PROVOST JONES REMARKS

“Every Pennsylvanian Counts”

Wednesday, February 19, 2020

In his remarks for this special event focused on the 2020 U.S. Census, Penn State Executive Vice President and Provost Nick Jones discussed the University’s vital role in communities throughout Pennsylvania where it has campuses. He also emphasized how “town-and-gown” relationships are integral to Penn State’s success.

Good evening, everyone. It’s a pleasure to join you for this special event focused on the 2020 U.S. Census, “Every Pennsylvanian Counts.”

On behalf of the University, I want to take a moment to recognize several people and groups – to thank them for their hard work and for being here tonight.

I offer a special welcome and thank you to Pennsylvania Second Lady Gisele Fetterman and members of her team. It’s an honor to welcome you to Penn State’s University Park campus.

Also, thanks go out to Centre County Commissioners Mike Pipe and Mark Higgins, State College Borough Mayor Ron Filippelli, and Bellefonte Mayor Tom Wilson for their hard work and support, as well as all local elected officials and the Census staff. Thank you for all you do.

And I wish to thank the entire Penn State Complete Count Committee, as well as Charima Young, Penn State’s Director of Local Government and Community Relations, and Mike Stefan, our Director of State Relations, for leading this critical effort and organizing this event. Your work is making a difference.
The United States Census has been a cornerstone of our democracy since the first national count in 1790. It is mandated by the U.S. Constitution and conducted by the U.S. Census Bureau, a nonpartisan government agency. Participation is required by law.

Simply put, the 2020 Census is a count of every individual living in the United States as of April 1st, 2020. This year’s census will be the 24th since the nation’s founding and the first to allow individuals to respond by phone or online.

Counting the country’s population has broad importance, both politically and economically. The Census results will determine the number of seats the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania has in the U.S. House of Representatives and how many people will represent local communities in the Pennsylvania House and Senate.

The results also will affect how between $600 billion and $900 billion in federal, state, and local funding will be distributed, which will have specific impacts on Penn State students. Officials use census data to make decisions about financial allocations for Pell Grants, transit services, community mental-health services, and much more.

Penn State has a big role to play in the 2020 Census, not just here but also in communities throughout Pennsylvania where the University has campuses.

Historically, college students have been an overlooked and “difficult-to-count” population, especially those who live off campus. In 2020, Penn State is committed to mitigating that challenge throughout Pennsylvania, where this University has tens of thousands of students who need to be counted.

College students residing on a Penn State campus or near one for most of the year will be counted in those individual households.
Town-and-gown relationships are integral to Penn State’s success. The University has long been a true partner on projects large and small that benefit our communities. This project is a big one, and we’re ready to deliver.

We Are Penn State … and We Are excited to be collaborating on the Census with officials and entities throughout the Commonwealth.

Locally, Penn State-University Park is already heavily involved with Centre County, State College Borough, and Bellefonte officials, among others, to get the most complete and accurate student counts possible in 2020.

The University is committed to doing the same in all the communities we serve … because “Every Pennsylvanian Counts.” Thank you.