

# News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: August 25, 2020



DANIEL HORRIGAN, MAYOR

**Contact:** Greta Johnson  
Assistant Chief of Staff  
Office of Executive Shapiro  
[gjohnson@summitoh.net](mailto:gjohnson@summitoh.net)  
330-643-2656

Ellen Lander-Nischt  
Press Secretary  
City of Akron  
[ELander@akronohio.gov](mailto:ELander@akronohio.gov)  
330-375-2325

## Mayor Horrigan and County Executive Shapiro Make Final Push to Count Residents in Last Six Weeks of 2020 Census

**SUMMIT COUNTY, OHIO**—The U.S. Census Bureau recently made an announcement that it will be ending all counting efforts for the 2020 census on September 30, a month sooner than previously anticipated. Legislation to extend the September 30th deadline to October 31st continues to stall in Congress, even though it seemed to be an agreed upon, bi-partisan and necessary solution earlier this year. The counting efforts to be suspended include collecting responses online, over the phone and by mail, as well as a critical door-knocking campaign to better reach hard-to-count populations.

As co-chairs of the Summit County Complete Count Committee, Akron Mayor Dan Horrigan and County Executive Ilene Shapiro are speaking up. “We are extremely concerned and disheartened that counting will be cut short, as a thorough and accurate census count is vital to the health, wealth, and accurate representation of our community’s residents. With Akron’s response rate at 62.3% and Summit County’s at 72.0%, we have more work to do to assure our community receives the funding, services and representation it needs, especially during these exceedingly trying times we are facing,” Mayor Horrigan says. County Executive Shapiro adds, “We strongly encourage every resident and organization to talk to friends, family, neighbors, employees and customers about the importance of filling out the Census, as it will affect how our community is funded, represented, and serviced for the next decade. We are counting on you, Summit County, to step up for your community.”

Resident responses to the 2020 Census matter greatly to the region. Census results help determine how billions of dollars in federal funding flow into states and communities each year and how many Congressional seats and electoral votes each state receives. The results influence highway planning and construction, as well as grants for public transit systems. The list of affected programs

goes on, including ones that determine how money is allocated for the Head Start program, or grants to support teachers and special education, health clinics, restore wildlife or prevent child abuse.

Urgency for an accurate count has steadily increased with local leaders, as an undercount will have a disproportionate effect on minority communities. Akron City Council President Margo Sommerville adds, “A complete count will assure our community has the resources and services that it needs and deserves to address issues like infrastructure, job creation, and gun violence prevention. We are continually experiencing disinvestment at the State and Federal level, but we control our own destiny with our Census count. We are taking care of each other when we fill out the Census. It’s safe, it’s easy, and it’s so important.”

To increase the accuracy of the community’s final count, the Summit County Complete Count Committee has stepped up efforts to capture more data in areas with lower response rates—which include zip codes 44301, 44302, 44303, 44304, 44305, 44306 and 44307, 44311, 44314, 44320, and 44223. Residents in those zip codes can expect to see an increased presence of Census workers, as well as more virtual events, community flyers and social media ads through September 30<sup>th</sup>. Additional marketing efforts will also include representation at community events, public service announcements, robo-calls, and mobilizing residents in low response neighborhoods to encourage their neighbors to respond.

Door knocking efforts are still under way and you can safely fill out the form either with a Census worker or online. Residents can fill out the Census *only* through September 30th and you can find more information at [www.2020census.gov](http://www.2020census.gov).

###