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One Parklane Boulevard
Suite 1000 E
Dearborn, MI 48126

313.253.6000
313.253.6033 fax

January 20, 2015

Jennifer Jessup
Departmental Paperwork Clearance Officer
Department of Commerce, Room 6616
14th and Constitution Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20230

Dear Ms. Jessup:

On behalf of Oakwood Healthcare, I am writing this letter in support of the U.S. Census Bureau including a new ethnic classification for persons from the Middle East and North Africa region in the 2020 Census.

Based in Dearborn, Michigan, Oakwood provides acute, specialty, primary and preventive care services backed by excellence in research and education. In addition to hospitals in Dearborn, Taylor, Trenton and Wayne, we operate 70 outpatient facilities, a rehabilitation skilled nursing facility and a residential retirement community. As one of the founding organizations of [Beaumont Health](#), Oakwood is committed to improving the health and well-being of the individuals and communities in southeastern Michigan.

Oakwood serves a large, diverse community that includes more than 62,000 people descended from the MENA region. According to the [Prevention Research Center of Michigan](#) – and borne out by our own experience – little data exists about the prevalence and outcomes of significant health issues within this population, including cancer, diabetes, HIV/AIDS and mental health.

With U.S. census data, Oakwood can better identify and support the unique health needs of this population through:

- medical research
- clinical language services
- post-hospitalization care management and coordination
- end-of-life care
- community education, programs and services

We believe accurate, inclusive data collection regarding the MENA population in the U.S. will be a valuable resource for federal and local officials, policy makers, public institutions and service organizations. It will certainly enable Oakwood to provide health care that is even more culturally sensitive, efficient and effective. Therefore, it is our sincere hope that MENA will be included as an ethnic classification in the 2020 Census.

Sincerely,

Mary A. Zatina
Senior Vice President, Government Relations & Corporate Communications
Oakwood Healthcare