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## Maryland DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING



### Secretary McCord Remarks to Governor's Ethnic Commissioners

March 19, 2020

- Thank you to the Chairs and Vice-Chairs of the Governor's Ethnic Commissions for all your tremendous efforts to spread the message about Census 2020 in your communities so we can have the most complete count possible. More than 11M people have already responded to the Census.
- If you haven't received a card/letter - you can respond anyway. Just go to our site at [census.maryland.gov](https://census.maryland.gov) and hit the big red "Take the Census" button and you will be taken to the U.S. Census form. Even if you hit The Department of Planning's site, you will see the same red button.
- Our media outreach plan is underway. TV, radio, digital, social media, billboards, bus signs. We are reaching out and touching markets in every area of the State – especially in areas of our State that have low response scores.
- You can see all of those areas in any census tract in the state by looking at our Maryland Response Outreach Area Map on our website [census.maryland.gov](https://census.maryland.gov). You can look at every census tract in your area to gauge where you might want to focus your efforts.
- We want people to know that Census 2020 is safe and confidential. We want them to know that an accurate count is critical to their communities so they get the services they need – funding for schools, roads, healthcare, emergency services and the like.
- It is estimated that \$18,250 per person is lost over 10 years (based on \$675B in federal funding available) for those who don't respond.

- The estimated undercount in 2010 means we lost out on roughly \$1 billion in federal funding over the last 10 years.
- We can't let that happen again and are working together for all Marylanders because every Marylander counts.
- These local efforts have been impressive and we are all working to deliver the right message from the right messenger.
- We are reaching out to faith communities – these are among our most Trusted Voices. They deal with members of their congregations that are new to the Census yet have a distrust of government.
- **We will need to work smarter than the virus.**
- ***“If you have a phone/computer, you have a Census!”***
- ***Fight the Virus by filling out Your Census!***
- You don't need to be a medical professional to help out.
- It is all of us against a bug that we **cannot see**, *but when we fill out the form, we are all seen!*
- Everybody can do their part. **This crisis reminds us of our common humanity.** We are all at risk simply by being human.
- I have been giving this number for a year now **411-675-5001**. It is a number that no one can call, it is used to remind us of important aspects of the Census.
- **411= Information** Your information is safe. Your personal information cannot be shared by the Census Bureau with anyone else. Not with the FBI, or ICE, or any federal, state, or local agency. The federal workers take a lifetime oath to protect personal information and are subject to a \$250,000 fine and/or 5 years in prison.
- **\$675B = Amount of federal funding available** This translates to \$18,250 per person over 10 years. The latest research (Nov.2019 George Washington University) has the number for census-derived funding at **\$1.5 trillion**, so you can more than double the numbers.
- **5001 = Number of a person in a line** *Now, this example I have been using for a year, just got real.* Imagine there is an area of a few census tracts with 6200 people, but only 5000 people respond, and the Centers for disease Control sends 5000 vaccines to that area. The 5001st person in line does not get a vaccine. They get sick, their family gets sick and the rest of us get sick. The virus does not care about your color, who you voted for, who you pray to, or whether you are a citizen. **Numbers today turn into vaccines next year.**

- **Who** we are starts with **How many** we are.
- We do not want to lose anyone. That's what we all pray for in whatever prayers we use. The unique combination of stardust and water that makes up each one of us will never be repeated again.
- For ourselves, for our children, for our future - *We all must be counted.*
- We must spread the word. Spread it any way you can. **All of our faith traditions began before the printing press, the telephone, the radio or the internet.**
- We now need to use those tools to **get the word out.**
- Yes, the Census is about \$1.5 trillion dollars in federal spending, but **the Census is about us. Who we are** as a state and **how many reside** in each community. We count **people**, not just citizens.
- **Participation is power.** The numbers will drive **policy** as well as **programs** for the next decade. Each of us counts.
- As a Muslim woman told me after I spoke before a gathering in Annapolis of leaders in Maryland representing 350,000 Muslims from 60 countries, "*I see now, this is not about me, it is about my community.*" She is right.
- As a pastor from one of the 25 Hispanic churches gathered around Census that I spoke to in Prince George's County said at the end of the meeting, "*The Census unites us!*" She is right.
- They are both right.
- It is a family portrait we take every 10 years, we need to show what Maryland really looks like, we need everyone in the picture, and I mean everyone.
- We invite everyone to **realize** the importance, **represent** their community, and **respond** to the Census...online, by phone or by mail. Just be sure to fill out the form!
- Thank you so much for being in this mission together.
- Together we can have the best count ever.
- **KEEP CALM and COME to your CENSUS!**
- Thank you and be safe.