

**Testimony of Planned Parenthood of New York City to**

**The New York State Complete Count Commission**  
**Submitted electronically to: [labor.sm.hearing@labor.ny.gov](mailto:labor.sm.hearing@labor.ny.gov)**

**May 1, 2019**

Planned Parenthood of New York City (PPNYC) is a trusted name in health care because of our commitment to comprehensive, inclusive care. We have been a leading provider of sexual and reproductive health services in New York City for more than 100 years, reaching approximately 85,000 New Yorkers annually through our clinical and education programs. PPNYC provides a wide range of health services including access to birth control; emergency contraception; gynecological care; cervical and breast cancer screenings; colposcopies; male sexual health exams; testing, counseling, and treatment for sexually transmitted infections; the HPV vaccine; HIV testing and counseling; and pregnancy testing, options counseling and abortion. We also provide PrEP and PEP, transgender hormone therapy, vasectomies, and menopausal hormonal therapy.

We believe that high quality health care is a human right every person deserves. Our doors are open to all New Yorkers regardless of income, gender, gender-identity, insurance, or immigration status. At PPNYC, we believe everyone deserves access to services; no one's access should be compromised because they belong to an immigrant family or community.

PPNYC is committed to ensuring a fair and accurate 2020 Census. The Census plays a significant role in determining people's long-term representation and political power at the federal, state, and local level. The Census also determines how the government spends over \$800 billion in federal dollars — that includes how many dollars go to sexual and reproductive health care programs.

Undercounting communities means less political representation for the individuals and families PPNYC serves. It could also mean the loss of billions of dollars of federal funds, including health care programs like Medicaid and Child Health Plus.

For example, Medicaid, a program that one in five women of reproductive age rely on, accounts for 58 percent of Census-guided funding.<sup>1</sup> The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services also distributes funding for Title X — the nation's program for affordable birth control — based, in part, on the Census results.<sup>2</sup> More than half of PPNYC's patients are insured by Medicaid. Patients not eligible for insurance can still pay reduced rates or receive our services for free due in part through Title X funding.

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<sup>1</sup> Brookings Institution; Carpenter, Rachel B.; Reamer, Andrew. Counting for Dollars: The Role of the Decennial Census in the Distribution of Federal Funds (2010, March 9). Retrieved December 13, 2018 from <https://www.brookings.edu/research/counting-for-dollars-the-role-of-the-decennial-census-in-the-distribution-of-federal-funds/>.

<sup>2</sup> Institute of Medicine. A Review of the HHS Family Planning Program: Mission, Management and Measurement of Results (2009). Washington, DC: The National Academies Press. Retrieved December 13, 2018 from <https://www.nap.edu/catalog/12585/a-review-of-the-hhs-family-planning-program-mission-management>.

Imposing additional barriers and exacerbating the undercount of marginalized communities would likely mean a reduction in the amount of support reproductive health programs receive and that allows PPNYC to continue to serve everyone regardless of ability to pay.

That is also why PPNYC opposes the addition of a U.S. citizenship question in the 2020 Census. Adding a question about citizenship status is discriminatory, and it is a departure from long-standing Census Bureau policy of counting all people who reside in the United States.

In the current political climate, asking the citizen status of every household and every person in the country will prompt fear and cause many people to avoid the Census for fear of being targeted by this administration. This question is unnecessarily intrusive and will raise concerns in all households — native- and foreign-born, citizen and non-citizen, as well as mixed-status families — about the confidentiality of their personal information and how it may be used by government authorities.

Adding an unnecessary question about citizenship to the Census threatens the accuracy of the count, especially in already “hard-to-count” communities like immigrant populations and contribute to fear in documented, undocumented and mixed status families. Certain populations, like families with young children, families with low incomes, immigrants and indigenous populations, have historically been underrepresented in Census data, despite the fact that they often need the health care resources allocated through the Census the most. PPNYC condemns the Trump-Pence administration’s placement of a citizenship question in the 2020 Census that would lead to an undercount of immigrant communities, resulting in less representation and less financial support for needed health care in those communities.

PPNYC appreciates the \$20 million in the New York State budget for Census education and outreach. Community-based organizations conducting outreach and education should have all the support and resources they need to maximize participation and avoid an undercount. This is a good foundation on which to build outreach efforts and more funds will be needed as the Census begins in earnest. A complete and accurate count is as important as ever, with reports that New York State is at risk of losing two seats in 2022.<sup>3</sup>

Regardless of the outcome of the U.S. Supreme Court’s decision on the inclusion of a U.S. citizenship question, PPNYC is committed to working alongside our partners and allies to ensure a complete and accurate Census count. Every single person residing in the U.S. has a constitutional right to be counted, and a fundamental right to health care.

Yours truly,



Laura McQuade  
President and CEO

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<sup>3</sup> Lombardo, David. New York poised to lose two congressional seats (2018, December 20). Retrieved April 25, 2019 from: <https://www.timesunion.com/news/article/New-York-poised-to-lose-two-congressional-seats-13481103.php>.

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*Since 1916, Planned Parenthood of New York City (PPNYC) has been an advocate for and provider of sexual and reproductive health services and education for New Yorkers. Providing more than 100,000 patient visits annually, PPNYC's health care centers in Manhattan, Brooklyn, the Bronx, Queens and Staten Island offer sexual and reproductive health services, including gynecological care, birth control, cancer screening, pregnancy testing, abortion, testing and treatment for sexually transmitted infections, HIV prevention, testing and counseling, transgender hormone therapy and vasectomy. Through a threefold mission of clinical services, education, and advocacy, PPNYC brings better health and more fulfilling lives to each new generation of New Yorkers. As a voice for reproductive freedom, PPNYC supports legislation and policies to ensure that all New Yorkers will have access to the full range of sexual and reproductive health care services and information.*