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Statement by CCC Executive Director Jennifer March on U.S. Census Data

“The United States Census Bureau released today the latest data on income and poverty levels from the American Community Survey. The 2017 ACS data reveals many of the same trends we see in years past, with children under 18 making up the largest percent of those living below the poverty level in New York City at 25.2%. This is a decrease from 2016, where it was estimated that 26.6% of children under 18 were living below the poverty line. Of the 442,837 children living below the poverty line, 30.6% (135,780) are under the age of five years, a slightly larger share than in 2016.

Child poverty and household poverty fluctuate by borough and impact race and ethnic groups differently. The highest percentage of children living below the poverty level is in the Bronx, with nearly 40% of children under 18 (141,034) compared to 15.6% (72,328) in Queens. NYC residents who are white make up the largest number of those living in poverty than any other racial group (474,041). However, a larger share of black residents are living in poverty at 21.3% (438,174). Furthermore, families with black heads of household are in poverty almost twice as much as families with a white household head, with 17.3% and 9.3% living in poverty respectively.

While subtle progress has occurred, it's incumbent upon all of us to assertively advance budget, legislative and programmatic priorities that address these geographic and racial/ethnic disparities and ensure that the needs of these children and their families are addressed. We must continue to press for action to protect and expand access to health care, food and nutrition programs, early education, affordable housing, eviction prevention and rental assistance services, immigration supports, and more. We must also ensure that youth and parents have access to programs that help promote upward mobility, including literacy and ESL courses, entrepreneurship and employment training, and financial literacy.

CCC will be conducting a thorough analysis of the data and in the coming weeks will release an infographic covering highlights at the local level.

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About CCC

Citizens’ Committee for Children of New York educates and mobilizes New Yorkers to make the city a better place for children. Since 1944, our advocacy has combined public policy research and data analysis with citizen action. We cast light on the issues, educate the public, engage allies, and identify and promote practical solutions to ensure that every New York City child is healthy, housed, educated and safe. For more information on CCC, visit our web site at www.cccnewyork.org. Stay up to date on the latest news and information regarding the well-being of New York City’s children by following us on Facebook and Twitter.