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**\*FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE\***

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## **BP DIAZ LAUNCHES BRONX 2020 CENSUS COMPLETE COUNT COMMITTEE**

Today, Bronx Borough President Ruben Diaz Jr. announced the creation of the “Bronx 2020 Census Complete Count Committee.” The committee will be tasked with increasing turnout in the upcoming 2020 Census and ensuring that Bronx residents participate in this important civic function.

“Whether Bronxites and New Yorkers know it or not the census count has a huge effect on what happens in our everyday lives. If we are not counted, our quality of life and our access to necessary services will undoubtedly be diminished,” said **Bronx Borough President Ruben Diaz Jr.** “We need to make sure that every corner of this borough is counted, and the creation of the Bronx 2020 Census Complete Count Committee will help us do just that.”

Complete Count Committees (CCC) are volunteer committees established by governments, community leaders and other organizations to increase awareness and motivate residents to respond to the 2020 Census. To launch the Bronx CCC, Borough President Diaz hosted a roundtable discussion on issues surrounding the 2020 Census featuring Julie Menin, Director of the Census for New York City, along with elected officials, advocates, non-profits, community organizations and others.

“We are proud that New York City is making an unprecedented investment of \$26 million in grant-making and public awareness efforts for the 2020 Census. Our investment will allow us to work closely with local organizations that are trusted voices in their communities to mount a sophisticated ‘get out the count’ campaign, and also allow us to fund robust public awareness efforts. We are thrilled to join Bronx Borough President Ruben Diaz Jr. in launching a Complete Count Committee that will help us reach and count every New Yorker,” said **Julie Menin, Director of NYC Census 2020 and Executive Assistant Corporation Counsel for Strategic Advocacy at the NYC Law Department.**

“We face a significant threat to the Census coming from the White House. President Trump and his administration have made it crystal clear they are intending to politicize the Census through their inclusion of their ‘citizenship question,’” added **Borough President Diaz.** “In the face of these circumstances, conducting an accurate count for the 2020 Census will be no small feat. It requires planning, education, strategic management, and a groundswell of community outreach with partners invested in its mission – ‘a complete count.’”

To get your organization, business, non-profit, community groups or media organization involved in the Bronx 2020 Census Complete Count Committee, sign up at <https://bit.ly/2Wh11FM>.

“The census will determine what the next ten years looks like in the Bronx, in New York and across the

country. We cannot afford to have the people in our communities undercounted,” **Assembly Speaker Carl Heastie** said. “The Bronx 2020 Census Complete Count Committee, along with complete count committees throughout the state, will bring awareness to how important the census is, from receiving federal funding for education and health care to determining our representation at all levels of government. While others seek to weaponize the census against immigrants and communities of color, we will not allow the Bronx to go undercounted, underrepresented and underfunded. Every New Yorker must be counted.”

“The Constitutionally-mandated Decennial Census is undeniably one of the most consequential duties carried out by our federal government. An accurate enumeration ensures that fair representation and adequate resources — related to everything from education, healthcare, and law enforcement — are allocated to the Bronx and New York State,” said **Rep. Adriano Espaillat**. “With an administration that is overtly and energetically pursuing illegal, racially-motivated changes to the enumeration, such as the citizenship question, it is imperative that the local stakeholders collaborate and mobilize in advance of the upcoming count. As leaders of a vibrant community like the Bronx, a place that thousands of immigrants call home, we must work tirelessly to counter the misinformed attacks perpetrated by this administration and ensure fair representation into the future. The Bronx 2020 Census Complete Count Committee, led by Bronx Borough President Rubén Díaz Jr. is an essential step in achieving our ultimate objective and goal of having all voices counted during the upcoming 2020 Census.”

“The 2020 Census comes at a critical time for our community. While the success of a proper count will determine billions of dollars in federal funds for the next decade, as well as ensure accurate federal representation for our State; there are significant efforts by the President and others to undermine an accurate count in communities like ours,” said **Assembly Member Marcos A. Crespo**. “It is imperative that we take matters into our own hands to ensure this is done accurately. I congratulate Borough President Diaz for this initiative. I know that with his leadership the members of this commission will get the job done.”

“I applaud and thank Bronx Borough President Ruben Diaz, Jr. for the creation of The Bronx 2020 Census Complete Count Committee. This effort is a vital step in ensuring that The Bronx receives our fair share of federal funding and representation in the halls of government,” said **Assembly Member Michael Blake**. “The results of the 2020 Census will impact the Bronx economically, socially and politically and will determine the future of the community services that are critically important to us today. The \$73 billion that New York State receives annually from the federal government is in jeopardy if every infant, child, woman, man and senior citizen is not accurately represented. Funding for our daycare centers, schools, healthcare clinics, senior services and affordable housing is at stake. Moreover, the representation we are granted in government, the number of congressional and state legislative seats, may be impacted if we don’t combat the racist and discriminatory fear mongers in Washington, DC that could lead to Bronxites not filling out the information. The Trump administration must not win by causing those who are immigrants and people of color to hide rather than be counted. Let us show that love, enlightenment and unity trumps hate and our voices will be heard.”

“It is of the utmost importance that we have an accurate census count for the Bronx in 2020. The data collected will be used to determine the number of legislative seats apportioned to the Bronx as well how much federal aid we receive, and due to the xenophobic rhetoric spewing from the White House we are at risk of being undercounted and underrepresented. I am proud to join my fellow Bronxites in fighting to make sure there is a complete count of all residents, and I thank Borough President Ruben Diaz Jr for his leadership on this issue,” said **Assembly Member Jeffrey Dinowitz**.

“Previously, the Bronx has been undercounted and misrepresented, causing a disservice to every single individual who lives in this borough on both the State and Federal level. Currently, there is a lot of fear

surrounding the Census, and I commend Borough President Ruben Diaz Jr. for creating the Bronx 2020 Census Complete Count Committee. I am hopeful that this committee will help ease these concerns and better motivate individuals to fill out the 2020 Census.” said **Assembly Member Victor Pichardo**.

“Accurate census data is the bedrock of our democracy – it determines how many congressional seats New York receives in the House of Representatives, and it informs the distribution of federal dollars to support our schools, hospitals, and infrastructure. I look forward to working with Bronx Borough President Ruben Diaz Jr. and the Complete Count Committee to secure the political representation and federal funding our communities deserve, by ensuring that every Bronx resident is counted in 2020,” said **State Senator Alessandra Biaggi**.

"Each year, the federal government distributes billions of dollars to state and local governments based on Census data. This information is used to guide planning decisions on where to build hospitals, new roads, child-care and senior citizen centers, schools and more. Obtaining an accurate count will require a concerted effort, with all community stakeholders working together to ensure our neighborhoods get the resources they deserve, and the Bronx Complete Count Committee will play a critical role in this endeavor. I commend Bronx Borough President Ruben Diaz Jr. for his dedication to maximizing participation in the 2020 Census,” said **State Senator Jose M. Serrano**.

"The creation of the Bronx 2020 Census Complete Count Committee will play an essential role in propelling residents to participate in the 2020 Census - a critical process for our nation as a whole. Without full participation, our communities will be under-represented, contributing to the chronic lack of resources we already face. As lawmakers, we need accurate data to best advocate for our constituents, and as representatives, it is our duty to ensure this process is carried out in a safe, trustworthy, and effective manner. Given the threatening initiatives at the national level, this bears even greater urgency,” said **State Senator Luis Sepulveda**.

“We cannot stress how important it is to participate in the 2020 Census. The opportunity to participate comes only once every 10 years and is vital in gathering information about our population and their needs. The Census data is a critical tool for determining the distribution of government funds, programs, and services. By establishing the Bronx 2020 Census Complete Count Committee, we are ensuring that everyone knows what the Census is, why it’s important, and how you can participate. I thank Bronx Borough President Ruben Diaz Jr., for establishing a Bronx based effort to ensure that all of our residents are counted and our Borough receives the resources it needs from the federal government,” said **Council Member Vanessa Gibson**.

“With so much at stake in the 2020 Census, and so many reasons why some New Yorkers may be hesitant to participate, it is crucial that New York City do all it can to ensure that everyone is counted—and The New York Public Library takes its central role in the effort very seriously,” said **New York Public Library President Anthony W. Marx**. “Public libraries are in every community, welcoming everyone and offering opportunity to all. As trusted community partners, we will play a key part in reaching hard-to-count communities, such as immigrants, and informing New Yorkers in the Bronx and beyond how they can and why they should participate, and providing the tools needed to be counted. We look forward to the challenge.”

“The coming census is of vital importance to the Bronx. A complete and accurate count of the people of our borough will ensure that the Bronx and the City receive our fair share of resources from the Federal Government. Therefore, I am very pleased that Bronx Community College is a member of the Borough President’s Census Task Force Steering Committee. Bronxites count — and everyone should be counted,” said **Thomas A. Isekengebe, President of Bronx Community College**.

“At the YMCA, we are focused on strengthening communities by supporting New Yorkers with the programs and services they need to thrive. Making sure that our city and our citizens have the resources they need starts with the census,” said **Sharon Greenberger, President & CEO of the YMCA of Greater New York**. “The YMCA is proud to join Bronx Borough President’s Bronx 2020 Complete Count Committee to raise awareness about the census and counting every Bronx resident. We must all be counted.”

“A fair and accurate census count will take the public, private and not-for-profit sectors working together to motivate individuals in every borough across New York City to stand up and be counted, and the Association for a Better New York is ready to do its part,” said **Melva Miller, executive vice president of ABNY and head of its Census 2020 for a Better New York campaign**. “I commend Borough President Diaz for his leadership in creating the Bronx 2020 Census Complete Count Committee and we look forward to working closely with our friends in the Bronx to make sure New York has the right resources to earn a strong count.”

“Dominicanos USA (DUSA) supports the creation of an effective and accountable ‘Bronx 2020 Census Complete Count Committee.’ DUSA is dedicated to mobilizing and empowering the Dominican-American community through civic, social, and economic engagement, which includes efforts to educate the Dominican and Latino communities about the importance of the Census 2020. With Latinos now the nation’s second largest population group, representing one out of every six Americans, full and accurate data about the Latino community are critical for our country’s economic, social and civic well-being. Census data are crucial for our representative democracy – these data determine the apportionment of seats in the U.S. House of Representatives and how district lines are drawn at all levels of government. These data also guide the allocation of more than \$800 billion in federal funding to programs that are crucial to the well-being of families, including those affecting health, transportation, education, and housing. Several challenges pose a threat to a full and accurate count of Latinos in Census 2020, including the addition of the citizenship question, a climate of fear and distrust in the government, a lack of adequate funding for the Census Bureau, and a shift to the internet as the primary response option. These challenges must be addressed by the Bronx 2020 Census Complete Count Committee and other stakeholders in the Bronx and beyond,” said **Eddie Cuesta, Executive Director of Dominicanos USA**.

“As a multinational, multi lingual, multi faith immigrant group, the Garifuna Community is among the Hard-To-Count populations. The Garifuna Coalition USA, Inc. is proud to join the ‘Bronx 2020 Census Complete Count Committee,’ to increase awareness and motivate residents to respond to the 2020 Census.” **José Francisco Ávila, Chairman of the Board, Chairman of Garifuna Coalition USA**.

Based on the latest Census estimates, approximately 57 percent of Bronx County’s current population, some 818,390 residents, live in hard to count neighborhoods. In fact, the Bronx ranks #4 on the list of “Hard to Count Counties” in all of New York State.

In 2010 the borough saw a significant increase in Census participation over the 2000 Census, rising from 56 percent participation in 2000 to 65 percent in 2010. However, almost 30 percent of Bronx households did not respond by mail to the 2010 Census, leaving some of them to be left out of that years count.

Without full participation in the 2020 Census, Bronx and New York City residents will not receive the Federal resources and political representation they need and are entitled to.