

2020 CENSUS REMARKS

Good evening and thank you for generously giving me a couple of minutes to address this gathering. My name is Tamara Stewart and I'm a member of Mt. Vernon's 2020 Census Complete Count Committee. Great news! The 2020 Census is almost here. Starting on March 12th, Mt. Vernon residents will be able to do our civic duty and get counted. Your household should receive a letter or postcard in the mail inviting you to participate, although some households may receive a traditional printed questionnaire instead. In any case, you should answer the nine questions for each person in your household, either online, by phone, or snail mail.

There are several reasons why responding promptly to the census is important. First, it is our civic duty and an act of patriotism. Whether you're an American citizen or non-citizen, documented or undocumented, housed or homeless, our country needs you to get counted. Second, the census determines Congressional representation. Third, the census also determines Congressional districts and how they're drawn. Fourth, and perhaps most importantly, the census count determines how \$675 billion per year in federal aid is allocated.

Mt. Vernon's official 2010 Census count was 67,292, although by many estimates our population is closer to 100,000. Due to the severe undercount in 2010, Mt. Vernon lost out on tens-of-millions of federal tax dollars over the past decade. Every person in our city who gets counted this year represents approximately \$2,750 from the federal government. That means that every 365 people represent \$1 million! If we could increase Mt. Vernon's official count to 90,000 people this year, we would increase our city's federal funding by \$61 million, the amount of the city's entire 2020 proposed budget! And that additional \$61 million wouldn't be for just one year, our city would receive this windfall of additional federal funding for the next ten years!

Federal funds pay for things like public safety, housing assistance, public transportation and roads, Medicare, health clinics, SNAP, school breakfast/lunch and after-school programs, Community Development Block Grants, community mental health programs, and Pell grants for college. We know that Mt. Vernon desperately needs funding for all of these purposes!

So please, demonstrate your patriotism while helping our community rebuild. Get counted and spread the word encouraging your family, friends and neighbors to get counted. For 2020, please help us make Mt. Vernon count. Thank you.

“CENSUS MATH”

Every person = \$2,750

Every 365 people counted = \$1 million/yr.

Estimated population = 100,000

Official 2010 census count = -- 67,292

Estimated 2010 undercount = 32,708

Mt. Vernon 2020 Proposed Budget = \$61 million

If we increase Mt. Vernon's census count to 90,000 (which is estimated would still be a 10% undercount), Mt. Vernon would increase its federal funding by \$61 million, the amount of the city's entire 2020 proposed budget! And that additional \$61 million wouldn't be for just one year, the city would receive this windfall of additional funding for the next ten years! If we succeed in getting our census count up to 90,000, the City of Mt. Vernon can improve ALL city services AND prevent the need for a property tax increase for the next ten years!

Let's share some "Census Math" with our community to help them understand why it's critically important for everyone living in Mt. Vernon to get counted.