

YWCA ASSOCIATIONS ACROSS ILLINOIS SUPPORT SUPREME COURT RULING REJECTING CITIZENSHIP QUESTION ON 2020 CENSUS FORM

June 27, 2019: YWCA associations from across the state of Illinois welcome yesterday's U.S. Supreme Court decision to reject that the proposed question on citizenship be included on the 2020 U.S. Census form.

"Today's decision reminds us that everyone counts in this country. We must all prepare to stand up for the representation of our communities and encourage full participation in the census," stated Rebecca Munoz-Ripley, Executive Director of YWCA Sauk Valley, an organization in northwest Illinois whose client base is more than 20% immigrant.

One in seven residents in Illinois is an immigrant, according to the American Immigration Council. Immigrants are already one of the hardest to count communities in the country. The possible addition of the citizenship question prompted collective fear across Illinois YWCA associations that immigrant communities would forego responding to the Census altogether in an effort to protect themselves and their families. By ensuring that the 2020 Census is free from extraneous inquiries, immigrant communities and people of color will feel more comfortable participating in the Census and the results will more accurately reflect our U.S. population.

As trusted resources and human services providers within their respective communities, YWCAs in Illinois are committed to ensuring a fair and accurate 2020 Census count. Five YWCA affiliates - Sauk Valley, Elgin, McLean County, Kankakee and Metropolitan Chicago - joined together to successfully secure grant funding from Forefront to promote census participation in traditionally undercounted communities, including immigrant communities. An undercount in Illinois could have devastating effects: A mere 1% undercount could cost the state over \$100 million each year in federal funding for the next decade. Illinois is also at risk of losing two Congressional seats.

"An accurate Census count is vital to ensure that our state has its rightful voice in Congress and receives its proportionate share of federal funding to support crucial programs," stated Dorri McWhorter, CEO of YWCA Metropolitan Chicago. *"As one of the largest human services providers in the state, we directly depend on millions of dollars in federal funds annually to administer critical services that promote economically sustainable communities."*

YWCA is on a mission to eliminate racism, empower women, stand up for social justice, help families, and strengthen communities. It is one of the oldest and largest women's organizations in the nation, serving over 2 million women, girls, and their families. There are 14 affiliates in Illinois: Alton, Canton, Chicago Metropolitan, Elgin, Evanston-North Shore, Kankakee, Lake County, McLean County (which includes Bloomington-Normal), Northwest Illinois (which includes Rockford), Pekin, Quad Cities, Sauk Valley, University of Illinois (Champaign), and Quincy.

