



4/26/2023

Mr. Bob Sivinski

Chair, Interagency Technical Working Group on Race and Ethnicity Standards

1650 17th Street NW

Washington, DC 20500

RE: Document ID OMB-2023-0001-0001, Federal Register Number 2023-01635, Document Citation 88 FR 5375, Initial Proposals For Updating OMB's Race and Ethnicity Statistical Standards

Dear Mr. Sivinski,

I write in response to Federal Register Notice 88 FR 5375, OMB-2023-0001 published on January 27, 2023, as a representative of The Healing Trust. The Healing Trust's mission is to support and partner with communities to advance racial equity and eliminate health disparities through advocacy and strategic investments. As a grantmaking foundation that focuses on health, **we support the addition of a MENA category and the addition of a combined question with detailed checkboxes.**

As a health-focused funder, our priority is on the elimination of health disparities. To do this, we need to have accurate and comprehensive data about the people and needs in our communities. Data collection, disaggregation, and reporting are central to understanding and meeting community needs.

Including MENA as an ethnic category will increase our understanding of who our neighbors are and how we might best serve them. Because MENA encompasses multiple languages, races, genders, religions and ethnic-religions, and ages and generations, the category should also include sub-boxes that allow people to be specific about their geographical and cultural heritage (e.g., Lebanese, Iranian, Egyptian, Somalia, Sudan etc.).

I strongly support the inclusion of the combined question format as the Working Group has proposed. Prior research by the Census Bureau has shown that the combined question format and a MENA category elicited higher response rates and more accurate collection for different communities. Federal forms can be confusing for respondents to complete and the combined

question format is a welcomed approach to streamlining this process for our community members.

The decennial census is the most far-reaching data collection of Americans, and we are responsible for ensuring that no one remains invisible.

Thank you for your attention to this very important topic.

Sincerely,



Kristen Keely-Dinger

President and CEO of The Healing Trust