



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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FAYETTE COUNTY KICKS OFF 2020 CENSUS CAMPAIGN

Uniontown, PA – Fayette County officially kicked off its 2020 Census campaign Wednesday, with a press conference at the Public Service Building in Uniontown.

Fayette County Commissioners Dave Lohr, Chairman Vincent Vicites and Angela Zimmerlink, in partnership with the Fayette County Office of Planning, Zoning and Community Development and the United States Census Bureau, also unveiled the county's Complete Count Committee.

As mandated by the U.S. Constitution, the nationwide Census, an official recording of the country's population, is conducted via a distributed survey form every 10 years.

The Census allows federal, state and local governments to conduct fair redistricting, provides statistical support for grant applications, helps communities plan for future needs and more.

Commissioner Lohr said achieving an accurate count is "critical," as many federal funding sources depend on Census figures.

"If we undercount, that results in the county being underfunded. It really is that simple," Lohr said, adding the press conference was meant to address why it's important for everyone to "stand up and be counted."

Commissioner Zimmerlink said Fayette County established its Complete Count Committee at the U.S. Census Bureau's urging.

"Each member is asked to use their voice to raise awareness and encourage participation in the count," Zimmerlink said.

The 15 members, and their classifications, of Fayette County's 2020 Census Complete Count Committee are: Rick Adaboto - Business, EMS, Mayor; Gary Altman - Legal Representative; Missy Brant - School Teacher-Union; Mary Coffman - Retired Occupational Therapist; Chuck Cook - Township Supervisor; Barb Croftcheck - University (Penn State Fayette); Bob Doria - Veteran; Clarence Johnson - Township Supervisor; Bob Lubic - Priest; Todd Miner - Farmer (Farmland Preservation); Muriel Nuttall - Chamber of Commerce; Mark Rafail - City of Uniontown Redevelopment Authority; Norma Ryan - Community Organizer; Phil Savini - Public School System; Bob Shark - Economic Development.

Lohr said the committee boasts a "diverse group of individuals, representing all walks of life."

"Their commitment, their drive is to carry the message to the community, to communicate why an accurate count is vital to the wellbeing of Fayette County," he said.

Although some citizens may be “reluctant” to answer the many questions the Census survey includes, Lohr said, the committee will be tasked with reaching out and encouraging people to respond with at least the essential information.

In addition to commissioners, Planning, Zoning and Community Development Director Sara Rosiek and U.S. Census Bureau Partnership Specialist Sheila Beasley also issued remarks during Wednesday’s event.

“Congratulations on being at this step in the process. The Complete Count Committees are formed throughout the United States and we appreciate you and recognize you as the trusted voices.” Beasley said. “When people hear you discuss the importance of the Census and how it will affect them, it will be the turning point for them to either respond or not respond.”

Beasley went on to say over \$675 billion are available through federal funds based on the data from the population count.

“This will affect your entities, your schools, your roads, services, your appropriation of seats in government,” she said. “All of those things are dependent and impacted on the population count.”

The press conference also featured a question-and-answer session. Commissioner Vicites said the event was meant to establish the committee’s priorities and a timeline in which to accomplish them.

“I believe we have a very well-rounded Complete Count Committee that encompasses all aspects of our citizenry,” Vicites said. “As the committee moves forward, they will maximize the effort to make sure the Census is as accurately counted as possible.”

For more information on the Complete Count Committee, call 724-430-1211. For more information on the 2020 Census, visit www.census.gov.

To learn more about Fayette County, visit www.FayetteCountyPA.org.

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