

# NEWS RELEASE

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## VOTO LATINO, LOCAL ELECTED OFFICIALS & THE HISPANIC COMPLETE COUNT COMMITTEE KICK OFF CELEBRITY & TECHNOLOGY-DRIVEN STATEWIDE CENSUS CAMPAIGN IN CAPITAL REGION

**ALBANY, NEW YORK (02/23/10)** -- With only a few weeks left before the U.S. Census forms are mailed to every household in America, Hispanic community leaders and elected officials joined Voto Latino and Time Warner Cable today to announce a state-wide multi-media campaign to help increase participation in the US Census process through the cablecasting of a celebrity packed public service announcement.

Voto Latino unveiled its New York Census Campaign and screened its star-studded "Be Counted, Represent!" public service announcement (PSA) featuring **Rosario Dawson**, **Luis Guzman**, **Demi Lovato** (Disney's Camp Rock franchise), **Ana Ortiz** ("Ugly Betty"), **Wilmer Valderrama** ("That Seventies Show") and **Jorge Garcia** ("Lost"). The multiplatform initiative includes high profile online, television & radio PSAs, a groundbreaking digital partnership with iTunes/Apple and a mobile/text messaging program targeting Latino youth, who are the key influencers in their community.

**Time Warner Cable, a major media presence throughout New York State**, was joined and surrounded by members of the Hispanic Complete Count Committee and elected officials from throughout the State as the corporate leader announced its commitment to cablecasting the PSA through its multimedia capabilities. The Hispanic Complete Count Committee has organized to work with and encourage such efforts since June 2009, and has partnered with Voto Latino to ensure that growing Hispanic communities in Upstate New York are adequately counted and localities actualize the full potential of available federal funding.

"Voto Latino's "Be Counted, Represent!" initiative is comprised of multi-platform celebrity-driven online, mobile texting, direct and traditional media initiatives that will elevate the census in the minds of Latinos, who were among the undercounted, by an estimated 200,000 in New York State in the 2000 Census," says **Voto Latino deputy director Josh Norek**. "Our work with the census is to both educate Latinos about the importance of completing it and re-imaging the Census as a means of personal empowerment and taking ownership of one's future. What we've found through our work is that Latino youth are pivotal household influencers. They're familiar with government processes, they are majority English-speakers who consume mainstream media, and they influence their households with everything from politics to household purchases. Empowering them to take the census is at the core of our strategy."

"Time Warner Cable is committed to working with organizations, like Voto Latino, to make sure every person counts in the 2010 Census. We will leverage TWC technology to spread the word online, on demand and on our many cable channels across the Central and Upstate New York," said **Rory Whelan, Time Warner Cable Northeast Regional Vice President of Government Relations**. **Assemblyman Felix Ortiz, chair of the Assembly Puerto Rican/Hispanic Task Force**, is calling upon the Hispanic community to stand up and be counted. "Hispanic's make up the largest ethnic group in the United States and by participating in this year's census, we will have a chance to voice our presence and empower our communities."

**Secretary of State Lorraine Cortés-Vázquez said:** "Latinos were significantly undercounted in the 2000 – both in New York State and around the country – and that's why this effort to educate Latinos about the census is so important. Gov. Paterson secured funding last year to ensure local governments and community groups, including Voto Latino, have the resources they need to achieve a complete and accurate count for New York, and the type of creative multimedia campaign that's being launched today is just what we need to guarantee that everyone is counted. I applaud Voto Latino, the Hispanic Complete Count Committee and their partners for working towards a successful 2010 census."

**According to Monica Arias Miranda, co-chair of the Hispanic Complete Count Committee**, Municipalities that fail to ensure a proper and complete count will lose millions of federal aid as the Census is used to distribute federal funding for a wide variety of programs." She continued, "Time Warner Cable has demonstrated tremendous leadership on this important issue through their commitment to cablecast this public service announcement. We are excited in the partnership of government, the public sector and business community to mobilize resources to insure that an accurate count and subsequent federal funding is accurate for New York."

"With poverty levels, unemployment and urban decay on the rise throughout the New York, efforts to count every resident are of critical importance because every federal dollar cities like Albany, Buffalo, Syracuse and Rochester lose amount to another nail in the coffin of these municipalities," declared **Guillermo A. Martinez, co-chair of the Hispanic Complete Count Committee**. Every tool that can be used to increase the participation in the US Census must be deployed immediately and utilized without hesitation." Martinez added, "Voto Latino has created such a tool by harnessing the powerful images of Hollywood personalities and Time Warner Cable and its multimedia capabilities is the perfect medium educate New Yorkers on the importance of participating in the Census."

"Now more than ever, we must ensure that barriers are removed from capturing an accurate picture of our population during the 2010 Census. The importance of this data goes far beyond counting people and will impact our diverse community for years to come. I would like to thank the Hispanic Complete County Committee of the Capital Region and Voto Latino for making it their mission to count every last person," said **Assemblyman George Amedore, member of the Assembly Committee on Cities**.

"We're all Americans, and we need to help make certain that everybody is counted. An accurate count is part of the very important process that makes certain New York receives appropriate funding from the Federal Government for services to help with problems such as poverty or unemployment. I want to thank Voto Latino for their great work in making sure everyone in our communities is counted during this very important census," said **Senator Roy McDonald**.

**Ann Thane, Mayor of the City of Amsterdam**, stated, "The significant amount of federal aid tied to the data collected by the US Census is a source of revenue for all localities. The City of Amsterdam has the highest percentage of Hispanics outside of New York City and every effort to increase our resident's participation in the Census process is immensely welcomed. Time Warner Cable's commitment to help spread this message is highly commended and appreciated."

"The results of the U.S. Census will drive national budgetary and policy decisions for the next decade," said **Assemblyman Peter D. Lopez, member of the Assembly Committee on Social Services** and who represents a seven county region in New York State. "It's vital that we take deliberate steps to ensure an accurate and thorough process. I commend the Hispanic Complete Count Committee for its leadership on this issue and encourage others to follow their example."

**Alfredo Vidal, founding board member of Voto Latino and a member of the Hispanic Complete Count Committee**, stated: "Working with Voto Latino and the Committee in using the new technology mediums to reach out to our community is of vital importance. This use of technology and working with leaders in the business community like Time Warner Cable, will definitely help get the message out about the importance of the Census."

"In New York State, Latinos are the fastest growing ethnic group. However, Latinos have historically been under-counted, in part due to language barriers and fear of immigration consequences," said **Senator Neil D. Breslin, chair of the Senate Insurance Committee**. "I applaud the Latino community for proactively seeking to ensure they are represented properly in the upcoming Census and for reassuring the community that by law their privacy will be protected."

"A proper count of our nation's Hispanic community will mean millions in additional resources for our schools, especially in areas where English is not the primary language spoken in the household," said **Bronx elementary school teacher Jose Vargas, President of the American Federation of Teachers Hispanic Caucus**. "Census 2010 presents a tremendous and important opportunity in enabling America's Hispanic and immigrant communities to be properly represented."

**Dr. Jose Cruz, political science professor at the University at Albany and board member of the Hispanic Complete Count Committee**, stated, "Demographic experts are now predicting that the 2010 Census will reveal that potentially as many as 1 in 4 New Yorkers is Latino. The Hispanic Complete Count Committee was organized to assist in a proper count because we recognize that more work needs to be done to assure a proper count. The outstanding work of Voto Latino in the production of this public service announcement and the commitment by Time Warner Cable to air this important message is a win-win situation for our entire state."

**Michael Fondacaro, the editor of Noticias y Notas, a weekly email newsletter** covering the news and events in Spanish and Portuguese speaking communities in Upstate New York and New England, said, "From the estimated 186,060 Latinos who live in Westchester County, to the 68 who live in Hamilton County\*, it is of the utmost importance that every Latino be counted. I am honored to use Noticias y Notas to publicize the efforts of Voto Latino, NALEO, various complete count committees, elected officials and other organizations and individuals who share my opinion about the importance of the Census."

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[www.BeCountedRepresent.com](http://www.BeCountedRepresent.com)

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