

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

HOUSE JOINT MEMORIAL NO. 2

BY WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE

A JOINT MEMORIAL

1
2 TO THE ACTING DIRECTOR OF THE OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET AND TO THE CON-
3 GRESSIONAL DELEGATION REPRESENTING THE STATE OF IDAHO IN THE CONGRESS
4 OF THE UNITED STATES.

5 We, your Memorialists, the House of Representatives and the Senate of
6 the State of Idaho assembled in the First Regular Session of the Sixty-sixth
7 Idaho Legislature, do hereby respectfully represent that:

8 WHEREAS, the Metropolitan and Micropolitan Statistical Area Standards
9 Review Committee has recommended that the Office of Management and Budget
10 (OMB) raise the population threshold for the statistical core used to iden-
11 tify a metropolitan statistical area (MSA) from 50,000 to 100,000; and

12 WHEREAS, if adopted, this recommendation would result in 144 of the na-
13 tion's current 392 MSAs being reclassified as micropolitan statistical ar-
14 eas; and

15 WHEREAS, six of Idaho's seven MSAs, including the Coeur d'Alene, Idaho
16 Falls, Lewiston, Pocatello, and Twin Falls MSAs, would be reclassified as
17 micropolitan statistical areas, leaving Idaho with just the Boise City MSA;
18 and

19 WHEREAS, the impact on Idaho communities from this reclassification may
20 result in fewer grant opportunities available to their residents; and

21 WHEREAS, because the loss of MSA status would mean a disruption in data
22 provided by the Bureau of Labor Statistics for these MSAs, the impact on
23 these communities would be the loss of current and regionally distinctive
24 data on labor force, jobs, occupations, and wages, which would likely ad-
25 versely impact economic expansion decisions and wage growth; and

26 WHEREAS, because modern economic decision-making and scholarship are
27 data-driven, it would make little sense to arbitrarily deprive communities
28 and researchers of data they rely on; and

29 WHEREAS, moving the minimum threshold would result in little overall
30 refinement of the data, as 86% of the United States population is located in
31 MSAs under the current standard, while the new standard would change that to
32 80%; and

33 WHEREAS, the data available under the current definition of MSA is
34 critically important for communities in Idaho and in 44 other potentially
35 affected states struggling to rebuild or maintain economies against the
36 COVID-19 crisis; and

37 WHEREAS, breaking away from 70 years of a cultural and economic tradi-
38 tion of delivering valuable and irreplaceable economic data by geography in
39 various states would be a setback to the states' economic health and future
40 development.

41 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the members of the First Regular Ses-
42 sion of the Sixty-sixth Idaho Legislature, the House of Representatives
43 and the Senate concurring therein, that the Idaho Legislature opposes the

1 Metropolitan and Micropolitan Statistical Area Standards Review Commit-
2 tee's recommendation to raise the population threshold for the statistical
3 core used to identify a metropolitan statistical area from 50,000 to 100,000
4 and urges the Office of Management and Budget to reject the recommendation
5 and maintain the current minimum threshold of 50,000.

6 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Chief Clerk of the House of Representa-
7 tives be, and she is hereby authorized and directed to forward a copy of this
8 Memorial to the Acting Director of the Office of Management and Budget and to
9 the congressional delegation representing the State of Idaho in the Congress
10 of the United States.