**June 19, 2018 | issue Statement**

**Census 2020: The New gerrymandering**

The Census is designed as a tool for collecting population data for congressional districts. The data collected is information about who lives in the United States, which is also the base of public policy. Therefore, ensuring the barriers for participating are not intimidating or burdensome is critical in gathering accurate data. Using the Census to discourage an accurate count among undocumented immigrant populations is like saying they do not exist, when in reality the group is part of the majority.

A citizenship question in the census is a new type of gerrymandering, reminiscent of Jim Crow, or the Voter ID used to discourage civic engagement. Similar plots to erase undocumented immigrants are common such as a 2016 case where the Supreme Court ruled that undocumented immigrants can be counted in redistricting, a response to Texas and Southern States ruling that population out.

Racism exist in the United States, but has played a constant role in South and Southwest public and private policy to dominate and enslave Native Americans, Mexicans, and African Americans. This population we call the true majority is the base of people who can shift the current political moment.

Cities such as San Antonio, Texas need to take a bold stand against policies aimed to suppress the voices of undocumented populations. We must work together to build a fair, just, and healthy community. We must protect and nurture youth to understand that racism and violence are not the new normal.

 “Native American, Latino, and African American communities will make up the majority of the U.S. population by the year 2040. In order to overcome historic structures of domination and control, our communities must become architects of public and private policy, rather than being the objects of policy set by those who have historically exercised power.”

In 2010 SWU, as part of the South by Southwest Experiment, took part in making San Antonio a Census complete count zone and has engaged in developing fair political districts in the state of Texas. The South by Southwest Experiment (SxSWE) is a partnership between the SouthWest Organizing Project (1980 New Mexico), Southwest Workers Union (1988 Texas) and Southern Echo (1989 Mississippi) and the related MS Delta Catalyst Roundtable. The goal of SxSWE is to build capacity in our organizations and communities to engage in the U.S. Census and legislative redistricting, ensuring complete and accurate Census counts and the creation of fair political districts.