Over the past four years, the Trump administration has taken every opportunity to undermine the collective power of our voices by manipulating the 2020 census count. Recent news that the administration will be ending the door-knocking efforts and self-response for the 2020 census four weeks early is their most recent attempt to suppress our count and cheat New Yorkers out of our fair share of federal funding and representation in Congress. Reducing the time needed for a comprehensive enumeration effort will have lasting ramifications for our State, and the country, for the next 10 years.

The data collected during the Census is the only data that the federal, state, and local governments will have about New Yorkers for 10 years of budget cycles and reapportionment. A complete count is vital to New York’s COVID-19 recovery, and any other plans that we have for the future. We stand with the Census Project and urge the Senators McConnell and Schumer to include language that would extend the statutory deadlines for the 2020 Census by four months in the next Senate COVID relief package. This extension will give the Census Bureau the time that they need to conduct the remaining enumeration operations during a global pandemic and then complete critical data review, processing, and tabulation activities.

New York’s current response rate is 38th among states, trailing the national average by 4% and New York City is behind by 8%. Census Bureau workers have already begun door knocking operations in New York with a full rollout occurring on August 11. But New York is not alone; the entire country needs more time. A rushed Census leads to inadequate data collection that will undoubtedly hurt our most vulnerable communities, those that are already bearing the brunt of the pandemic disproportionately.

In order to combat this erosion of our power as New Yorkers and the future of our democracy for the next 10 years, we must insist that the Census Bureau have the full amount of time and resources necessary to complete a full and accurate count.

As we have done in the past, we will continue to fight until every New Yorker is counted.