

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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CONTACT:

Casey Farmer, Executive Director,
Alameda County Complete Count Committee,
(510) 393-0388 casey.farmer@acgov.org
Erika Brink, (951) 553-3561
erika@fcpcommunications.com



ALAMEDA COUNTY COMMUNITY LEADERS RESPOND TO REMOVAL OF CITIZENSHIP QUESTION ON CENSUS 2020

Oakland, CA – A coalition of community and elected leaders from the Alameda County Complete Count Committee rallied in response to the Supreme Court’s decision to block the citizenship question on Census 2020, which was proposed by the Trump Administration.

The Supreme Court found that the Census Bureau’s rationale to add a citizenship question (“for the purposes of enforcing the Voting Rights Act”) was “contrived” and in violation of the Administrative Procedures Act. The Supreme Court sent the case back to the lower court so the Census Bureau can present its justification at a future hearing. However the Bureau claims to have a print deadline of July 1, 2019 so it is unclear whether the Census Bureau will wait until the fall to or will commence in printing next week without the question.

On the steps of the Alameda County Superior Courthouse, dozens of people chanted “Our Community Counts! Our Community Belongs!” followed by impassioned speeches from immigrant advocates, elected officials, and allies.

The County of Alameda has established a Complete Count Committee to ensure an accurate count of its residents. The Committee will work with trusted messengers of immigrant communities to convey the importance of the Census and specifically to dispel the myths and fear caused by the proposed citizenship question. Outreach efforts will include workshops in multiple languages, Questionnaire Assistance Centers throughout Alameda County, Census Weeks at schools and colleges, and more. The 2020 Census can be completed online, via mobile device, by phone, and on paper.

Below are statements from community and elected leaders in response to this decision.

Alameda County Supervisor Wilma Chan:

“The citizenship question was a direct attack on immigrant communities intended solely to ignite fear and deter immigrant communities from participating in the Census. If residents don't complete

the Census, Alameda County would lose billions of dollars for our roads, our hospitals, and our schools.”

Alameda County Supervisor Nate Miley:

"We stand here today with a message for the immigrants of Alameda County: you belong and you count! We need you to complete the Census so our community gets the resources we all deserve. We have approximately 247,000 immigrants in Alameda County and we need the Census to be accessible to every single one of them. Next spring, we'll open Questionnaire Assistance Centers in many neighborhoods and our partners will host workshops in multiple languages."

United States Congresswoman Barbara Lee:

"This was an unnecessary question designed to threaten and intimidate our immigrant communities who rightfully feel that the federal government would use this data against them. I will continue to fight to ensure that we have a census that meets the constitutional requirement for an accounting of all individuals regardless of citizenship – and to ensure that our immigrant neighbors are treated with dignity, compassion, and respect."

Julia Marks, Staff Attorney, Asian Americans Advancing Justice - Asian Law Caucus:

"Strong laws are in place to protect the confidentiality of your census response. The Census Bureau is not allowed to share information about individual responses with anyone. This includes immigration enforcement, police, housing authorities, and any other government agencies--they cannot see your census information."

Geraldine Alcidi, Executive Director, Filipino Advocates for Justice:

"Today, we stand together, as immigrants and citizens. We stand against injustice and bigotry. We stand for the diversity and inclusion of our often-overlooked communities that truly make America great. We must fight for the resources we deserve here in Alameda County - and that means everyone must get counted. Our Community Counts. Our Community Belongs."

Emma Paulino, Senior Organizer, Faith in Action East Bay:

"The Census is used to distribute billions of dollars to Alameda County. For every single person not counted, we lose nearly \$10,000 over a decade for our community. That means billions of dollars are at stake. An undercount will reduce housing units for low-income working families. An undercount will further reduce our scarce education dollars for our children - who are our future. An undercount will reduce funding for highway repairs that impact us all. Our community – immigrants and non immigrants – cannot afford to lose any funding for our community."

Rona Popal, Executive Director, Afghan Coalition (Fremont)

"Last year, our Alameda County Board of Supervisors unanimously opposed the citizenship question. Today, the Supreme Court ruled the question is unconstitutional. While we're relieved that Census 2020 will not ask about citizenship status, we recognize how severely the actions of the Trump Administration have frightened, and even terrorized, our immigrant neighbors. We stand here to remind everyone that they belong in Alameda County and they must get counted on the Census next spring."

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About the Alameda County Complete Count Committee (CCC) is a regional, cross-sector stakeholder group working to maximize participation in Census 2020, promote Census jobs, and communicate with the public about the Census. The CCC provides community partners with information, data, training, materials, and technical assistance for direct outreach. To learn more about the CCC, please visit: <http://acgov.org/census2020/>.