



Giving Every Child A Chance

March 1, 2019

Hon. Philip D. Murphy  
Office of the Governor  
PO Box 001  
Trenton, NJ 08625

**SUBJECT: NJ needs FY2020 funding to ensure an accurate Census**

Dear Governor Murphy:

New Jersey faces serious fiscal challenges, which makes getting our fair share of federal funding critical for our state's success. Federal funding depends on an accurate 2020 Census count, which will pose special challenges for New Jersey, including lower federal spending on Census outreach, the Census Bureau's first-ever online questionnaire, and continued uncertainty about a citizenship question. About 22 percent (1.9 million) of New Jersey residents live in a hard-to-count area, including a disproportionate number of Black, Hispanic/Latino, Asian residents and children under age 5.

We are heartened that New Jersey has joined many other states in forming a broad-based Complete Count Commission. However, Commission's plan will need adequate funding in the FY2020 state budget to successfully complete an accurate count of all residents, particularly those in hard-to-count areas.

The New Jersey Institute for Social Justice has estimated that New Jersey will need \$9 million in FY2020 to get an accurate 2020 Census count. These funds would be used for communications efforts in multiple media and languages, public forums and multiple in-person discussions, and local "get out the count" campaigns in hard-to-count communities, as determined by the Complete Count Commission.

The \$9 million would be a limited, one-time expense totaling less than .01% of the total budget but could pay enormous dividends. More than \$22 billion in annual federal spending in New Jersey relies on Census population counts, including:

- Health care (Medicaid, Medicare, CHIP, health care centers)
- Education (Title I schools, Special Education, student loans, Pell Grants, Head Start)
- Nutrition (SNAP, school meals, WIC)
- Infrastructure (highway construction, federal transit grants)
- Housing (Section 8 housing vouchers, housing loans, public housing, housing tax credits, LIHEAP)

Even a slight undercount could lead to decreased federal funding, not just in FY2021 but for a full decade to follow. New Jersey is routinely at the bottom of the list of states in collecting federal spending, a figure that will not improve without an accurate Census count.

Although the Census seems abstract, data collected from the Census influences almost all federal formula funding grants and policy decisions. New Jersey cannot afford an undercount in 2020.

We urge you to commit to robust Census funding of \$9 million in your FY2020 budget to support the outreach plan and campaign being developed by the Complete Count Commission.

SIGNED:

Advocates for Children of New Jersey  
New Jersey Institute for Social Justice  
Make the Road New Jersey  
New Jersey Policy Perspective  
Education Law Center  
Latino Action Network Foundation  
NAACP - New Jersey State Conference  
League of Women Voters of New Jersey  
New Jersey Principals and Supervisors Association  
New Jersey Association of School Administrators  
New Jersey PTA  
New Jersey School Boards Association  
Save Our Schools NJ  
New Jersey Library Association  
NJ American Academy of Pediatrics  
NJ School-Age Care Coalition  
Coalition of Infant/Toddler Educators  
Prevent Child Abuse NJ  
Anti-Poverty Network of New Jersey  
National Organization for Women of NJ  
NJ Association for the Education of Young Children  
NJ Association for Infant Mental Health  
NJ Chapters of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc.  
ACTION TOGETHER NEW JERSEY  
Paterson Mayor Andre Sayegh  
Paterson Education Fund  
Paterson Alliance  
4Cs of Passaic County  
Boys & Girls Club of Paterson and Passaic  
Paterson Habitat for Humanity  
Montclair Alumnae Chapter-Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc

NAACP of the Oranges & Maplewood  
Perth Amboy Area NAACP  
The Reformed Church of Highland Park  
Inner City Ensemble  
Gilmore Memorial Preschool, Inc.  
Wharton Institute for the Performing Arts  
Neighborhood Assistance Office  
Child Care Connection  
Union of Rutgers Administrators-American Federation of Teachers, Local 1766 (URA-AFT)  
Reform Jewish Voice of New Jersey  
Rancocas Valley Alumnae Chapter, Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc.  
Salvation and Social Justice  
Nurse-Family Partnership