

TO:

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FROM:

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July 6th, 2020

RE: Reinstatement of the “Well-being Supplement to the American Time Use Survey

The Data Coalition is America’s premier voice on data policy. As a membership-based business association, the Data Coalition advocates for responsible policies to make government data high-quality, accessible, and usable. Our work unites data communities that focus on data science, management, evaluation, statistics, and technology in companies, nonprofit organizations, and academia.

The Data Coalition supports the reinstatement of the Well-being Supplement on the American Time Use Survey. As decision-makers consider interventions to address the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, clear information on what these effects are is crucial to making evidence-based policies. The Well-being Supplement will help develop a clearer picture of the experiences of workers. This supplement can also provide insights into how the impacts of the pandemic affect worker well-being in varying occupations and with differing disability status.

Research into the social well-being and mental health is already being conducted with the support of private sector organizations, such as the [COVID Impact Survey](#). These projects help to fill the information gaps while our official government data sources worked to expand their products to cover new questions brought up by the pandemic. The Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) is in a unique position to benefit the research being done in these areas. By adding this supplement, the BLS will help fill those gaps. Additionally, by using a module that is identical to the one that was collected in 2012 and 2013, there is the ability to make comparisons across time.

Supplementing the American Time Use Survey has benefits beyond the BLS. Other federal agencies such as the Bureau of Economic Analysis, the Bureau of Transportation Statistics, and the Economic Research Service use this data to conduct their own research into the economy, health and safety, and family and work-life balance. This module also helps to support international research. Adding the supplement will substantially improve the practical benefit of the Time Use Survey to many researchers and policymakers.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit comments on this important issue. If you or your staff have any questions about the Data Coalition's comments, please contact Corinna Turbes at corinna.turbes@datacoalition.org.

Respectfully,
Corinna Turbes
Data Coalition