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From: Zuleyma Gomez <zgomez@centralfallsri.us>
Sent: Tuesday, March 26, 2019 12:17 PM
Cc: James Diossa <jdiossa@centralfallsri.us>
Subject: Request for Support- RI Complete Count 2020

Dear Colleagues in Government,

As you may know I am co-chairing the Rhode Island Complete Count Committee alongside Dr. Nicole Alexander Scott of the Rhode Island Department of Health. The state-wide Complete Count Committee is responsible for developing, recommending, and assisting the administration of a census outreach strategy to encourage full participation in the 2020 census.

Why is this so critical for our communities?

The census will decide the future of our government’s representation and billions in federal funding. Local municipalities must act NOW in making sure all Rhode Islanders are counted. The 2020 Census will decide the distribution of roughly $700 billion in federal dollars. Inaccurate representation of our cities and towns will disrupt funding for our police and fire departments, housing, education and veterans. An inaccurate count would
be the basis for inaccurate redistricting. And, we are at risk of losing one of our congressional seats if we are under counted in this upcoming Census.

With today’s political climate some of our constituents may be wary about the addition of an untested citizenship question to the Census, amongst other problems such as the 2020 Census will be the first one held online and not on paper (causing problems in urban and rural communities alike). In an effort to overcome these barriers I have compiled a few ways we can work together to make sure everyone is counted.

How can your city/town take the lead in the 2020 Census?

- Attend the “Rally for Rhode Islanders to be Counted in the 2020 Census,” at the State House Rotunda from 3:00 pm to 4:00 pm on April 2nd, 2019. Click HERE for the event’s Facebook page, please share with all your networks. Flyer for the event attached
- Attend the Rhode Island League of Cities and Town’s board meeting on April 9th, 2019 to take part in a special presentation regarding the census
- Consider passing a resolution in support of the state-wide Census 2020 efforts using the attached draft
- Join the Rhode Island Complete Count Committee’s government strategies sub-committee to share your thoughts on municipal action by emailing co-chairs Matt Jerzyk and Jeff Dana.
- Create your own municipal Complete Count Committee by joining efforts with local businesses, school representatives, and faith leaders in your community to make sure your city has an accurate count. Click HERE to view a webinar on establishing Complete Count Committees.
- For a comprehensive list of resources from the Rhode Island Complete Count Committee Click HERE

Thank you for your consideration. Together we can ensure everyone in our communities and RI is counted.

James A. Diossa
Mayor of Central Falls

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to ask. As always, thanks for your time and support.

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RALLY
For Rhode Island to be Counted
IN THE 2020 CENSUS

Tuesday, April 2nd
3:00 pm - 4:00 pm
State House Rotunda (82 Smith St.)

Join top BUSINESS, COMMUNITY, LABOR and GOVERNMENT leaders from across Rhode Island for a rally to urge everyone to be counted in the 2020 Census which begins in just 1 year on April 1, 2020.

BILLIONS OF DOLLARS in funding are at stake for education, health care, housing, veterans, small businesses and the environment.

For more information, please contact: Dcolon@centralfallsri.us or call 401-616-2449
RESOLUTION

Encouraging all Rhode Islanders to Participate in Census 2020 and be Counted

Sponsored by:

WHEREAS, Article I, Section 2 of the United States Constitution requires every man, woman, and child in America be counted every ten years for purposes of allocating seats in Congress; and

WHEREAS, April 1, 2019 marks one year until the next decennial census of the population must be conducted; and

WHEREAS, In December 2018, the United States Census Bureau ranked Rhode Island’s second congressional seat number 388, with only the top 385 districts to be seated; and

WHEREAS An undercount of the population in 2020 will likely result in the loss of fair representation for Rhode Island in the United States House of Representatives; and

WHEREAS, the Census will not only be the basis for drawing congressional, state and local voting districts, but also the allocation of $700 billion dollars in federal funds for the next decade; and

WHEREAS, one third of Rhode Island’s state budget, approximately $3 billion, is comprised of these federal dollars, including funding for police and fire departments, small business owners, housing, healthcare, education, Medicaid, clean water, waste disposal, and other services; and

WHEREAS, the federal government allocated $157 million to Rhode Island’s elementary and secondary schools in 2017; and

WHEREAS, local jurisdictions across Rhode Island use Census data to determine social and economic characteristics of its populations, funding needs for infrastructure projects, economic development programs, job trainings and other activities; and

WHEREAS, obtaining a fair and accurate count from both rural and urban communities across Rhode Island has historically proven to be difficult in the 61 Census tracts known to be Hard-to-Count, spanning from north to south and east to west, encompassing such communities as Woonsocket, West Warwick, South Kingstown, and Newport; and

WHEREAS, the late proposal by the Secretary of Commerce to add an untested citizenship question puts the ability to achieve an accurate count at serious risk throughout the United States, leading the American Sociological Association, 6 former Census Bureau Directors from both Republican and Democrat administrations, more than 161 Mayors, and 19 State Attorneys General to all come out publicly against inclusion of a citizenship question; and

WHEREAS, for the first time in United States history the Census Bureau will be launching its survey response through electronic means, creating a risk to communities with limited internet access; and

WHEREAS, the United States Government Accountability Office has sounded the alarm in a series of reports that budget cuts, cyber-security weakness and the ongoing legal battle regarding the citizenship question may impede the accuracy of the agency’s critical work; and
WHEREAS, it will take the united action of all Rhode Island towns and cities to ensure a complete and accurate count and, furthermore, it will be vitally important for local governments to support census outreach and education efforts to ensure that every Rhode Islander is counted in the 2020 Census; and

WHEREAS, The Rhode Island Complete Count Committee, ordered by the Governor, shall develop, recommend and assist in the administration of a census outreach strategy to encourage full participation in the 2020 federal decennial census of population.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that this Council recognizes the critical importance of Census 2020 for the future of Rhode Island and encourages all residents to participate in the 2020 Census and to become involved in peer education and outreach; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we support the effort of the Rhode Island Complete Count Committee to raise at least $1.2 million to build a community outreach campaign to ensure that all of Rhode Island is counted in 2020; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that a copy of this resolution be sent to the Co-Chairs of Rhode Island Complete Count Committee, the Governor, the Speaker of the House, and the President of the Senate.