



Community Board 12 - Manhattan Washington Heights & Inwood

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Richard R. Lewis, Chairperson
Ebenezer Smith, District Manager

May 23rd, 2019

Hon. Adriano Espaillat
Congressman (13th C. D.)
163 West 125th Street, Suite 508
New York, NY 10027

The Honorable Andrew M. Cuomo
Governor of New York State
NYS State Capitol Building
Albany, NY 12224

Mayor, City of New York - Bill de Blasio
City Hall, New York, NY 10007

Re: Community Board 12, Manhattan Partnership With the U.S. Census 2020 and New York Counts 2020

Dear Congressman Espaillat, Governor Cuomo, and Mayor De Blasio:

At the General Meeting on Tuesday, April 23, 2019, with a vote of 35 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstention, Community Board 12 Manhattan, passed a resolution confirming community partnership with the U.S. Census 2020 and New York Counts 2020, urging the removal of the citizenship question from the U.S. Census 2020 and urging New York State and New York City to fund the \$40 million requested by New York Count 2020.

Whereas, all 50 US States, the District of Columbia, and U.S territories must participate in a U.S Census Count - as required by the United States Constitution. And the next U.S. Census count will begin on April 1, 2020, and continue through July 2020; and

Whereas, the last Decennial Census was taken in 2010; and

Whereas, the data collected by the US Census plays a significant role in the number of seats a state gets in Congress and guides how more than \$675 billion in federal funds are distributed to states annually, including the Washington Heights and Inwood communities. And New York State's share of those dollars was \$73,300,580,954 in Fiscal Year 2016 through 55 federal spending programs as a result of data culled from the 2010 Census; and

Whereas, 2010 Census data guided funding in areas of concern for all committees of Community Board 12, Manhattan, including: Medicaid, the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Section 8 Housing Choice Vouchers, Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF), National School Lunch Program, Special Education Grants, Federal Transit Formula Grants, Head Start, WIC, Unemployment Insurance Administration, Child Care and Development Block Grant, Crime Victim Assistance, Public Housing Capital Fund, Block Grants for the Prevention and Treatment of Substance Abuse, Social Services Block Grants, Business and Industry Loans, Special Programs for the Aging, and Health Care Centers; and

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Whereas, in just the Census Tract area in Washington Heights surrounding Community Board 12, Manhattan headquarters, the community was in the highest scale of a Low Response Rate - with a Low Response Score of 36.8 percent, according to the latest Census Tract data, and meaning that 36.8 percent did not mail in their census questionnaires; and

Whereas, the U.S. Census 2020 count is expected to encounter significant continuing obstacles in 2020 in predominantly immigrant communities such as Washington Heights and Inwood due to the addition of a citizenship question included on the Census that is currently being fought in the courts for removal; and

Whereas, the 2020 Census will be the first time in US Census history that residents will be able to complete their census questionnaire online; and

Whereas, significant monetary and community resources will be needed to overcome community fears of completing the census, precipitated by the addition of the citizenship question (whether it is ordered removed or not), and to accommodate and assist residents who wish to complete their census questionnaire online. And, New York Counts 2020 is a diverse, statewide coalition made up of racial, ethnic, immigrant, religious, health, education, labor, housing, and business groups working in partnership with state and local governmental officials to ensure that all New Yorkers - including those in hard-to-count districts such as Manhattan Community District 12 - can fully participate in the 2020 Census; and

Whereas, the Federal Government is underfunding the U.S. Census Bureau. New York Counts 2020 is currently seeking a total of \$40 million to support community outreach and education efforts. And the New York State Legislature allocated only up to \$20 million to U.S. Census 2020 outreach and education funding in its Fiscal Year 2020 Budget that began on April 1, 2019, while New York City still has an opportunity to provide greater funding for city Census outreach and education before its budget is due on July 1, 2019; and

Whereas, Community Board 12, Manhattan possesses an important direct connection to the Washington Heights and Inwood communities, and has resources to reach community members, including Board Member connections, Board staff operations, and committee meetings and outreach activities; and

Whereas, the partnership with the U.S. Census 2020 and New York Counts 2020 will enable Community Board 12, Manhattan to access important tools to successfully conduct outreach initiatives, including Census materials in multiple languages, Census office support, social media content and links, and sample email messages. And that partnership with the U.S. Census 2020 and New York Counts 2020 involves Community Board 12, Manhattan making whatever efforts it can to promote the U.S. Census, conduct community outreach and education on the importance of completing the Census questionnaire and helping provide residents with access to complete their questionnaires online. **Now, therefore be it**

Resolved, that Community Board 12, Manhattan will be a community partner with the U.S. Census 2020 and New York Counts 2020; and the Board will take the lead in organizing a community-wide outreach campaign to try to ensure a complete count in Washington Heights and Inwood; and be it further

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Resolved, that Community Board 12, Manhattan urges the removal of the citizenship question from the U.S. Census 2020; and be it further

Resolved, that Community Board 12, Manhattan urges New York State and New York City to fund up to the \$40 million requested by New York Counts 2020 for Census outreach and education initiatives.

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Richard Lewis', written over the word 'Sincerely'.

Richard Lewis
Chairperson

Hon. Julie Menin, Director Census N Y C
Hon. Jumaane Williams, Public Advocate
Hon. Scott M. Stringer, Comptroller
Hon. Gale Brewer, Borough President
Hon. Brian Benjamin, State Senator
Hon. Brian Kavanagh, State Senator

Hon. Robert Jackson, State Senator
Hon. Al Taylor, Assembly Member
Hon. Carmen De La Rosa, Assembly Member
Hon. Ydanis Rodriguez, Council Member