



MEDIA RELEASE

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City and County Working to Ensure Deployed Military Are Counted Locally in the 2020 Census

(Fayetteville, N.C.) – The City of Fayetteville and Cumberland County have worked with the U.S. Census Bureau, the State of North Carolina and the Greater Fayetteville Chamber to ensure that deployed military personnel and their family members are counted locally in the upcoming 2020 decennial Census. Since a portion of Fort Bragg is within Cumberland County and the Fayetteville city limits, the local governments believe that any deployed military personnel and their family members from Fort Bragg should be included in local Census numbers to accurately reflect the city and county populations.

For the past several decades, the Census Bureau has used a procedure for counting deployed military personnel that has resulted in an undercount of population at the state, county and city levels, which impacts federal funding levels.

Proposed changes in the Census process were announced June 30 when the Census Bureau published the “2020 Census Residence Rule and Residence Situations” in the Federal Register. The changes address the deployed military issue by counting deployed military at a residence within a community rather than apportioning them to a total state population only, which had been a joint federal goal for the City and County, as well as other North Carolina military communities. The Census Bureau is seeking public comment in writing through Aug. 1 and a final announcement for the 2020 rules is expected in 2017.

“I’m happy that the City of Fayetteville and our staff have made progress in helping achieve a better Census count to include deployed military personnel and their family members,” Mayor Nat Robertson said. “I sincerely thank Gov. McCrory’s Office, Governor’s Census Liaison Bob Coats, Sen. Thom Tillis, Sen. Richard Burr and other legislative and congressional members for organizing the meeting held in Fayetteville last summer that spearheaded these efforts. The U.S. Census Bureau, State of North Carolina and Fort Bragg also deserve praise for their efforts in helping Fayetteville accomplish this goal. The City is planning to submit comments about the Census by the Aug. 1 deadline.”

“We are very pleased that the Census Bureau has listened to our concerns regarding the undercounting in military communities and taken action,” said Marshall Faircloth, chairman of the Cumberland County Board of Commissioners. “This is a clear example of local, state and federal agencies collaborating together to produce positive results for the good of the community. Well done.”

The Census Bureau’s current procedure has counted deployed military personnel in the “overseas” part of the apportionment population of a state, but it did not count deployed military personnel at all in the “resident” part of the apportionment population of a state. This meant that deployed military personnel were not counted at the county and city level.

On August 24, 2015, at the request of Gov. McCrory’s Office and with Governor’s Census Liaison Bob Coats playing a leading role, the City hosted a meeting with Census Bureau staff members and other local partners. At this meeting, the recommendations submitted by letter in July were discussed in more detail. Several members of the North Carolina congressional delegation were instrumental in setting up this meeting.

To read more, click on: <https://federalregister.gov/a/2016-15372>.

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