



Legislation Text

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To: Board of Supervisors

Department or Agency Name(s): County Administrator's Office

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Vote Requirement: Informational Only

Supervisorial District(s): All

Title:

2020 Census Update - Get Counted Sonoma County!

Recommended Action:

Receive Update on 2020 Census Hard-to-Count Communities Outreach Efforts

Executive Summary:

On January 2019, the County of Sonoma opted in to receiving \$100,000 in grant funding from the State of California, and subsequently entered an agreement with the California Complete Count Office to support countywide Census 2020 outreach efforts targeting Hard-to-Count communities and Hard-to-Count tracts. Through the CAO's Community and Governmental Affairs team, the County designed and filed its Census 2020 Hard-to-Count Strategic Outreach Plan (Attachment A), which was approved by the California Complete Count Committee in July 2019. Currently, nearly 40% of the County's budget comes from State and Federal Funding, and research estimates that about \$2,000 dollars is lost every year for ten years for every resident not counted. To tackle the risk of an undercount, the County has partnered with United Way of the Wine Country (UWWC) to establish the Sonoma Complete Count Committee (SCCC), which brings together community based organizations and other institutions around the common goal of educating the County's residents about the census and the importance of getting counted. On May 2019, the Sonoma County Board of Supervisors recognized the importance of achieving a full and accurate count in our jurisdiction through a Gold Resolution. Today's update presents outreach activities to date and upcoming steps. It also highlights anticipated outreach challenges and the approach put in place to tackle these. Finally, the update provides a brief preview of redistricting information.

Discussion:

The State of California initially approved \$90.3 million in the 2018-2019 budget for the 2020 census outreach and media campaign. Amidst concerns about the challenges facing Census 2020, Governor Gavin Newsom allocated more resources, bringing the total State budget for census outreach to \$154,300,000. Approximately \$26 million was allocated specifically to Counties based on population size, Sonoma County received \$100,000.

State funding allowed the hiring of a temporary staff to coordinate the outreach operation, including the creation of the required Strategic Outreach Plan, Implementation Plan and their execution. In addition, funding allows for operational costs such as SCCC convening costs, the training of trusted messengers, and the development of communications materials, including a census 2020 social media campaign. Staff is also coordinating with Community Based Organizations (CBOs) who have received census outreach funding awards from United Way of the Wine Country.

Current efforts:

The County's outreach strategy and implementation plan are articulated around three main outreach phases: 1) educate about Census, from May 2018 through January 2020; 2) motivate County residents to participate, from end of January through mid-March 2020; and 3) activate the count, from mid-March through the non-response follow-up period in July 2020. As part of this implementation plan, the County and the Administrative Community Based Organization (ACBO) for region 2, United Way of the Wine Country, have co-created the Sonoma County Complete Count Committee, an inclusive and partnership-based platform regrouping a cross section of over 40 trusted community stakeholders working together to ensure execution of the multi-phased Hard-to-Count outreach approach (Attachment B). These representatives have expert knowledge of the community groups at stake, and enjoy the status of trusted messengers, which enables them to assist in a successful grassroots effort.

Under the slogan "*Get Counted Sonoma*," and thanks to the early support of SCCC members, the County has already kicked off consistent Census 2020 education, both through participation in key events, and ongoing social media engagement (Attachment C). Board members have extended opportunities for census outreach activities for Hard-to-Count communities such as presentations to fire survivors and education opportunities during key community events within their respective districts. Furthermore, in line with the strategic goal of activating trusted messengers, the County has initiated a "*Train the Trusted Messenger*" program to equip SCCC partners with outreach tools and impactful messaging. Finally, the County is extending this once in a decade civic action opportunity to youth through a Census 2020 volunteer program. The bilingual website (www.getcountedsonoma.org <<http://www.getcountedsonoma.org>> / www.HazteContarSonoma.org) launched in May 2019, and provides full information on the County's census outreach efforts, as well as recurrent updates to the public. These early efforts set the stage for a full-scale census mobilization during the critical "Activate the Count" phase.

Challenges:

While the U.S. Census Bureau will not include a question asking about citizenship on the 2020 Census, an accurate count is far from guaranteed. According to the Public Policy Institute of California, inadequate funding and fears among immigrant communities increase the likelihood of a significant undercount in California. This alarming situation could potentially cause the loss of millions of dollars in federal funding for critical programs. Without a fully operating budget of \$7.5 billion, the Census could be compromised in its mission of effectively reaching every community and achieving an accurate count. Several sources estimate that States could lose around \$2,000 in funding per year for every person not counted. To put things in perspective, 20.1% of Sonoma County residents did not mail in their census responses in 2010, and the US

Census Bureau estimates that 32,322 Sonoma County residents live in the top five hardest to count tracts. If these residents do not respond to the census, the County could lose over \$64 million dollars every year, for the next 10 years. This estimate significantly increases if we take in consideration the lack of participation of other undercounted groups like children from 0 to 5, seniors, individuals with no broadband access, or families displaced by the October 2017 firestorm. The SCCC is fully aware of these challenges and will continue to unite and coordinate efforts to ensure that Hard-to-Count communities in Sonoma County are motivated to get counted.

Redistricting:

The United States Constitution, Article I, Section 2, requires congressional apportionment to be based on the enumeration of the U.S. population, which is why redistricting is always needed after the census.

New districts must be drawn when a state gains or loses congressional districts as a result of a change in population shown by the census. However, even if the number of districts does not change, jurisdictions must redraw district lines so that the districts have equal populations, giving their residents fair representation.

Division 21, Chapter 9, Section 21500 of the State Elections Code, as amended per AB-849, dictates that “following each federal decennial census, and using that census as a basis, the board shall adjust the boundaries of any or all of the supervisorial districts of the County so that supervisorial districts shall be substantially equal in population as required by the United States Constitution.

Per Section 23001, subdivision (C), as amended per SB-139, a County with more than 400,000 residents on July 1, 2019 shall establish an independent redistricting commission to adopt the County’s supervisorial districts after each federal decennial census.

If a county does not pass an ordinance to establish an independent redistricting commission pursuant to Section 23005 (12 members) or 23006 (9 members) by March 1, 2020, the county shall establish an independent redistricting commission pursuant to Section 23005. In either case, commissioners shall be appointed on or before March 1, 2021.

The boundaries shall be adopted by the Board no earlier than August 1, 2021, but not later than 151 days before the County’s next regular election occurring on March 1st, 2022.

Hard to Count Communities

The State is focusing its communication and outreach efforts on the areas of greatest need: communities historically undercounted in the Census. These Hard-to-Count groups are least likely to respond to the Census questionnaire without specialized outreach and assistance.

The State’s goal is to meet or exceed the U.S. Census Bureau’s nationwide target to achieve a 60.5% self-response rate from people in all communities.

Hard-to-Count census tracts are defined by the U.S. Census Bureau based on a range of housing, demographic, and socioeconomic variables that correlate with undercounts. They include population density, and percentage of the following demographic variables:

HTC variables	% Specific to Sonoma County
Immigrants and foreign born	16.6% of Sonoma County residents
Linguistically isolated people	10.4 % of Sonoma County residents speak English “less than very well”
Persons who are not high school graduates	12.3% of Sonoma County residents
Persons who are unemployed	3.8% of Sonoma County residents
Number of vacant housing units in an area	8.6% of housing units are vacant in Sonoma County
Specific ethnic and minority populations	26.4% of Sonoma County residents are Hispanic or Latino of any race. Other races account for 6.9% of total population.
Renters and children	5.2% of Sonoma County residents are children under 5 years old. 39.7% of housing units in Sonoma County are renter occupied.
Densely populated communities with multi-unit housing, public assistance characteristics	14.1% of Sonoma County households have receive supplemental security income, cash public assistance and/or food stamp benefits for over 12 months
Native Americans living on tribal lands	1.1% of Sonoma County residents belong to a tribal community

Prior Board Actions:

Resolution 19-0029 Authorizing a Budgetary Adjustment to the Fiscal Year 2018-2019 Final Budget for the County Administrator's Office in the Amount of \$100,000 for Census 2020 State Funding, adopted on January 29, 2019.

Resolution 19-0669 supporting the 2020 Census and the full and accurate count of all California residents, adopted on May 14, 2019.

FISCAL SUMMARY

Expenditures	FY 19-20 Adopted	FY20-21 Projected	FY 21-22 Projected
Budgeted Expenses			
Additional Appropriation Requested			
Total Expenditures			

Funding Sources			
General Fund/WA GF			
State/Federal			
Fees/Other			
Use of Fund Balance			
Contingencies			
Total Sources			

Narrative Explanation of Fiscal Impacts:

The County has received \$58,000 out of the \$100,000 from the contract with the State of California. The remaining funding will be utilized for outstanding staffing costs that we estimate will get us through March 2020.

Staffing Impacts:			
Position Title (Payroll Classification)	Monthly Salary Range (A-I Step)	Additions (Number)	Deletions (Number)

Narrative Explanation of Staffing Impacts (If Required):

N/A

Attachments:

Attachment A: Sonoma County HTC Strategic Outreach Plan

Attachment B: List of Outreach Partners per HTC tract and HTC communities

Attachment C: List of Outreach Activities to date

Attachment D: AB 849 Elections: City and County Redistricting

Attachment E: SB 139 Independent Redistricting Commissions

Attachment F: Census PowerPoint Presentation

Related Items "On File" with the Clerk of the Board:

N/A