NEGATIVE POPULATION GROWTH

Press Release

For immediate release

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New NPG Forum Paper Explores the Most Influential Factors of Population Growth and the Implications of COVID-19 in the U.S.

How Birth, Death, and Immigration Rates Relate to Population Growth and COVID-19

Alexandria, VA, (October 20, 2020):   With the final debate on the horizon and COVID-19 still dominating headlines, Negative Population Growth, Inc. has published a new Forum paper, titled *Will U.S. Population Fall in 2021?* Written by Edwin S. Rubenstein, this paper explores the most influential factors in population growth for the United States, and what implications can be surmised given the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

Beginning with facts, Rubenstein states: "Three key factors determine the fluctuations in a country's population: births, deaths, and net immigration." After establishing the bar for population growth in the U.S., Rubenstein brings the reader up-to-date by discussing the effects of COVID-19 on population levels. Noting the significance of the pandemic, Rubenstein says: "The coronavirus pandemic is disrupting all three in ways that could portend dramatic departures from 'normal' population growth scenarios."

Of the three factors contributing to population numbers, death is the most difficult to measure. Rubenstein acknowledges this, saying: "Amid a pandemic it can be difficult to determine the exact cause of death, even with sophisticated diagnostic tools." Birth rates, however, are easily tracked, as Rubenstein points out: "…for decades Americans have been having fewer children, and preliminary data for 2019 show no signs of a turnaround. The number of babies born in the U.S. hit its lowest level in more than three decades last year, continuing a five-year downward trend. In all, 3.75 million babies were born in the country last year."

In consideration of birth rates, Rubenstein addresses the question of whether women who choose to postpone pregnancy plans during the pandemic will eventually conceive, noting: "Women will try to delay having their next child. If they make up for lost time by having more children later, the decline in birth rate will be short-lived. But demographers predict that many, if not most, postponed births will never be made up. The major reason? Lack of time. American women are getting married, and having their first child, later than ever."

The third factor in population is immigration. Rubenstein assesses recent programs that may have helped curtail growing population numbers and also reviews 2020 travel patterns to the U.S., by stating: "Even if the U.S. were issuing visas at pre-pandemic levels, our high COVID-19 rate and economic turmoil would make this country a less enticing destination. All of this portends less immigration to the U.S."

In conclusion, Rubenstein makes his point clear, declaring: "Never in our lifetime has the world faced three simultaneous environmental calamities: the coronavirus, record wildfires and their attending pollution, and floods. Both population growth and overcrowding are implicated in each of these current scenarios. Of all the mitigation strategies available, having fewer children is the best thing people can do for the environment."

Founded in 1972, NPG is a national nonprofit membership organization dedicated to educating the American public and political leaders regarding the damaging effects of population growth. We believe that our nation is already vastly overpopulated in terms of the long-range carrying capacity of its resources and environment. NPG advocates the adoption of its Proposed National Population Policy, with the goal of eventually stabilizing U.S. population at a sustainable level – far lower than today's. We do not simply identify the problems – we propose solutions. For more information, visit our website at NPG.org, follow us on Facebook @NegativePopulationGrowth or follow us on Twitter @npg_org.