



## Hidalgo County Commissioners Court

**Ramon Garcia**  
*County Judge*

**David L. Fuentes**  
*Commissioner, Precinct 1*

**Eduardo "Eddie" Cantu**  
*Commissioner, Precinct 2*

**Joe M. Flores**  
*Commissioner, Precinct 3*

**Joseph Palacios**  
*Commissioner, Precinct 4*

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## NEWS RELEASE

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Wednesday, April 4, 2018

### **Hidalgo County Judge urges House and Senate leaders to move to exclude citizenship question from 2020 Census**

**EDINBURG** – In the midst of countywide efforts to ensure an accurate count in the 2020 Census for an area that has traditionally suffered from undercounts, Hidalgo County Judge Ramon Garcia penned letters to House and Senate leaders urging them to ensure questions surrounding a person's citizenship status be removed.

"I send this letter to express my concern and objection to the inclusion of the citizenship question to the Census Form," Garcia writes. "Like many communities around the nation, I urge you to hold oversight hearings promptly and take action to ensure this question does not appear on the Census Questionnaire."

Although it is one of the fastest growing areas in the state, Hidalgo County has historically been undercounted, which can translate into millions of dollars in losses to the area. To help ensure an accurate count, Garcia formed a census coalition committee to provide accurate addresses and other information to assist census workers in reaching all residents.

"It is unlikely that our state will join in lawsuits against the Census Bureau and Commerce Department to remove the citizenship question from the 2020 census questionnaire," said Garcia. "But we need to act, because our county will be severely impacted."

Hidalgo County is the seventh most populous of 254 counties in Texas, as noted in the letters sent to Congressman Trey Gowdy, who chairs the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee, and Sen. Ron Johnson who chairs the Senate Committee of Homeland Security and Government Affairs, as well as to their ranking members and local representatives.

"The Constitutional mandate is that all those residing in the United States be counted. I urge you to take action to ensure this requirement is met and partisan politics and anti-immigrant sentiments do not obstruct and impair the Census process," the letter concludes.

In addition to the letters, which were mailed today, Garcia intends to submit a resolution opposing the citizen question for consideration and approval at the April 10 Commissioners Court.

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*Copies of the two letters are attached. For more information on the county's efforts visit: <https://www.hidalgocounty.us/2315/2020-Census>*

*Hidalgo County is home to one of the fastest growing regions in the nation. We provide health and justice to the over 800,000 residents of our county. We strive to be accessible and responsive to our citizens by providing excellent public service through the values of leadership, transparency, fairness, collaboration, respect and fiscal responsibility.*