



MAYOR BYRON W. BROWN



Dear Community Leader,

In preparation for the upcoming 2020 Census, Erie County Executive Mark C. Poloncarz and City of Buffalo Mayor Byron W. Brown have formed respective Complete Count Committees to ensure that all of our communities are accurately counted and represented. Mayor Brown's BUFFALO Count Us In 2020 Committee and the Erie County 2020 Census Complete Count Committee (CCC) will work together and look forward to working with you on how our community can achieve full participation in this critical census.

As you know, an accurate count is essential both for ensuring an equal voice in government and for the provision of adequate federal and state funding to our County for critical areas such as infrastructure, education, health care, housing, transportation, and more. Yet historically Erie County has struggled to ensure a complete count, with only 80.4% of households mailing back the 2010 questionnaire, exposing disproportionate undercounting among some of our more vulnerable populations.

We invite you to join in the identification of and outreach efforts to our vulnerable communities. The joint City and County Committees will be a central vehicle for coordinating and nurturing a cooperative effort across a broad spectrum of government and community leaders and organizations. We invite you to join with us and be a resource in developing a community campaign to ensure that every Erie County resident -- regardless of race, gender, age, sexual orientation, or immigration status -- is counted in 2020.

This campaign will also ensure the broad distribution of key information, such as messaging on changes to the Census questionnaire, strategies for achieving full participation in your community, navigating technology barriers, advocating for funding opportunities for Census related work, offering employment opportunities, and more.

We certainly face challenges, including the likelihood of fewer field staff than in 2010 and a move to an online system that will be unfamiliar and possibly disconcerting to some residents, which could negatively impact responses to the 2020 Census. We hope you will join us as we work together to develop a plan to overcome these challenges and ensure an accurate census count.

The first official meeting of the joint City and County Committees will take place on Thursday, June 6 at 3:00 PM at the Jacqueline Vito LoRusso Alumni and Visitor Center at Buffalo State College, 667 Grant Street, Buffalo, NY 14213. We ask that you RSVP to census@erie.gov by Thursday, May 30 to join the committees and indicate if you or a designated representative will be at the launch meeting.

Thank you for the work you do on behalf of Buffalo and Erie County's communities. We look forward to partnering with you to make our community count in 2020!

Sincerely,

Julie Barry
Erie CCC Co-Chair

Cara Matteliano
Erie CCC Co-Chair

Jessica Lazarin
Buffalo Count Us In 2020