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Contact: Paul Hoang

Email: paul.hoang@mfpinstitute.com

Cell: (949) 431-6374

2020 Census Caravan to #GetOutTheCount through Garden Grove-Stanton

(Garden Grove, CA) – In the Age of COVID, everyone has had to pivot—including the U.S. Census Bureau. Given the unprecedented challenges brought forth by ‘social distancing’ to contain this global, contagious and virulent novel coronavirus, the 2020 U.S. Census has been extended until October 31st (3 months later than usual deadline in July).

Usually, a few months after National Census Day (April 1st), the U.S. Census Bureau sends out enumerators out into communities. These Census specialists’ jobs are to knock on doors and encourage those who have NOT filled out their census forms to do so. However, in this unprecedented era of shelter-in-place and social distancing, such enumeration cannot take place. The task of getting everybody counted becomes all the more challenging.

On Friday July 24th, from 1-5pm, there will be a massive effort by community-based organizations, activists and local leaders involved with 2020 OC Census, to count the hardest-to-reach community members in Garden Grove-Stanton. A caravan of 15 cars (escorted by Garden Grove police) will be driving through low-response Census tracks. That is, the caravan will parade through areas of homes, businesses and houses of worship, which have NOT yet filled out their Census forms (based on live-data collected via 2020 Census).

The Caravan will begin at the Stanton Community Center at noon (7800 Katella), wind through the Stanton Family Resource Center, Continental Gardens Apartments, Stanton Central Park, Chua Quan Am Buddhist temple, Advance Beauty College, Buena Clinton Youth & Family Center; and Main Street-Garden Grove. The finish line will be Steelcraft across from Garden Grove City Hall.

Along the route, volunteers will be handing out 2020 Census swag (water bottles, canvas tote bags, hipster beanies, etc.), postcards and flyers to help educate the public. Safety measures of hand sanitizers, face coverings/shields and social distancing more than 6 feet, will be implemented (per California Department of Public Health Guidelines) to ensure the safety of all.

To incentivize the public to #GetOutTheCount, local businesses, leaders and community-based non-profits have donated prizes and gift cards (of 10, \$25 in cash, haircuts, mani-pedis, restaurant vouchers, etc). This Census Caravan is spearheaded by Paul Hoang, LCSW founder of the mental health service agency, Moving Forward Psychological Institute, Inc; U.S. Census

Bureau, and volunteers from OC 2020 Census VietNameese Complete Count Committee (VNCCC), Community Action Partnership—OC; Cities of Garden Grove and Stanton; the Garden Grove Police Department, Charitable Ventures, etc.

Historically, the Census is a massive, nationwide survey conducted by the U.S. Census Bureau every ten years. It is written in the U.S. Constitution and its impact pervades through every aspect of civic life. In the Age of COVID, now more than ever, an accurate, complete count of EVERYONE who lives in Orange County is imperative. The questionnaire consists of only 9 questions, and takes less than 10 minutes to complete. In this landmark year 2020, the U.S. Census is now available online but can be filled out in 3 ways:

- 1) old-fashioned paper format (sent out to households back in March);
- 2) online at <https://2020Census.gov> or
- 3) by calling toll-free numbers, available in over 33 languages at the above website, and speaking with an in-language intake person.

****For every person not counted, Orange County loses \$1000-2000 per year. Multiplied by 10 years, that's a potential loss of \$20,000 per person (ages 0-110 years), of lost federal, public funding every decade!**

As of July 18, 2020, Orange County is averaging only 70% response rate (with Anaheim and Santa Ana, lagging in the mid 60% response rate, due to their greater numbers and ethnic and socioeconomic diversity.) The challenge now is to reach the 'hardest-to-count' (HTC) residents and convince them to fill out their Census. These HTC members include: Limited English Proficient or monolingual immigrants, the undocumented, the unhoused, the elderly, veterans, babies (0-5 years old), the disabled, those who are now isolated, sheltering in place.

Regardless of immigration status, Census data is protected by strong federal laws and cannot be used by police, law enforcement, Immigration Customs Enforcement (ICE) or federal agents. Thus, for everyone to get proper healthcare; for us to know how many COVID test kits are needed; for governments to allocate proper funding for community clinics, hospitals, schools, roads, utilities, police, fire departments, first-responders, etc, it is urgently important to #GetOuttheCOUNT! Come. Join in the Census Caravan through Garden Grove and Stanton on Friday, July 24th, from 1-5pm. (See attached route map).