



County of San Mateo

Inter-Departmental Correspondence

Department: BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
DISTRICT 5
File #: 19-1269

Board Meeting Date: 1/14/2020

Special Notice / Hearing: None
Vote Required: Majority

To: Honorable Board of Supervisors
From: Supervisor David J. Canepa, District 5
Supervisor Don Horsley, District 3
Subject: Census 2020

RECOMMENDATION:

Adopt a resolution recognizing the importance of the 2020 Census and encouraging residents of the County of San Mateo to promote and complete the census to ensure a fair, accurate and complete count.

BACKGROUND:

San Mateo County Manager's Office of Community Affairs is leading the County's Census 2020 efforts by developing and implementing proactive outreach strategies and messaging guidance. Working closely with both the United States (US) Census Bureau, the California Complete Count Census 2020 Office, as well as other stakeholders, San Mateo County is committed to ensuring a complete count of all San Mateo County residents, citizens and non-citizens alike. This work is especially important as the 2020 Census will be moving to an online format and many segments of the community have discomfort about participation in the census in the wake of the federal government's unsuccessful attempt to include a citizenship question on the Census 2020 questionnaire.

The San Mateo County census team has convened a County Steering Committee made up of department heads, representatives of elected officials, as well as managers of the cities considered hardest to count in the county. Additionally, a Census Complete County Committee was convened, which includes participants from community and faith-based organizations, core service agencies, and the business community. The County Census team has also developed an online outreach toolkit which has resources to help everyone prepare, plan, implement, and track census outreach.

DISCUSSION:

The US Constitution requires the federal government to count the total number of people in the

United States every ten years. The US Census Bureau, a division of the US Department of Commerce, will conduct the next Census in 2020. The results of the census are used to distribute seats in the House of Representatives and inform the amount of federal funds allocated to states for certain programs. The count is used to make sure that everyone is fairly represented in government and funding is distributed equitably. The information gathered is also used by businesses, schools, community groups and government agencies to make decisions about services they provide.

Obtaining an accurate and complete count poses challenges due to several factors. The housing affordability crisis has forced more Californians into homelessness or into hard to count unconventional housing and overcrowded dwellings. Further, for the first time, the census will be conducted in a primarily digital format and Californian households will be receiving an invitation to complete their census form online. It is important that all residents participate in order to ensure that their communities receive funding for programs and services they rely on, such as housing, transportation, schools, libraries and parks. California could lose up to \$1,000 in federal funds for each person not counted in Census 2020, for each of the next 10 years, according to the recent analysis from George Washington University's study entitled *Counting for Dollars 2020*.

The State of California has allocated over \$180,000,000 toward Census 2020 efforts, of which, San Mateo County has received \$228,000 to support local census efforts. The County of San Mateo has committed resources toward a robust outreach and communications strategies, focusing on reaching the hardest to county individuals. It is important that the San Mateo County Board of Supervisors encourage and support the County Census 2020 team to ensure a complete, fair and accurate count of all residents in San Mateo County.

FISCAL IMPACT:

No fiscal impact.