

**FERRER: DOMINICAN, COLUMBIAN UNDERCOUNT SUPPORTS
LAWSUIT TO FORCE ADJUSTMENT OF CENSUS**

Borough President Fernando Ferrer today said the errors in the census enumeration forms that resulted in the possible undercounting of certain Latino groups, including Dominicans and Columbians, provide another example that justifies the multi-city lawsuit (City of Los Angeles, et al. v. Evans, et al.) to compel U.S. Secretary of Commerce Donald Evans to release adjusted census data.

Ferrer said, "The inaccurate counting of the origin of some Latinos just points to the damaging effects of a census collection process that fails to accurately count all New Yorkers – particularly those from traditionally undercounted communities." Last February, Ferrer became New York's first elected official to sign onto the lawsuit, and he has continued to lead the citywide effort to avoid an undercount.

In May, Ferrer announced the filing of a Notice of Appeal in Federal Court continuing the effort to adjust the census undercount. "We will not rest until we ensure that no New Yorker's voice will go unheard, and that our schools, hospitals and other city services get the federal resources they deserve," Ferrer said.

Ferrer said, "It is incumbent on the Bush administration to abandon its opposition to a fair and accurate count and recognize the failures of the current enumeration system. We've been fighting this battle for five months, and it is high time for Mayor Giuliani to join our suit and put the full weight of New York City behind it. The failure to use scientific methods for the census, if allowed to stand, would mean that millions of Americans – most of them Black, Latino, poor, and working class – would go uncounted. New York's leaders must all step up to the plate on this important matter.

"Just as many of us stood for fair funding of our schools in the Campaign for Fiscal Equity lawsuit, we must stand for the many New Yorkers threatened with being left out if federal resources get unjustly apportioned," said Ferrer. "The undercount, if left unchallenged, will deny hundreds of thousands of New Yorkers a place in the census -- and will deny New York at least \$85 million in annual federal funds. At a time when our schools are under-funded, health care costs are rising, and affordable housing is scarce, we cannot allow a politically motivated population count to sap the federal resources our city desperately needs."

The Notice of Appeal was filed in the 9th Circuit U.S. Court of Appeals, May 24, 2001.