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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

NJFA Airing Encore Presentation of “Census 2020” Aging Insights Episode

TRENTON, NJ (March 30, 2020) – The U.S. Constitution mandates that a headcount, as well as a count of all housing units, be conducted throughout the nation every 10 years. Census 2020 invitations are arriving. Why should households complete the Census and what impact will the results have on the Garden State?



To provide additional information to the public during this critical time, the New Jersey Foundation for Aging (NJFA) is airing an encore presentation of the *Census 2020* episode of *Aging Insights*, its monthly TV program, beginning today.

On Episode 103, which originally premiered in Oct. 2019 – before the COVID-19 crisis hit – host Melissa Chalker [pictured, left] discusses why the Census is so vital with guests Jeff Behler, Director of the New York Regional Office of the U.S. Census Bureau, and The Hon. Tahesha Way, New Jersey Secretary of State. Launched in 2011, *Aging Insights* is an award-winning, half-hour show that promotes dialogue and provides resources on critical issues for older adults and caregivers. Census 2020 can be seen on more than 70 public-access stations across NJ [check local listings for channels and times] as well as on NJFA’s website at www.njfoundationforaging.org/aging-insights and YouTube channel at www.youtube.com/njfoundationforaging.

On *Aging Insights*, Secretary Way explains that in New Jersey, about \$22 billion in funding for about 55 federal programs is at stake. She cites such examples as \$1.5 billion federal dollars for transportation and highway infrastructure, an estimated \$80 million in federal funds for meals for seniors and people with disabilities and a combined estimated \$12 billion for Medicare and Medicaid. These federal funds are also tied with senior service centers, she says.

In a statement sent to the NJFA on March 27, Secretary Way said, “Our response to the Census doesn’t just determine how we are represented in government and how federal funds are distributed in our communities. It is also used for emergency planning, including for public health crises like the one we all face right now.”

Two new methods of completing the Census were added this year, Behler points out on *Aging Insights*. In addition to being completed on paper, the Census can also be done online (in English and 12 non-English languages) or be reported by phone (also in English and 12 non-English languages). U.S. Census Bureau Director Steven Dillingham indicated in a press statement dated March 18 that slightly more than a week prior, “... more than 11 million households [in the United States] have responded. America is stepping up to shape our future and ensure families and communities are counted.”

Behler explains that if a household has not completed the Census by late May, teams of enumerators – federal employees with official identification – would be “knocking on doors to ask the same information available online, over the phone or on paper.” However, Director Dillingham, in his March 18 statement, said, “As we continue to monitor the evolving COVID-19 outbreak, we will adjust Census taker and survey operations as necessary in order to follow the guidance of federal, state and local health authorities.”

“For the first time ever, we can respond to the U.S. Census online or over the phone,” urged Secretary Way in her statement. “Doing so now will prevent the need for a Census taker to come to your door and ask you to respond in person. We should all do our part to make sure our communities are prepared for whatever we face in the next decade by answering the U.S. Census for our households today.”

Behler reminds households that Census data are protected under federal law and cannot be used against anyone. Additionally, the information is reported in statistical summaries and never at a personal or household level. For more information on Census 2020, visit census.nj.gov.