

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: Cara Burton, (757) 787-3400

SETTING A GOAL FOR A COMPLETE CENSUS COUNT FOR THE EASTERN SHORE OF VIRGINIA



Photo above: Raquel Cepeda, Partnership Specialist - 2020 Census, U.S. Census Bureau - Philadelphia Region (left) and Bill O'Hare, a member of the Virginia Complete Count Commission and Cape Charles resident (center) share information about the 2020 Census at the library's children event this past May. To ensure the Eastern Shore does not miss out on federal funding, each household is expected to complete the 2020 Census survey this spring.

(Accomac, Virginia) February 16, 2020 – The Eastern Shore of Virginia could lose an estimated \$20,000 in federal funding for each person who goes uncounted in the 2020 Census. This includes funding for many of the services citizens rely on like schools, public safety, libraries, and fire departments. To help ensure the Eastern Shore of Virginia has an accurate and complete count, Accomack and Northampton Counties formed a regional Complete Count Committee. The purpose of the Committee is to educate the community as to why it is important to complete the Census survey. The goal is to have every individual on the Shore counted.

The Committee, formed by Accomack County Administrator Michael Mason and Northampton County Administrator Charles Kolakowski, is comprised of community leaders on the Eastern Shore as recommended in the Census Complete Count manual. This includes community leaders from community organizations, business, education, faith-based organizations, the immigrant community, social services, and senior citizens. The Committee meets twice a month to identify outreach events and community communication outlets with which to distribute information about taking the Census.

By understanding why the Census is so important to community services, it is hoped individuals will want to answer the short, ten-question survey. The U.S. Constitution requires a Census of America's population every ten years. It determines how many representatives each state gets in

Congress and how to redraw district boundaries for elections. Communities rely on census statistics to plan for a variety of resident needs including new roads, schools, and emergency services. Businesses use census data to determine where to open places to shop. Each year, the federal government distributes more than \$675 billion to states and communities based on Census Bureau data.

For the first time, you will be able to respond online or by phone, as well as by mail. By taking ten minutes to complete the survey online, you will not need to respond to a follow-up visit by a Census employee to your home. Starting March 12th, 2020, the Census Bureau will mail postcards to residences with a code to start the survey. You can use this code or your home address to start completing the survey. Computers at all Eastern Shore Public Libraries are available for residents to complete the Census. Staff will be available to assist as needed.

All Census information is kept confidential, by law. An individual's information is not shared with any other government agency. The Census does not ask for your social security number, banking information or political affiliation. The Census captures every person living in the United States, including babies, but only one survey needs to be filled out per household. The Census only happens every ten years, let's be sure your friends and family are counted!

For more information, visit 2020Census.gov or call the main library in Accomac at (747) 787-3400.

END