Preliminary findings

Because of how recent this topic is, not many findings exist to demonstrate the impact the Census 2020 Citizenship Question has thus far, which serves as another reason for the potential this proposed story has. Politicians are still fighting on The Hill to revoke this change to the 2020 Census under the argument that such a question will

“discourage noncitizens, especially immigrants without legal status, from filling out the census at all.” With regards to resources, Medicaid continues to cover lawfully present immigrants, but this policy may change if the nonresponse rate increases for noncitizens across the U.S.

From the graphs created and proposed for the story (see `Example Graphics`), we see that there is already low representation of immigrants and noncitizens, despite many coming into the U.S. We see that there are a high number of noncitizens that enter the U.S. (~40 million accounted for in California, Florida, New York, and Texas). With respect to refugees, there are ~100k that the U.S. has taken in the year of 2016, and they may be directly impacted. With respect to the state of Iowa, ~1% of constituents are considered noncitizen. Across different public use microsample areas (PUMAs), this differs, especially within urban areas (Des Moines, Cedar Rapids) and micropolitan areas (Iowa City, Davenport, etc.). The impact this policy may have in these areas is large and can vary when looking on a state-by-state basis.

Minimum story

We determine U.S. citizenship estimates for each state (particularly Iowa) and can determine the extent at which the Census 2020 Citizenship Question may impact the nation on a statewide level. Perhaps current voting lines are already drawn with respect to immigrant and non-U.S. citizen populations, which can then feed into stories that may further expose corruption in redistricting and gerrymandering.

Maximum story

There are clear pockets of immigrant and non-U.S. citizen populations that exist within each state. The Census 2020 Citizenship Question has immediate impact on such areas and can affect the way party lines are drawn in redistricting and how resources, such as Medicaid, will dramatically change access to health care in a negative manner.

Data sources

Here are a variety of data sources that have been used (or will be used) for the project:

- American Community Survey (ACS) Public Use Microdata Samples (PUMS) for 2012-2016 - <https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs/data/pums.html>
- Nonimmigrant Admissions (I-94 Only) By Selected Category of Admission and State or Territory of Destination: Fiscal Year 2016 - <https://www.dhs.gov/immigration-statistics/yearbook/2016/table30>

- Mapping Public Benefits for Immigrants in the States - <http://www.pewtrusts.org/~media/assets/2014/09/mappingpublicbenefitsforimmigrantsinthestatesfinal.pdf>
- Number and Cost of Immigrants on Medicaid, The National and State Estimates - <https://www.urban.org/sites/default/files/publication/70451/407384-Number-and-Cost-of-Immigrants-on-Medicaid-The.pdf>
- Refugee Arrivals: Fiscal Years 1980 to 2016 - <https://www.dhs.gov/immigration-statistics/yearbook/2016/table13>
- Yearbook of Immigration Statistics 2016 - <https://www.dhs.gov/immigration-statistics/yearbook/2016>
- Welfare Use by Immigrant and Native Households - <https://cis.org/Report/Welfare-Use-Immigrant-and-Native-Households>

Other works

Other works (including news stories, academic journal articles, etc.) are important in determining whether or not this story is worth pursuing and if something like this has already been done. To my knowledge, no in-depth research or work has been done for this particular topic.

Below, you will find various sources that describe important works that can support this story:

- 2020 Census Will Ask About Respondents' Citizenship Status - <https://www.npr.org/sections/thetwo-way/2018/03/26/597192714/2020-census-will-ask-who-is-a-citizen>
 - This is NPR's coverage of the announcement of the Census 2020 Citizenship Question. It contains basic information about Wilbur Ross' memo and anecdotal implications of the question by policy analysts and other experts.
- Skipping The 2020 Census Citizenship Question? You'll Still Be Counted - <https://www.npr.org/2018/04/19/603629576/skipping-the-2020-census-citizenship-question-youll-still-be-counted>
 - This is NPR's story on how census respondents will still get counted on the census regardless of whether they answer the Census 2020 Citizenship Question. Although it may seem to bring some comfort to some, it also highlights the discouragement of noncitizens to fill out the census, which can lead to implications for the proposed story.

- Use of Emergency Medicaid by Undocumented Immigrants - <http://virtualmentor.ama-assn.org/2008/04/jdsc1-0804.html>
 - This journal article is of importance as it evaluates the use of emergency medicaid and emergency department (ED) usage for undocumented immigrants. Specifically, they discuss the use of 2001-2004 expenditures under the North Carolina Emergency Medicaid program to highlight important immigrant health care challenges.
- What to know about the citizenship question the Census Bureau is planning to ask in 2020 - <http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2018/03/30/what-to-know-about-the-citizenship-question-the-census-bureau-is-planning-to-ask-in-2020/>
 - This is Pew's analysis of what to watch out for with regards to the Census 2020 Citizenship Question. Notable information includes citizenship-related infographics from past years and how immigration has changed over the years.

Why now

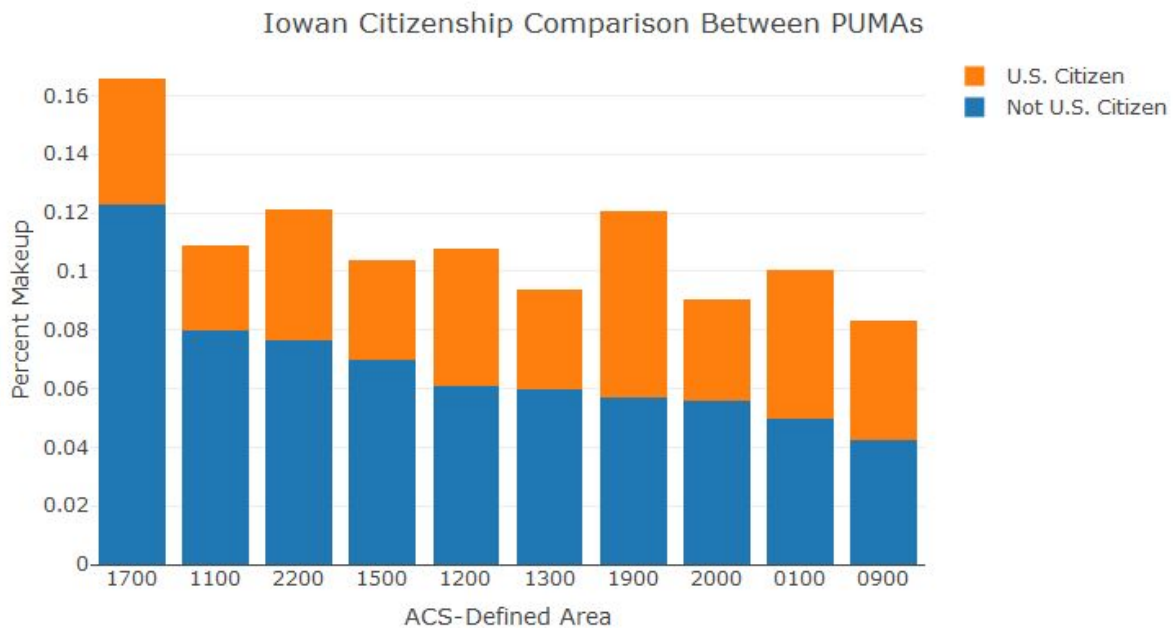
With the Trump administration highly active in the arena of immigration and health care policy, it is extremely important to bring light to one of their initiatives that may affect the drawing of boundaries for elections in the next ten years as well as allocation of resources to those that are traditionally underrepresented. This may call for the continuation of a conservative government for the next ten years and contribute to the ever-decreasing number of enrollees in programs, such as Medicaid, year after year.

Example graphics

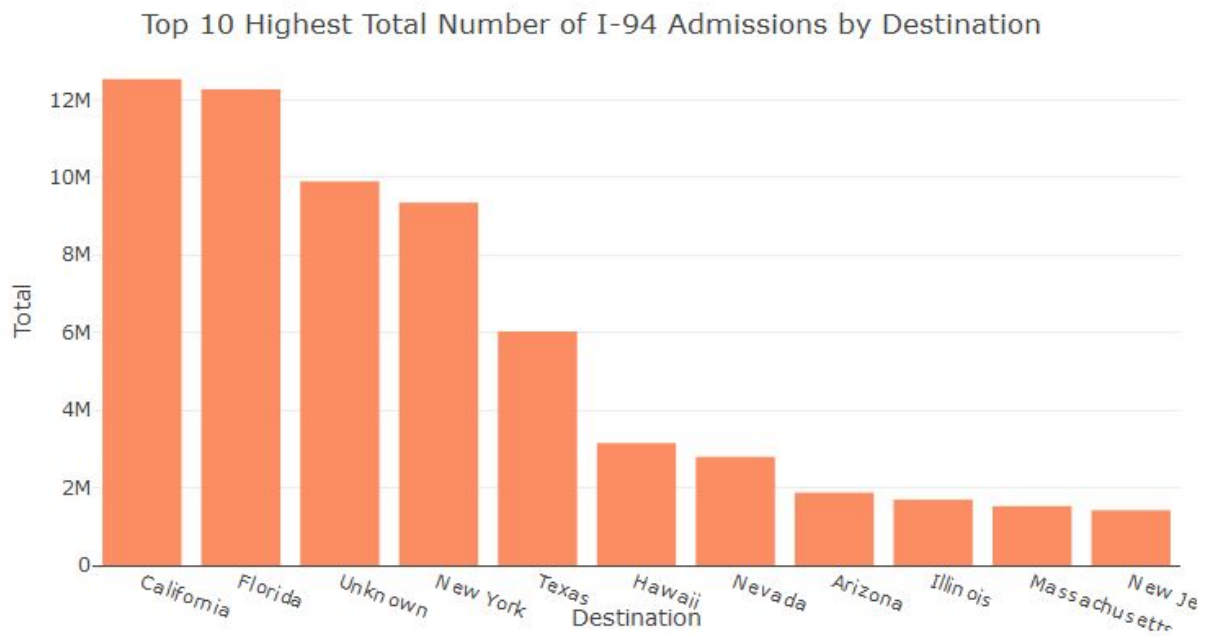
Example graphics were created using the `plotly.js` library, interfaced using R and RStudio. To view the code for this project, see the following GitHub gist:

- <https://gist.github.com/jarrenLS/2b73f28221cd6324e18e42077b67e195>

Iowan Citizenship Comparison Between PUMAs - <https://plot.ly/~jarrenls/1/>



Top 10 Highest Total Number of I-94 Admissions by Destination - <https://plot.ly/~jarrenls/3/>



Refugee Arrivals for FY 1980 to 2016 - <https://plot.ly/~jarrenls/5>

