



COUNTY OF DUTCHESS

MARCUS J. MOLINARO

COUNTY EXECUTIVE

June 9, 2020

Dear friends,

We have been going through unprecedented times these past few months, working together to battle the COVID-19 pandemic and doing everything we can to protect our communities.

It's a testament to our strength and our belief in helping people. We know this work is far from over, and we are going to need every resource available to keep our communities safe and to get people back on their feet. One way we can do this is to make sure everyone is counted in the 2020 census.

The census asks questions that provide a snapshot of the nation. The federal government relies on this information – including the final headcount – to allocate funding for everything from highways to hospitals. In fact, the federal government uses population numbers to calculate how to distribute money to state and other governments through the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act. That Act, passed by Congress in March, included the Paycheck Protection Program and other measures aimed at providing financial relief to people during this crisis. Undoubtedly, more federal assistance will be needed, and it too will be based on our census data. Even during less turbulent times, approximately \$675 billion in federal funds get distributed this way, involving more than 130 programs, including housing and education needs. Congressional and legislative districts also will be redrawn based on the final census figures.

For these reasons, I encourage you to reach out to individuals in your communities and ask that they complete their census at My2020Census.gov. People also can complete the form over the phone or via mail if they like. Census assistance numbers are available in English (844-330-2020) and Spanish (844-468-2020). Filling out the form takes only a few minutes; collected personal information is kept confidential; and it is protected under law.

To finish the count, the Census Bureau will have to rely on field workers, but those operations have been suspended in our area for now. They are expected to resume this summer.

Recognizing what is at stake, I established the Dutchess County Complete Count Committee last year to conduct outreach and raise awareness about the importance of the census. The committee's mantra is "You count, be counted." I wholeheartedly agree, and I am confident you feel the same way about everyone in your community.

Please, let's get them counted today.

Stay safe,

Marcus J. Molinaro
Dutchess County Executive