

TO:

Sheleen Dumas
Department PRA Clearance Officer
Office of the Chief Information Officer
Department of Commerce

FROM:

Corinna Turbes, Policy Manager
corinna.turbes@datacoalition.org
202-573-7975

July 20th, 2020

RE: Continuation of the Household Pulse 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 continuation of the Household Pulse Survey because of the tremendous utility of the information collected. 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. This survey will help develop a clearer picture of the experiences of households in a timely manner and help policymakers to develop more responsive interventions.

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.

However, the Census Bureau's technical expertise and extensive reach mean it has a unique ability to collect large amounts of information for statistical purposes, creating official data that can be complemented by private sector efforts. The Household Pulse Survey helped to demonstrate the Census Bureau's ability to produce near real-time

data in times of need. It also showed how well the federal statistical system can work in cooperation to help create a holistic picture of what households are experiencing in these unprecedented times.

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

OMB Control Number 0607-1013

JoVon Sotak <jsotak@admin.nv.gov>

Fri 6/5/2020 4:18 PM

To: Cassandra Logan (CENSUS/ADDP FED) <Cassandra.Logan@census.gov>

Cc: Grant Office <grants@admin.nv.gov>

Hello, Ms. Logan:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comment re: on the potential for extending data collection for the Household Pulse Survey During COVID-19 Epidemic (OMB Control Number 0607-1013). On behalf of the State of Nevada Office of Grant Procurement, Coordination, and Management, we'd like to request that this survey be extended.

With a current unemployment rate of 28%, Nevada's households will continue to feel the effects of COVID-19 long after July 30. As it is highly likely that the pandemic will continue and our country will experience one or more waves of emergency response and recovery, the impact to our citizens over a longer period of time may shift during these waves, as well as in response to federal relief dollars (such as Coronavirus Relief Funds) that haven't yet been distributed to local governments throughout Nevada. We believe that grant professionals throughout Nevada may benefit from using this data for future grant proposals related to workforce development, economic diversification, food security, homelessness, emergency preparation and resilience, and more. To conclude the survey prematurely would limit the value of the data set as we will not yet know if we are actually through the crisis until we're well into recovery.

Best regards,



JoVon Sotak, Administrator
Office of Grant Procurement, Coordination, and Management
Department of Administration

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Fw: public comment on federal register

Jean Public <jeanpublic1@yahoo.com>

Sun 6/7/2020 7:50 PM

To: Cassandra Logan (CENSUS/ADDP FED) <Cassandra.Logan@census.gov>

----- Forwarded Message -----

From: Jean Public <jeanpublic1@yahoo.com>

To: Cassandra.Logan@census.gov <cassandra.loglan@census.gov>; PRAComments@doc.gov <pracomments@doc.gov>; info@taxpayer.net <info@taxpayer.net>; media@cagw.org <media@cagw.org>; info@njtaxes.org <info@njtaxes.org>; info@afphq.org <info@afphq.org>

Sent: Sunday, June 7, 2020, 07:40:35 PM EDT

Subject: public comment on federal register

the problem with the govt collecting information is that whatever is collected can be so easily changed for political reasons. the corruption in washington dc is enormous and everything is reported to favor whoever wants to look good. so that the us public is getting more and more misinformation and downright lies from our federal govt. the cdc for example has been misleading the us public on flu information for years now with fake data. i have severe concerns about this extra collection and do not think it will improve one iota the correct accurate information that the us public needs so that i think we should just say goodbye to this latest spending debacle. this comment is for the public record. jean public1@yahoo.com

[Federal Register Volume 85, Number 107 (Wednesday, June 3, 2020)]

[Notices]

[Pages 34178-34179]

From the Federal Register Online via the Government Publishing Office [www.gpo.gov]

[FR Doc No: 2020-11966]

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

Census Bureau

Agency Information Collection Activities; Submission to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for Review and Approval; Comment Request; Household Pulse Survey

AGENCY: U.S. Census Bureau, Commerce.

ACTION: Notice of information collection; request for comment.

SUMMARY: The Department of Commerce, as part of its continuing effort to reduce paperwork and respondent burden, invites the general public and other Federal agencies to take this opportunity to comment on the potential for extending data collection for the Household Pulse Survey During COVID-19 Epidemic. The Household Pulse Survey was launched on April 23, 2020 with approval from the Office of Management and Budget to continue data collection through July 31, 2020 (OMB No. 0607-1013). The Department of Commerce may determine it prudent to continue the

Household Pulse Survey after July 31, 2020. This notice serves to inform the public about this possible continuance.

DATES: To ensure consideration, comments regarding the continued Household Pulse Survey information collection must be received on or before August 3, 2020.

ADDRESSES: Interested persons are invited to submit written comments to Cassandra Logan, Survey Director, U.S. Census Bureau, by email to Cassandra.Logan@census.gov or PRAComments@doc.gov. Please reference OMB Control Number 0607-1013 in the subject line of your comments. Do not submit Confidential Business Information or otherwise sensitive or protected information.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Requests for additional information or specific questions related to collection activities should be directed to Cassandra Logan, Survey Director, U.S. Census Bureau, 4600 Silver Hill Road, HQ-7H157, Washington, DC 20233, (301) 763-1087, and Cassandra.Logan@census.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Abstract

The Census Bureau has developed the Household Pulse Survey as an experimental endeavor in cooperation with five other federal agencies. The survey is designed to produce near real-time data in a time of urgent and acute need. Changes in the measures over time will provide insight into individuals' experiences on social and economic dimensions during the period of the Covid-19 pandemic. This survey, conducted under the auspices of the Census Bureau's Experimental Data Series (<https://www.census.gov/data/experimental-data-products.html>), is designed to supplement the federal statistical system's traditional benchmark data products with a new data source that provides relevant and timely information based on a high quality sample frame, data integration, and cooperative expertise.

Question domains contributed by the Census Bureau (Census), Economic Research Service (ERS), Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS), National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), and the Department of Housing (HUD) seek to measure employment status, spending, food security, housing, health, and education disruptions. Many of the questions that will be asked on this survey have been fielded on other surveys in the past. However, some of the questions are new, designed to explore potential impacts associated with the COVID-19 pandemic response.

II. Method of Collection

The Census Bureau will conduct this information collection online using Qualtrics as the data collection platform. Qualtrics currently is used at the Census Bureau for research and development surveys and provides the necessary agility to deploy the Household Pulse Survey quickly and securely. It operates in the Gov Cloud, is FedRAMP authorized at the moderate level, and has an Authority to Operate from the Census Bureau to collect personally identifiable and Title-protected data.

The Census Bureau will sample approximately 2,159,000 housing units, with an additional approximately 1,100,000 housing units each subsequent week of data collection. The survey will be administered over the course of 24 weeks starting April 23, 2020. Households will be contacted via email and asked to complete approximately 50 questions focused on employment, spending, food security, housing, health and educational disruption. Prior to production the survey was estimated to take 20 minutes; the actual time for survey participants to complete the survey now that it is in production is approximately 11 minutes.

Weekly survey estimates will be produced by weighting the results to various demographic controls from auxiliary sources like the Census Bureau official population estimates and the American Community Survey. Weekly source and accuracy documentation will provide details about the methods and quality of the survey estimates.

III. Data

OMB Control Number: 0607-1013.

Form Number(s): None.

Type of Review: Regular submission.

Affected Public: Individuals and households.

Estimated Number of Respondents: The total number of respondents is estimated at 93,400 per week (a reduction in the initial estimate of 108,000) for 24 weeks (an extension from the 12 weeks initially planned) for a total estimate of 2,241,600 respondents.

Estimated Time per Response: 11 minutes (actual time in production; initial estimate was 20 minutes).

Estimated Total Annual Burden Hours: 410,960.

Estimated Total Annual Cost to Public: \$0.

Respondent's Obligation: Voluntary.

Legal Authority: Title 13, United States Code, Sections 8(b), 182 and 196.

IV. Request for Comments

We are soliciting public comments to permit the Department/Bureau to: (a) Evaluate whether the proposed information collection is necessary for the proper functions of the Department, including whether the information will have practical utility; (b) Evaluate the accuracy of our estimate of the time and cost burden for this proposed collection, including the validity of the methodology and assumptions used; (c) Evaluate ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and (d) Minimize the reporting burden on those who are to respond, including the use of automated collection techniques or other forms of information technology.

Comments that you submit in response to this notice are a matter of public record. We will include or summarize each comment in our request to OMB to approve this ICR. Before including your address, phone number, email address, or other personal identifying information in your comment, you should be aware that your entire comment--including your personal identifying information--may be made publicly available at any time. While you may ask us in your comment to withhold your personal identifying information from public review, we

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cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so.

Sheleen Dumas,
Department PRA Clearance Officer, Office of the Chief Information
Officer, Commerce Department.

[FR Doc. 2020-11966 Filed 6-2-20; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510-07-P

To: Cassandra Logan, Survey Director, U.S. Census Bureau, PRAcomments@doc.gov
From: Alana Vega, KIDS COUNT Coordinator, Advocates for Children of New Jersey
Date: July 31, 2020

Re: OMB Control Number 0607-1013

Advocates for Children of New Jersey (ACNJ) urges the Census Bureau:

1. to extend the Household Pulse Survey at least until the end of 2020, if not well into 2021;
2. to update questions on the number of children by age range in each home;
3. to include new questions on the availability and type of child care used by household members, as well as preferred child care settings;
4. to include more detailed questions on school reopening models.

The data from the Pulse Survey have been invaluable for communicating to policymakers, elected officials, service providers, advocates and families about the impact of COVID-19 on households across New Jersey. In addition, the ability to split out data for households with children has provided critical information about the unique challenges they face.

Advocates for Children of New Jersey (ACNJ) is the state's largest multi-issue nonprofit focused on children's issues, ranging from child welfare and juvenile justice to early childhood education and infant-toddler care. ACNJ is also the KIDS COUNT grantee for New Jersey, funded by the Annie E. Casey Foundation, producing data reports and publications on child well-being for policymakers and community members.

In light of the COVID-19 pandemic, many traditional sources of data have lagged substantially, with little up-to-date information about how families are doing. Even data available on a monthly basis, such as Medicaid enrollment or SNAP participation, failed to keep pace with the speed of the pandemic and its impacts on families. Housing data, which have almost always lagged by a year or more, were particularly lacking.

1. Extend the Household Pulse Survey until the end of 2020.

In light of the massive nationwide repercussions of COVID-19, ACNJ encourages the Bureau to continue this effort and track the long-term impact of the pandemic. The novel data collection model has allowed for rapid communication of key data points to policymakers, while tracking critical trends for households with children.

Without continuation of the Household Pulse Survey, federal, state and local policymakers and elected officials risk flying blind, developing policy solutions and adapting existing programs to address issues without knowing who they affect and by how much. Already, many programs instituted to protect families from the damage caused by COVID-19 have begun expiring, although the people experiencing this damage continue to face substantial harms.

The current spikes in COVID-19 across the country suggest that this will not be a quickly resolved crisis, but rather a longer-term natural disaster with long-running consequences for households across the nation, especially access to medical care, health insurance status, education, housing, employment and nutrition.

Already these data have helped spur initiatives in New Jersey around affordable housing and eviction protection, vaccination campaigns to catch up children who missed vaccinations/immunizations due to delayed medical visits, additional data requests from the state Medicaid agency on Medicaid enrollments, and inquiries into the administrative burdens of applying for SNAP benefits.

Household Pulse Survey data provide critical guidance for how to protect families, and community members and advocates need more, rather than less, data.

2. Update questions on the age of children.

More fine-grained data on the ages of children in the home may help to further highlight the issues facing households with very young children as opposed to households with older children and adolescents. In particular, young children (ages 0-5) are more likely to use child care providers and family caregiving, while older children are more likely to attend school or participate in extracurricular school-based activities.

ACNJ urges the Bureau to update the presence-of-children questions to include the age ranges of the children.

3. Add questions on child care services and preferred settings for children.

Anecdotal and limited polling data suggest that child care remains a difficult choice for many working families, but child-care-specific polling and surveys have been few and far between. With school and child care closures or reductions in capacity, families are creating makeshift arrangements, often cobbling together a combination of center-based care, family- or neighbor-based home care, or informal child care arrangements. Some of these informal arrangements have even been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, due to fears surrounding transmission between households with high risk members.

These arrangements are not currently captured by data and will inform how to rebuild the child care system as the pandemic continues.

ACNJ encourages the Bureau to ask what kind of child care services they are using (child care centers/preschool; before/after care; paid day care in someone else's home; paid or no-cost care by friends and family; parental/guardian care at home; taking the child to work; child left unattended at home). In addition to asking about what child care setting families have chosen, there should also be a question asking what their preferred child care setting would be, and if it

is different than the one they are using, whether they have been unable to find such a program, unable to afford it, or the hours do not match their needs.

These data will help inform the development of policy solutions to meet the child care needs of households, especially those with young children.

4. Modify education questions to capture a variety of educational reopening models.

Current debates on school reopenings focus on a few key questions for policy implementation:

- Should schools reopen fully in-person, a hybrid of in-person and virtual/remote learning, or all-remote learning?
- Which students should be prioritized in reopening (younger students, special education, etc.)?
- Should parents have the choice to opt out of in-person schooling for health concerns?
- How will working parents with school-age children manage to care for remote-learning and go to work?

Anecdotally, there are also reports of small neighborhood “pods” of parents who will conduct child care one day a week for small groups of children. These informal childcare arrangements are difficult to see in generic polling data, but a longer list of potential options for parent child care arrangements in response to school closure may yield more helpful data about this phenomenon.

As a result, ACNJ encourages the Bureau to develop finer-grained questions on school reopening models and the impact on households with children, both in terms of child care and the impact on work, particularly for female respondents.

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ACNJ thanks the Bureau for the opportunity to comment on the Household Pulse Survey. Please feel free to reach out to me for further questions at avega@acnj.org

Sincerely,
Alana Vega



July 31, 2020

United States Census Bureau,

Data collected through the Household Pulse Survey during the COVID-19 pandemic has been invaluable for policymakers and for advocates. The Census Bureau is providing Americans with a clear picture of how people are faring during a difficult and turbulent period. We applaud the Bureau's efforts to gather this important information under these circumstances, developing the survey with unprecedented speed, using innovative approaches to reach families, and releasing data in days rather than months. This work must continue. **We submit this comment in favor of extending data collection for the Household Pulse Survey during the COVID-19 pandemic. We also propose that current questions be updated and important new questions be added to better capture the effect of the pandemic on children and families.**

The Partnership for America's Children supports a network of 52 state and community multi-issue advocacy organizations in 41 states. Collectively, they represent over 90 percent of the nation's children. Our member organizations advocate to improve policies for children at the state, local and federal level. Partnership members work on a myriad of interconnected issues affecting children and families, including advancing racial and ethnic equity and reducing trauma for children. The Partnership connects its members to peer expertise and national resources and facilitates interstate collaborations to deepen the level of impact of child advocacy within and across states. It fosters policy expertise, advocacy skills, and strong organizations.

We ask that the Census Bureau **extend data collection for the Household Pulse Survey during the COVID-19 pandemic for at least another 14 weeks.** While early hotspots like New York and Seattle have seen major reductions in cases of the disease since March, the number of cases of COVID-19 have increased in places like Florida, Texas, Arizona, and California. State and local policymakers will continue to need to determine, week by week, whether schools and businesses can open and whether people who have lost jobs continue to need help. The information in this survey is essential to helping them decide which policy interventions are most needed to protect the physical and financial health of American families.

For example, responses to the question about expected loss of income reveal how this pandemic has affected different parts of the country in disparate ways over time. During survey Week 2 (May 7-12), 46 percent of respondents in New York state — but 37 percent of Texans — expected to lose employment income soon. By Week 10 (July 2-10), 40 percent of New Yorkers but 43 percent of respondents in Texas expected a loss of employment income. Without Household Pulse Survey data, these trends could not be seen, making it impossible for policymakers to respond to the needs of American families in real time.

The data collected through the Household Pulse Survey has been especially important to the child advocacy community in our fight for better policy solutions for children and families. In particular, questions about access to medical care, health insurance status, education, housing, employment, and nutrition are critical to understanding the impacts of this pandemic on children. This survey is essential because it provides statistically significant data for each state that reflects the rapid changes week by week. Thus we strongly support the continuation of this survey for at least 14 more weeks, and preferably



through at least the beginning of 2021, or until widespread vaccination has ended the pandemic and allowed these critical indicators to stabilize.

Though the current iteration of the Household Pulse Survey asks important questions, it can be doing more to better capture the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on children and families. We therefore also recommend that the following questions be updated and/or added to improve upon the survey.

How many children in the household are under 5? How many are 5 to 12? How many are 13-17?

The Household Pulse Survey collects data on the number of children living in a respondent's household, but it does not ask about the age of any children living in the home. The needs of children vary drastically by age, which has consequences for families' finances as well as school systems and plays a large role in how both families and school administrators are thinking about education and child care decisions. We suggest that the current question be updated to ask how many children in the household are under 5, how many are 5 to 12, and how many are 13 to 17. This adjustment would give us insight into families' needs for full time child care and part-time child care and whether education programs are working well for elementary and secondary students.

What kind of child care services are being utilized by members of the household? What would be your preferred setting for children in the household?

Many families with young children are facing difficult choices about whether to send their children to child care settings. During the pandemic, child care centers experience many of the same operational challenges as schools (e.g. smaller class sizes, requiring children to be six feet apart, increased need for additional supplies in order to reduce sharing among children, etc.). However, financing and oversight for child care centers is far different from schools. This means that policy solutions that aim to protect children attending schools are much more difficult to extend to younger children who are in child care settings. In addition, parents of school-aged children may need more hours of child care if schools offer reduced hours of in-person instruction, perhaps needing three days a week, or only afternoons. Existing programs are not currently designed to offer these hours.

We are proposing that the Census Bureau add questions to the Household Pulse Survey about the decisions families are making around child care. It should ask what kind of child care services they are using (child care centers/preschool; before/after care; paid day care in someone else's home; paid or no-cost care by friends and family; parental/guardian care at home; taking the child to work; child left unattended at home.) In addition to asking about what child care setting families have chosen, there should also be a question asking what their preferred child care setting would be, and if it's different than the one they are using, whether they have been unable to find such a program, unable to afford it, or the hours do not match their needs. Finding affordable child care is one of the greatest challenges facing parents and caretakers who work outside the home. Child care programs have incurred significantly increased costs and reduced income in order to meet COVID safety requirements, including reduced class size, new equipment, and increased cleaning costs. Many programs have closed temporarily or permanently and others may be raising their fees. For these working families, the economic fallout of the COVID-19 pandemic could be exacerbated by challenges in securing child care. Without data on this matter, policymakers are unable to consider targeted solutions for families with young children.



Thank you for the opportunity to submit this comment. If you have any questions, you can reach me at dstein@foramericaschildren.org.

Sincerely,

Deborah Stein



July 20, 2020

FOUNDER EMERITUS

Hon. Edward R. Roybal [†]

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EVP and Director of
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CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Mr. Arturo Vargas

[†] deceased

Ms. Cassandra A. Logan
Survey Director, Household Pulse Survey
U.S. Census Bureau
4600 Silver Hill Road
Washington, DC 20233

Re: DOC Docket No. USBC-2020-0013 – Comments on Household Pulse Survey

Dear Ms. Logan:

On behalf of the National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials (NALEO) Educational Fund, I am writing to comment on the U.S. Census Bureau's Household Pulse Survey During COVID-19 Epidemic (the "Household Pulse Survey"), in response to the Notice published at 85 Fed. Reg. 29922 on May 19, 2020. We are concerned that the response mode and the contact strategy for the Household Pulse Survey will not adequately capture responses from the Latino population, and we offer recommendations to address our concerns.

NALEO Educational Fund is the nation's leading nonprofit organization that facilitates the full participation of Latinos in the American political process, from citizenship to public service. Our Board members and constituency encompass the nation's more than 6,800 Latino elected and appointed official, and include Republicans, Democrats and Independents. NALEO Educational Fund is a national leader in Census outreach, community education and policy development. Since the 1990 Census, our organization has conducted outreach campaigns to promote the full and accurate count of the Latino community. Together with media and community-based organizational partners, we have launched iHAGASE CONTAR! ("Make Yourself Count!") and iHAZME CONTAR! ("Make Me Count!") campaigns to drive response to the 2020 Census through dissemination of community education materials; promotion of a toll-free Census information hotline staffed by bilingual operators; technical assistance for community groups; and direct assistance to Latino residents with completing Census forms. NALEO Educational Fund also conducted comprehensive research to inform its campaigns and determine the best messages and messengers to reach the Latino community. The research included a survey of a nationally-representative sample of Latino adults, which allowed the organization to compare the perspectives of both documented and undocumented residents. We also conducted focus groups with diverse segments of the Latino population.

NALEO Educational Fund also has decades of experience working closely with its Latino elected official constituency, other government officials and partner organizations to promote public policies to achieve the most accurate count possible of the nation's population. NALEO Educational Fund served as a member of the U.S. Census Bureau's national advisory committees between 2000 and August 2019, and continues to share its expertise with top Census Bureau officials.

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NALEO Educational Fund is also the co-chair of the Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights' Census Task Force, and of the National Hispanic Leadership Agenda's Census Task Force.

NALEO Educational Fund commends the Census Bureau for its effort to collect near real-time data about the social and economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic in a time of urgent and unprecedented need. We also applaud the Bureau's work in assessing whether collaborative data collection between federal agencies can produce high quality information to guide our nation during this crisis. However, NALEO Educational Fund believes that the response mode and the contact strategies for the Household Pulse Survey will not result in the survey including a representative sample of the Latino population or other population groups.

Our first concern is regarding the response mode, the Qualtrics online data collection platform. According to August 2019 research published by the Pew Research Center, while the "digital divide" is narrowing, Latino adults are less likely than White adults to own a computer or tablet, or have access to high speed internet at home. For example, 57% of Hispanic adults own a computer compared to 82% of White adults; 43% of Hispanic adults own a tablet device compared to 53% of White adults; and 61% of Hispanic adults have broadband access compared to 83% of White adults. Moreover, while many Latinos have access to smartphones, there are disparities between smartphone access between native-born and foreign-born Latinos, with 87% of native-born Latinos owning smartphones compared to 69% of foreign-born Latinos. Pew research has also indicated that older adults, those with lower incomes, and those in rural areas generally have less access to computers or broadband technology. Thus, the use of an online response platform for the Household Pulse Survey will not capture a representative sample of Latinos or other population groups – and it is unclear whether weighting the sample will overcome this problem.

In addition, the Household Pulse Survey will contact potential respondents through e-mail or SMS text. However, as noted above, there are disparities within and between different population groups with respect to computer, broadband and smartphone access. Moreover, e-mail and SMS text contact strategies are less effective in reaching households where there is high mobility, or residential instability. Even before the pandemic, according to Census Current Population Survey data, Latinos were a more mobile population than non-Hispanic Whites. Data which examined mobility between 2018 and 2019 revealed that 10.6% of Latinos were "movers" compared to 8.6% of non-Hispanic Whites. Within the Latino population and the population as whole, young persons, persons living in poverty, renters, and non-citizens were among the groups with the highest mobility rates. All of these groups would be harder to reach and capture with the Household Pulse Survey's contact strategies, because of the likelihood that they would not have stable e-mail addresses or cellphone numbers.

After the advent of the pandemic, the mobility of the Latino population has likely increased even more because of a variety of factors, including economic instability and job losses, family care arrangements and responsibilities, and evictions or changes in renter housing. Data analyses by Latino Decisions, UCLA's Latino Policy and Politics Initiative, the Centers for Disease Control and other entities suggest that COVID-19 is

disproportionately affecting Latinos, and Pew Research Survey data indicate that Latinos are more likely than Americans overall to see coronavirus as a major threat to their health and finances. The pandemic is also likely to disproportionately affect other population groups with high mobility, such as youth, persons living in poverty, renters and non-citizens.

Thus, the contact strategies for the Household Pulse Strategy could result in a sample which does not accurately represent Latinos and other groups who are experiencing higher mobility and residential instability than the population as a whole. We recommend that the Bureau consider the following to address possible sample bias in the survey:

- Conduct an evaluation of the Bureau's Household Pulse Survey design and methodology, including its weighting methodology, to better assess how representative the Survey's sample is, and the quality of the data produced.
- Augment the collection of data and contact strategies by adopting approaches that would better capture populations who lack access to online response platforms or are experiencing residential instability. This should involve conducting interviews with respondents using live telephone interviews.

We greatly appreciate the Bureau's work to provide a new data source with timely and relevant information about the impact of the pandemic on our nation's households. We believe our recommendations will enhance the Bureau's ability to achieve this goal, and we look forward to continuing our partnership with the Bureau as it proceeds with the Household Pulse Survey and other data collection efforts.

Sincerely,



Arturo Vargas
Chief Executive Officer

NALEO
Educational Fund

OMB Control Number 0607-1013

Schwinberg Jean <jeanschwinberg@yahoo.com>

Wed 7/29/2020 6:32 PM

To: Cassandra Logan (CENSUS/ADDP FED) <Cassandra.Logan@census.gov>

Dear Ms. Logan,

This is a comment in support of the Household Pulse Survey. Given the difficulties in getting an accurate count this program will help to do that.

Sincerely,

Jean M. Schwinberg

July 29, 2020

United States Census Bureau,

We submit this comment in favor of extending data collection for the Household Pulse Survey during the COVID-19 pandemic. We also propose updating current questions and adding important new questions to better capture the effect of the pandemic on children and families.

New Mexico Voices for Children is a nonpartisan, statewide advocacy organization that works to make systems-level changes to improve child well-being. We provide numerous grassroots and organizing partners, state agencies, and lawmakers with data on New Mexico's children to help inform policy positions and decisions. Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, we have received many requests for data regarding how children and families are faring. Data collected through the Household Pulse Survey during the COVID-19 pandemic has been invaluable for our state's policymakers and advocates.

We ask that the Census Bureau extend data collection for the Household Pulse Survey during the COVID-19 pandemic for at least another 14 weeks. State and local policymakers will continue to need to determine, week by week, whether schools and businesses can open and whether people who have lost jobs continue to need help. The information in this survey is essential in helping leaders decide which policy interventions are most needed to protect the physical and financial health of American families.

The data collected through the Household Pulse Survey has been especially important to the child advocacy community in our fight for better policy solutions for children and families. In particular, questions about access to medical care, health insurance status, education, housing, employment, and nutrition are critical to understanding the impacts of this pandemic on children. This survey is essential because it provides statistically significant data for each state that reflects the rapid changes week by week. We strongly support the continuation of this survey for at least 14 more weeks, and preferably through at least the beginning of 2021, or until widespread vaccination has ended the pandemic and allowed these critical indicators to stabilize.

We also recommend that the following questions be updated and/or added to improve upon the survey.

The Household Pulse Survey collects data on the number of children living in a respondent's household, but it does not ask about the age of any children living in the home. The needs of children vary drastically by age, which has consequences for families' finances as well as school systems and plays a large role in how both families and school administrators are thinking about education and child care decisions. We suggest that the current question be updated to ask how many children in the household are under 5, how many are 5 to 12, and how many are 13 to 17. This adjustment would give us insight into families' needs for full-time child care and part-time child care and whether education programs are working well for elementary and secondary students.

We are also proposing that the Census Bureau add questions to the Household Pulse Survey about the decisions families are making around child care. It should ask what kind of child care services they are using (child care centers/preschool; before/after care; paid care in someone else's home; paid or no-cost care by friends and family; parental/guardian care at home; taking the child to work; child left unattended at home.) In addition to asking about what child care setting families have chosen, there should also be a question asking what their preferred child care setting would be, and if it's different

than the one they are using, whether they have been unable to find such a program, unable to afford it, or the hours do not match their needs.

Finding affordable child care is one of the greatest challenges facing parents and caretakers who work outside the home. Child care programs have incurred significantly increased costs and reduced income in order to meet COVID safety requirements, including reduced class size, new equipment, and increased cleaning costs. Many programs have closed temporarily or permanently and others may be raising their fees. For these working families, the economic fallout of the COVID-19 pandemic could be exacerbated by challenges in securing child care. Without data on this matter, policymakers are unable to consider targeted solutions for families with young children.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit this comment. If you have any questions, you can reach me at ewildau@nmvoices.org.

Sincerely,

Emily Wildau

(she, her, & [why this matters](#))

Research & Policy Analyst/KIDS COUNT Coordinator

New Mexico Voices for Children

625 Silver Ave SW, Suite 195

Albuquerque, NM 87102

Statement Supporting the Household Pulse Survey

Elizabeth Archambault <elizabeth.archambault@gmail.com>

Tue 7/28/2020 8:57 PM

To: Cassandra Logan (CENSUS/ADDP FED) <Cassandra.Logan@census.gov>

Good Evening Cassandra and PRAcomments,

I am emailing you in support of keeping the Household Pulse Survey. Since this survey was launched on April 23rd 2020, it has produced near real-time data that provides much needed information for assessing services for those who need COVID19 assistance; such as Tenant Eviction Protections on the Federal level.

The new data sources that the Household Pulse Survey is designed to produce supplement the federal statistical system's traditional benchmark data and give new data sources that are vital and pertinent and timely that is based on high quality sample frames, integration of data and professional expertise based on changes over time of individuals' experiences both on social as well as economic dimensions during this period.

The Household Pulse Survey is a new tool that is needed. We need to retain it for the insights and current data critical to the creation of Federal Eviction protections to protect small business owners as well as tenants.

Thank you for your consideration.

Elizabeth Archambault
Seattle WA 98109

Please extend Pulse Survey

Beth <ri_econ@yahoo.com>

Thu 7/30/2020 1:21 PM

To: Cassandra Logan (CENSUS/ADDP FED) <Cassandra.Logan@census.gov>; PRAcomments@doc.gov
<PRAcomments@doc.gov>

I am writing to express support for continuing the Household Pulse Survey beyond July 31, 2020. This survey serves two important purposes:

1 - The survey provides valuable, timely data on the effects of the pandemic on U.S. social, economic, health, and other conditions. There is no substitute for this data. As such it is an invaluable resource for state and local governments, nonprofits, community groups, businesses, and other in responding to the pandemic.

2 - The survey serves as an incredible model for agile, responsive, cross-departmental data collection and dissemination. The lessons learned from this effort will inform and improve the federal statistical system for years to come.

Thank you.

Beth Jarosz
Demographer



1400 Eye Street NW Suite 650 | Washington, DC 20005 | t: 202.657.0670 | f: 202.657.0671 | www.firstfocus.org

July 31, 2020

Cassandra Logan
Survey Director
U.S. Census Bureau
4600 Silver Hill Rd.
Suitland-Silver Hill, MD 20746

Re: Agency Information Collection Activities; Submission to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for Review and Approval; Comment Request; Household Pulse Survey, OMB Control Number 0607-1013

Dear Director Logan:

I write to you on behalf of First Focus on Children and as an advocate for children, in response to the Office of Management and Budget's (OMB) request for comment the continuation of the Household Pulse Survey.

First Focus on Children is a bipartisan advocacy organization that is dedicated to making children and families the priority in federal policy and budget decisions. Due to the hardships that children continue to face in the wake of COVID-19, we submit this comment in favor of extending data collection for the Household Pulse Survey during the pandemic. We also propose that current questions be updated, and important new questions be added to better capture the effect of the pandemic on children and families.

The coronavirus pandemic has hit the United States and the rest of the world with a once-in-a-generation event creating uncertainty, instability, and harm that will hold for years to come. Many researchers and policymakers have focused on the economic impacts of the crisis, but more emphasis is needed on how the crisis is impacting our most vulnerable population - our nation's children. Millions of children have seen a disruption in their education, lost access to nutritious meals, face housing insecurity, or are at risk of slipping into poverty because of the economic crisis. To make matters even worse, the long-term implications of this crisis will likely last well beyond the coronavirus itself, impacting the health and development of children for years to come. It is incredibly important that we continue to monitor the havoc caused by the situation and put forward solutions in real-time to these problems.

Our organization has found the survey data to be helpful in developing our policy and budget analyses during the pandemic, and we are appreciative that the Census Household Pulse Survey has put a necessary spotlight on one aspect that traditional survey measures neglect: how children are faring. While the Current Population Survey (CPS) provides a vital resource for researchers and advocates to understand Americans' situations, the CPS lags at too slow of a pace for it to be helpful in the middle of an unprecedented crisis like the one we face now and often focuses too much on the broadest view of the population as a whole.

On the other hand, the Household Pulse Survey provides a nearly real-time update on the American experience from multiple points of view, which is especially important while we're in the midst of the coronavirus pandemic. The specific questions on educational attainment, food security, health insurance coverage, housing status, and employment characteristics provide us with a deeper look at how households with children are faring. These weekly updates inform policymakers and the public about the stakes,

consequences, and effects of the current situation, and they often inform us weeks in advance of what the CPS will tell us the following month.

We strongly support the continuation of this survey for at least 14 more weeks, but preferably through at least the beginning of 2021 or until widespread vaccination has ended the pandemic and allowed these critical indicators to stabilize. The Household Pulse Survey will be an invaluable tool for lawmakers and the public seeking to address our most pressing needs, and it will continue to highlight the oft-ignored challenges that households with children face. The Census Bureau should consider making the real-time nature of the Household Pulse Survey a long-term reality; providing weekly updates on the ongoing reality for U.S. children and adults serves an important purpose even outside of a global pandemic.

Though the current iteration of the Household Pulse Survey asks important questions, it can be doing more to better capture the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on children and families. We therefore also recommend that the following questions be updated and/or added to improve upon the survey.

How many children in the household are under 5? How many are 5 to 12? How many are 13-17?

The Household Pulse Survey collects data on the number of children living in a respondent's household, but it does not ask about the age of any children living in the home. The needs of children vary drastically by age, which has consequences for families' finances as well as school systems and plays a large role in how both families and school administrators are thinking about education and child care decisions. We suggest that the current question be updated to ask how many children in the household are under 5, how many are 5 to 12, and how many are 13 to 17. This adjustment would give us insight into families' needs for full time child care and part-time child care and whether education programs are working well for elementary and secondary students.

What kind of child care services are being utilized by members of the household? What would be your preferred setting for children in the household?

Many families with young children are facing difficult choices about how to access child care and whether to send their children to child care settings. During the pandemic, child care providers experience many of the same operational challenges as schools (e.g. smaller class sizes, requiring children to be six feet apart, increased need for additional supplies in order to reduce sharing among children, etc.), but these are exacerbated by the lack of public financing for child care and the needs and necessary requirements for younger children in those settings. This means that policy solutions that aim to protect children attending schools are much more difficult to extend to younger children who are in child care settings.

We are proposing that the Census Bureau add questions to the Household Pulse Survey about the decision's families are making around child care. It should ask what kind of child care services they are using (child care centers/preschool; before/after care; paid care in someone else's home; paid care in their own homes; paid or no-cost care by friends and family; parental/guardian care at home; taking the child to work; child left unattended at home.) In addition to asking about what child care settings families have chosen, the survey should also ask what their preferred child care setting would be, and, if it's different than the one they are using, whether they have been unable to find such a program, unable to afford it, or the hours do not match their needs. Finding affordable child care is one of the greatest challenges facing parents and caretakers who work outside the home under normal circumstances. Child care is now in crisis due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Child care programs have incurred significantly increased costs and reduced income in order to meet COVID safety requirements, including reduced class size, new equipment, and increased cleaning costs, and many programs have closed temporarily or permanently. For these working families, the economic fallout of the COVID-19 pandemic could be exacerbated by challenges in securing child care, and without a stable

and safe child care sector, our economy cannot begin to restart. Without data on this matter, policymakers are unable to consider targeted solutions for families with young children.

Week by week we have seen how the pandemic has directly increased food insecurity, job losses, educational and child care challenges, and housing insecurity nationwide. Without such data, we would not know the full extent of this crisis and what policies are needed most to ensure Americans, especially children, are getting the help they need.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit this comment. If you have any questions, please contact me at Brucel@firstfocus.org.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Bruce Lesley". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Bruce Lesley
President

[OMB Control Number 0607-1013] Support to extend the Household Pulse Survey

MacDonald, Graham <GMacDonald@urban.org>

Fri 7/31/2020 9:03 AM

To: Cassandra Logan (CENSUS/ADDP FED) <Cassandra.Logan@census.gov>

Hi,

I'm writing in response to the Federal Register request for comment to extend the Household Pulse Survey (<https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2020/06/03/2020-11966/agency-information-collection-activities-submission-to-the-office-of-management-and-budget-omb-for#addresses>).

I want to commend the hard working people at the Census Bureau for producing such a critical data resource for understanding the current moment and enabling organizations like the Urban Institute and my Data Science team to produce tools that can help policymakers respond effectively to help people most in need. I strongly endorse continuing this effort for as long as the current economic and health crises continue. Keep up the great work.

--

Graham MacDonald

Chief Data Scientist

202-261-5466

@grahamimac

U R B A N I N S T I T U T E

Technology & Data Science

www.urban.org

August 3, 2020

Cassandra Logan
Survey Director
U.S. Census Bureau
4600 Silver Hill Road
HQ-7H157
Washington, DC 20233

Submitted electronically via Cassandra.Logan@census.gov

RE: Agency Information Collection Activities; Submission to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for Review and Approval; Comment Request; Household Pulse Survey (OMB Control Number 0607- 1013)

Dear Ms. Logan:

On behalf of America's Health Insurance Plans (AHIP) and the Blue Cross Blue Shield Association (BCBSA), we are writing in response to the request for comments regarding extending data collection for the Household Pulse Survey During COVID-19 Epidemic ("Household Pulse Survey").

We applaud the Census Bureau and the five other coordinating agencies—the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the Department of Housing and Urban Development, the National Center for Health Statistics, the National Center for Education Statistics, and the USDA Economic Research Service—on their quick development and launch of Household Pulse Survey to assess the impact of the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) is impacting American households. The survey provides critical, near real-time insights into the social and economic effects of the pandemic and is a critical tool for identifying and addressing the impact for employment, economic security, and access to health care. These data are crucial in guiding federal policy and actions of employers in the private sector as they craft responses to the COVID-19 pandemic.

AHIP and BCBSA strongly recommend the Household Pulse Survey be extended for the duration of the Public Health Emergency (PHE). The Survey is singular in its frequency, timeliness, and breadth of covered topics, ranging from employment status to food and housing security to physical and mental health to health care access. While the Census Bureau is seeking an extension for an additional 12 weeks, we believe continuing this data collection throughout PHE will allow Federal policymakers, employers, and the private sector to better understand the unfolding impact of the pandemic on all aspects of American life and continue to develop and implement solutions to serve the American people during this unprecedented pandemic.

After reviewing results from the initial 12-week survey period, available through the Household Pulse Survey public use files (PUFs), we are concerned that Question 36 may be generating inaccurate or misleading data related to enrollment in employer-sponsored insurance and coverage offered through the individual market. We would welcome the opportunity to discuss with you further.

Based on our calculations using the weekly PUFs for the data collection period May 5 – July 21, those data indicate enrollment in employer-sponsored insurance ranging from approximately 112-119 million and enrollment in the individual market, including through Marketplace coverage, over 30 million.¹ Both estimates deviate significantly from broadly accepted coverage estimates. Prior to COVID, approximately 160 million individuals under age 65 were enrolled in employer sponsored insurance. Early estimates project 25-43 million could lose employer-sponsored coverage due to COVID.² As of early 2019, about a year before the COVID pandemic, about 13.7 million people were enrolled in coverage through the individual market, including coverage offered on- and off-marketplace.³ The PUFs indicate enrollment in employer sponsored coverage that is about 30 percent of commonly accepted coverage estimates, and more than double individual market enrollment. While COVID-related unemployment is impacting coverage through both employer sponsored coverage and the individual market, we have not seen evidence yet that indicates enrollment levels have shifted as dramatically as the PUF data would suggest.

Accurate data collection will be critical to tracking the impact of COVID-19 on Americans' access to health care over the course of the PHE and, as a result, policies implemented by lawmakers, employers, and the private sector. We urge the Census Bureau to review Question 36 to ensure it is generating reliable data on trends in health insurance coverage as a result of COVID.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on the proposed data collection. We appreciate the efforts of the Census Bureau and other federal agencies in prioritizing this critical data collection and sharing the results in a timely manner. If you have any questions on our comments, please contact Jeanette Thornton at jthornton@ahip.org or Stuart Hagen at stuart.hagen@bcbsa.com.

Sincerely,



Jeanette Thornton
America's Health Insurance Plans



Kris Haltmeyer
Blue Cross Blue Shield Association

¹ Household Pulse Survey Public Use File. <https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/household-pulse-survey/datasets.html>

² Garrett B, and Gangopadhyaya A. How the COVID-19 Recession Could Affect Health Insurance Coverage. Urban Institute. May 2020. <https://www.rwjf.org/en/library/research/2020/05/how-the-covid-19-recession-could-affect-health-insurance-coverage.html>

³ Fehr R, Cox C, and Levitt L. Data Note: Changes in Enrollment in the Individual Health Insurance Market through Early 2019. Kaiser Family Foundation. August 21, 2019. <https://www.kff.org/private-insurance/issue-brief/data-note-changes-in-enrollment-in-the-individual-health-insurance-market-through-early-2019/>

Appendix

Household Pulse Survey

Section Q36 (insurance)

Are you currently covered by any of the following types of health insurance or health coverage plans? *Mark Yes or No for each.*

- 1) Insurance through a current or former employer or union (through yourself or another family member)
- 2) Insurance purchased directly from an insurance company, including marketplace coverage (through yourself or another family member)
- 3) Medicare, for people 65 and older, or people with certain disabilities
- 4) Medicaid, Medical Assistance, or any kind of government-assistance plan for those with low incomes or a disability;
- 5) TRICARE or other military health care
- 6) VA (including those who have ever used or enrolled for VA health care)
- 7) Indian Health Service
- 8) Other

Section Q36 Spanish (insurance)

¿? *Seleccione solo una respuesta.*

- 1)

Logic:

- Matrix style question with Yes/No response option for each row
- Only one response permitted per row

Response to Request for Comment Regarding the Household Pulse Survey During COVID-19

OMB Control Number 0607-1013

Survey Director Logan,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on extending the data collection period for the Household Pulse Survey During COVID-19 (OMB Control Number 0607-1013). The Bipartisan Policy Center's Early Childhood Initiative strongly encourages the U.S. Census Bureau to extend the data collection period for the Household Pulse Survey During COVID-19 Epidemic past the current end date of July 31st, 2020. The data collected by this survey provides critical and timely information about the challenges children and families are facing during the pandemic. These data are critical for policymakers to make informed decisions about how and where to target financial and programmatic supports. As the COVID-19 crisis continues, it is necessary to continue collecting data to fully understand its impact, in both the short and long-terms.

One of the biggest issues faced by families with children is child care. Many parents now working from home are trying to balance child caregiving needs with work demands, and parents who are on the frontlines and unable to work from home are struggling to find child care as many programs have been forced to close or significantly reduce capacity. These issues will become more pressing as school districts across the country make difficult decisions about whether to hold classes in person or virtually. School-age children who would normally spend most of their days in an elementary or middle school will no longer have that option and need another safe and enriching learning environment while their parents work. As we move into the fall, extending the Household Pulse Survey will provide useful insight on the changes in child care demand throughout the summer and into the fall. Specifically, question 13 of the current survey asks if child care need is the main reason why a respondent might have left the workforce. The continuation collection of this data point will provide longitudinal data about how school and child care closures may increase child care needs and lead to further labor force dropout.

While the current question about child care combined with the questions about K-12 education are useful in understanding the impact of the pandemic on families with children, the current questionnaire only mentions child care once, overlooking the critical role child care plays in the economic health of our country. We strongly recommend any survey extension include additional questions specific to child care. Child care is necessary for parents to maintain or return to work. [A BPC and Morning Consult survey](#) conducted in October 2019 found child care affected the ability of 68% of parents to stay in the workforce. Yet, it remains unclear what parent demand for child care will look like as the pandemic evolves. A major change is likely to occur in the fall as K-12 schools re-open or close in various ways, which may leave many school-age children in need of care.

The impact of child care availability and demand go far beyond individual families. It also greatly impacts the success of businesses, and these businesses are concerned about how child care is impacting their employees. In an [April 2020 BPC/Morning Consult survey](#) of small business owners, half of employers said that family and child responsibilities from school closures are very or somewhat challenging. The survey also found that 71% of business executives were very or somewhat concerned about their employees who have children at home because of school or child care closures. Business concerns and uncertainty will slow the economic recovery after the pandemic. The addition of new child



BIPARTISAN POLICY CENTER

care questions to the Household Pulse Survey will help leaders to understand and respond to the needs of families with children and provide data businesses need to move forward.

The Household Pulse Survey is the most capable of collecting accurate data on child care demand because of its large, representative sample and regular updates. Such data can inform the child care industry and the nation of the potential need for additional supports in the coming months.

In alignment with the Bureau's goal to enhance the utility of the survey data, attached are several additional questions we request be included in the extended Household Pulse Survey. These questions aim to isolate the impacts of child care on the parental workforce and will help understand the shifts in labor participation during the COVID-19 pandemic. The questions focus on capturing details about child care usage, including how many hours of care the household used and how much families spent child care expenses. We also recommend including questions regarding care arrangements for school-age children, those between the ages of 6 and 14, who will need a wide-range of care options as K-12 schools open in various ways this fall.

We strongly encourage the Census Bureau to continue the Household Pulse Survey During COVID-19 and recommend including additional questions that gather critical data about child and school-age care. Our economy will not recover without child care. We need the best data possible to know how to support working parents and the businesses that rely on them to succeed. Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,

Linda K. Smith

Director, Early Childhood Initiative



BIPARTISAN POLICY CENTER

Request for Inclusion of New Questions:

- 1) "Since February 2020, has anyone in your household experienced a change in their workforce participation due to child care needs?"
 - a) Yes, I am now working remotely or at home
 - b) Yes, someone else in my household is now working remotely or at home
 - c) Yes, I am working fewer hours
 - d) Yes, someone in my household is working fewer hours
 - e) Yes, I have left the workforce
 - f) Yes, someone else in my household has left the workforce
 - g) No, no one in my household has experienced a change due to child care
- 2) "Due to modified school schedules, how many of your school-age children need, or do you expect will need, school-age care by a caregiver outside your family this fall?" *Please enter a number.*
- 3) Does your household use a nonparental child care arrangement? *Yes or No*
- 4) If yes, what type of child care arrangement did you use in the last 7 days?
 - a) Child care center
 - b) Family child care home
 - c) Preschool/nursery school program
 - d) Family or friend cares for child
 - e) Child care in your own home
 - f) Pre-kindergarten/school-based program
 - g) Nanny or nanny-share
 - h) School-aged child care
 - i) Head Start program
 - j) Faith-based program
 - k) Other
- 5) During the last 7 days how much money did you or your household spend on child care? *Please enter a number.*
- 6) During the last 7 days how many hours of child care per week does this household use? *Please enter a number.*

Revisions to Previous Questions:

- Q8: "How many people under 18 years-old currently live in your household?"
 - Request to include how many are 6-14 and how many are below 6.
- Q19: "What did, or will, you and your household spend the "stimulus payment" on?"
 - Request to include an option for "Child Care or School-age care"
- Q20: "Which of the following did you use (or expect to use) to meet your spending needs?"
 - Request to include the options of cash assistance, SNAP/ food stamps, and child care subsidies to this list
- Q43: "How has the coronavirus pandemic affected how the children in this household received education?"
 - Request to change "received" to "will receive"



Cassandra Logan
Survey Director
U.S. Census Bureau
RE: OMB Control Number 0607-1013

Submitted via email

August 3, 2020

Dear Ms. Logan,

Data collected through the Household Pulse Survey during the COVID-19 pandemic has been invaluable for policymakers and advocates. The Census Bureau is providing a clear picture of how people are faring during a difficult and turbulent period. We applaud the Bureau's efforts to gather this important information under these circumstances, developing the survey with unprecedented speed, using innovative approaches to reach families, and releasing data in days rather than months. This work must continue. **We submit this comment in favor of extending data collection for the Household Pulse Survey during the COVID-19 pandemic. We also propose that current questions be updated and important new questions be added to better capture the effect of the pandemic on children, young adults, and families.**

The Center for Law and Social Policy (CLASP) is a national, non-partisan, non-profit anti-poverty organization that advances policy solutions for people in low-income households. Working at the federal, state, and local levels, we develop practical yet visionary strategies for reducing poverty, promoting economic security, and addressing barriers faced by people of color. We rely on data to inform our policy work and in particular find accurate, up-to-date information about the lives of people in the United States to be crucial to advocating for effective policy solutions that support the health and economic well-being of individuals and families.

We ask that the Census Bureau **extend data collection for the Household Pulse Survey during the COVID-19 pandemic for at least another 14 weeks**. Data indicate the pandemic and its associated impacts are far from over. State and local policymakers will continue to need accurate data to make policy decisions to support children and families during this unprecedented time. The information in this survey is essential to helping them decide which policy interventions are most needed to protect the physical and financial health of American families.

For example, responses to the question about expected loss of income reveal how this pandemic has affected different parts of the country in disparate ways over time. During survey Week 2 (May 7-12), 46 percent of respondents in New York state — but 37 percent of Texans — expected to lose employment income soon. By Week 10 (July 2-10), 40 percent of New Yorkers but 43 percent of respondents in Texas expected a loss of employment income. Without Household Pulse Survey data, these trends could not be seen, making it impossible for policymakers to respond to the needs of American families in real time.

The data collected through the Household Pulse Survey has been especially important to the child advocacy community in our fight for better policy solutions for children and families. In particular, questions about access to medical care, health insurance status, education, housing, employment, and nutrition are critical to understanding the impacts of this pandemic on children. It has also been very important to the youth and young adult advocacy and practitioner community. For example, young adults ages 18-24 have been particularly impacted by job losses and report experiencing greater stress, anxiety and depression during COVID-19. It is important to understand the health, nutrition, and employment consequences on this generation of youth/young adults as this is a critical time period in their development. This survey is essential because it provides statistically significant data for each state that reflects the rapid changes week by week. Thus we strongly

support the continuation of this survey for at least 14 more weeks, and preferably through at least the beginning of 2021, or until widespread vaccination has ended the pandemic and allowed these critical indicators to stabilize.

Though the current iteration of the Household Pulse Survey asks important questions, it can be doing more to better capture the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on children and families. We therefore also recommend that the following questions be updated and/or added to improve upon the survey:

How many children in the household are under 5? How many are 5 to 12? How many are 13-17?

The Household Pulse Survey collects data on the number of children living in a respondent's household, but it does not ask about the age of any children living in the home. The needs of children vary drastically by age, which has consequences for families' finances as well as school systems and plays a large role in how both families and school administrators are thinking about education and child care decisions. We suggest that the current question be updated to ask how many children in the household are under 5, how many are 5 to 12, and how many are 13 to 17. This adjustment would give us insight into families' needs for full time child care and part-time child care and whether education programs are working well for elementary and secondary students.

What is the age of the respondent and their relationship to children in the household?

Similarly, we request that the Survey collect data on young adults who are parenting. As mentioned above, young adults ages 18-24 have been particularly impacted by job losses and report experiencing greater stress, anxiety and depression during COVID-19. Moreover, many young adults in this age group are parents and are likely experiencing even greater levels of stress and need related to the care and wellbeing of their children. The current survey data allows for breakdown of data by young adult but doesn't not allow for understanding the needs of these young parents because it only asks whether there are children in the household, not whether they are the child's primary guardian. This makes it impossible to sort out households which include young adults and children (including siblings) from households led by young parenting adults.

What kind of child care services are being utilized by members of the household? What would be your preferred setting for children in the household?

Many families with young children are facing difficult choices about whether to send their children to child care settings. Child care programs have incurred significantly increased costs and reduced income in order to meet COVID safety requirements, including reduced class size, new equipment, and increased cleaning costs. Many programs have closed temporarily or permanently, and others may be raising their fees. We are proposing that the Census Bureau add questions to the Household Pulse Survey about the decisions families are making around child care. It should ask what kind of child care services they are using (child care centers/preschool; before/after care; in-home care; paid care in someone else's home; paid or no-cost care by friends and family; parental/guardian care at home; taking the child to work; child left unattended at home; child in care of a sibling.) In addition to asking about what child care setting families have chosen, there should also be a question asking what their preferred child care setting would be, and if it's different than the one they are using, whether they have been unable to find such a program, unable to afford it, or the hours do not match their needs. Finding affordable child care is one of the greatest challenges facing parents and caretakers who work outside the home. For these working families, the economic fallout of the COVID-19 pandemic could be exacerbated by challenges in securing child care. Without data on this matter, policymakers are unable to consider targeted solutions for families with young children.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit this comment.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'H M', on a light-colored background.

Hannah Matthews
Deputy Executive Director for Policy
hmatthews@clasp.org

July 30th, 2020

Cassandra Logan
Survey Director, U.S. Census Bureau
Cassandra.Logan@census.gov
PRComments@doc.gov
OMB Control Number: 0607-1013

Dear Dr. Logan:

Data collected through the Household Pulse Survey during the COVID-19 pandemic has been invaluable for policymakers and advocates. The Census Bureau is providing Americans with a clear picture of how people are faring during a difficult and turbulent period. We applaud the Bureau's efforts to gather this important information under these circumstances, developing the survey with unprecedented speed, using innovative approaches to reach families, and releasing data in days rather than months. This work must continue. **We submit this comment in favor of extending data collection for the Household Pulse Survey during the COVID-19 pandemic. We also propose that current questions be updated and important new questions be added to better capture the effect of the pandemic on children and families.**

The Colorado Children's Campaign is a nonprofit, nonpartisan advocacy organization committed since 1985 to realizing every chance for every child in Colorado. We advocate for the development and implementation of data-driven public policies that improve child well-being in health, education and early childhood. We do this by providing Coloradans with trusted data and research on child well-being and organizing an extensive state-wide network of dedicated child advocates. In recent weeks, the Children's Campaign has used data from the Census Pulse Survey to understand how issues of food and housing insecurity, lost income, and delayed access to medical care are currently impacting our state's families. Specifically, our work to effectively compile all current data and research to inform K-12 school reopening decisions in Colorado used several statistics from the Household Pulse Survey; as public schools are often primary sites of child nutrition and youth mental health and medical care, these timely data were instrumental in illustrating the changing needs of households and the likely consequences of extended physical school closures.

We ask that the Census Bureau **extend data collection for the Household Pulse Survey during the COVID-19 pandemic for at least another 14 weeks.** While early hotspots like New York and Seattle have seen major reductions in cases of the disease since March, the number of cases of COVID-19 have increased in many other states. State and local policymakers will continue to need to determine, week by week, whether schools and businesses can open and whether people who have lost jobs continue to need help. The information in this survey is essential to helping them decide which policy interventions are most needed to protect the physical and financial health of American families.

For example, responses to the question about expected loss of income reveal how this pandemic has affected different parts of the country in disparate ways over time. During survey Week 2 (May 7-12), 46 percent of respondents in New York state — but 37 percent of Texans — expected to lose employment income soon. By Week 10 (July 2-10), 40 percent of New Yorkers but 43 percent of respondents in Texas expected a loss of employment income. Without Household Pulse Survey data, these trends could not be seen, making it impossible for policymakers to respond to the needs of American families in real time.

The data collected through the Household Pulse Survey has been especially important to the child advocacy community in our fight for better policy solutions for children and families. In particular, questions about access to medical care, health insurance status, education, housing, employment, and nutrition are critical to understanding the impacts of this pandemic on children. This survey is essential because it provides statistically

significant data for each state that reflects the rapid changes week by week. Thus we strongly support the continuation of this survey for at least 14 more weeks, and preferably through at least the beginning of 2021, or until widespread vaccination has ended the pandemic and allowed these critical indicators to stabilize.

Though the current iteration of the Household Pulse Survey asks important questions, it can be doing more to better capture the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on children and families. We therefore also recommend that the following questions be updated and/or added to improve upon the survey.

- **How many children in the household are under 5? How many are 5 to 12? How many are 13 to 17?**

The Household Pulse Survey collects data on the number of children living in a respondent's household, but it does not ask about the age of any children living in the home. The needs of children vary drastically by age, which has consequences for families' finances as well as school systems and plays a large role in how both families and school administrators are thinking about education and child care decisions. We suggest that the current question be updated to ask how many children in the household are under 5, how many are 5 to 12, and how many are 13 to 17. This adjustment would give us insight into families' needs for full time child care and part-time child care and whether education programs are working well for elementary and secondary students.

- **What kind of child care services are being utilized by members of the household? What would be your preferred setting for children in the household?**

Many families with young children are facing difficult choices about whether to send their children to child care settings. During the pandemic, child care centers experience many of the same operational challenges as schools (e.g. smaller class sizes, requiring children to be six feet apart, increased need for additional supplies in order to reduce sharing among children, etc.). However, financing and oversight for child care centers is far different from schools. This means that policy solutions that aim to protect children attending schools are much more difficult to extend to younger children who are in child care settings. In addition, parents of school-aged children may need more hours of child care if schools offer reduced hours of in-person instruction, perhaps needing three days a week, or only afternoons. Existing programs are not currently designed to offer these hours.

We are proposing that the Census Bureau **add questions** to the Household Pulse Survey about the decisions families are making around child care. It should ask what kind of child care services they are using (child care centers/preschool; before/after care; paid day care in someone else's home; paid or no-cost care by friends and family; parental/guardian care at home; taking the child to work; child left unattended at home.) In addition to asking about what child care setting families have chosen, there should also be a question asking what their preferred child care setting would be, and if it's different than the one they are using, whether they have been unable to find such a program, unable to afford it, or the hours do not match their needs.

Finding affordable child care is one of the greatest challenges facing parents and caretakers who work outside the home. Child care programs have incurred significantly increased costs and reduced income in order to meet COVID safety requirements, including reduced class size, new equipment, and increased cleaning costs. Many programs have closed temporarily or permanently and others may be raising their fees. For these working families, the economic fallout of the COVID-19 pandemic could be exacerbated by challenges in securing child care. Without data on this matter, policymakers are unable to consider targeted solutions for families with young children.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit this comment. If you have any questions, you can reach me at erica@coloradokids.org.



Sincerely,

Erica Manoatl, MPH

Research Analyst, Colorado Children's Campaign

Please Extend Household Pulse Survey – OMB Control Number 0607-1013

Debbie Weinstein <DWeinstein@chn.org>

Mon 8/3/2020 11:12 PM

To: Cassandra Logan (CENSUS/ADDP FED) <Cassandra.Logan@census.gov>



COALITION ON HUMAN NEEDS

1120 Connecticut Avenue, NW · Suite 312 · Washington, DC 20036 · 202.223.2532 · Fax 202.223.2538 · www.chn.org

Please Extend Household Pulse Survey – OMB Control Number 0607-1013

August 3, 2020

Ms. Cassandra Logan,
Survey Director
United States Census Bureau
Cassandra.Logan@census.gov

Dear Ms. Logan:

On behalf of the Coalition on Human Needs, I would like to express our gratitude for the tremendously helpful Household Pulse survey, and to strongly urge you to extend its collection of weekly data throughout the continuation of the COVID-19 pandemic and its economic consequences, or at least another 14 weeks.

The Coalition on Human Needs (CHN) is an independent non-profit alliance of national organizations, including human service providers, faith organizations, civil rights, labor, policy experts and other advocates for meeting the needs of low-income and vulnerable people. CHN has made extensive use of many Census Bureau products for many years. We host annual webinars reaching more than 2,000 advocates nationwide to teach how to make use of the poverty, income and health insurance data released through the Current Population Survey and American Community Survey every year, and use the national and state data in our analyses of the needs of low-income people. We are currently partners with the Bureau in its work towards an accurate decennial census count, and play a leadership role in the Count All Kids campaign, which has worked closely with the Census Bureau to improve the count of young children.

We very much appreciate that the Household Pulse survey is a departure from other Census products, and applaud your careful work to respond to what we believe is a genuine national emergency. We want you to know that we are using the survey findings each week in multiple ways. One major use for us is our weekly **COVID-19 Watch**, which relies heavily on the data in the Household Pulse survey. This is an emailed and online publication delivered to a large nationwide list. Our most [recent edition](#), published on July 31, cited findings related to households unable to pay rent in the previous month and children in households who did not have enough to eat in the past week. Previous editions have also utilized that data, as well as employment data, such as households in which someone had lost income from work since March 13. We value and make use of the breakdowns by race/ethnicity. Most of our **COVID-19 Watch** issues focus on national data, but we have used your state or

metropolitan area data at times as well.

We do use the state data in separate fact sheets that we have been producing in partnership with various state organizations. One recent example is a [North Carolina fact sheet](#). This document cites Household Pulse employment, food sufficiency, rental housing, and health insurance data. We have so far partnered with groups in Arizona, California, Florida, Missouri, North Carolina, North Dakota and Utah, always relying significantly on the Household Pulse survey data.

The questions asked, showing connections among health status, employment status, care-giving responsibilities, income level, race, and hardships such as hunger and the threat of eviction are very helpful in raising awareness about urgent problems brought on by the pandemic. The breakdowns by race add dimension to the growing information about disproportionate incidence of disease among people of color. Thank you for creating a thoughtful set of questions that make it possible to learn more about communities especially at risk in the pandemic, either from the disease itself or its economic dislocations.

We ask that the Household Pulse Survey be continued at least another 14 weeks because it is clear both that COVID-19 is spreading significantly across the country and that the economic consequences will last for a long time. Some of the federal responses to emergency shutdowns – additional unemployment compensation and an eviction moratorium – have just expired, although Congress may reinstate some or all of these policies. The Household Pulse will help to evaluate what happens to families/households when they are receiving various forms of assistance – or when they are not. It can focus attention on people most vulnerable to eviction.

One difference between the Household Pulse Survey and other Census products is that there are not many direct questions about children. There are a number of questions about households with children, and we make a great deal of use of that data, but there are fewer opportunities to get information in which the child is the focal point. I noticed that in Week 12, the Food Table 5 includes a specific line in which it is possible to say something specifically about children not having enough to eat in the previous week, which I do not believe was in earlier weeks (I have not gone back to find exactly when this line first appeared). This is a helpful inclusion; it would be still more helpful if there are other kinds of questions in which it is possible to isolate the impact on children specifically. If it is possible to add other questions to the survey that get at conditions for children, it would be of use to many organizations.

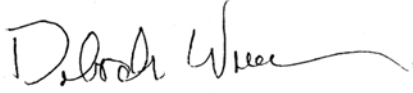
There is another way in which the Census Bureau could be helpful: guidance in making comparisons from one week to another, or in the confidence one can have about very small subgroups, such as racial breakdowns in small states. We make great use of the data provided by the Census, but none of CHN's staff are statistical experts. We pay strict attention to advice the Census Bureau offers around comparisons using the ACS and CPS. There is less guidance here. I have noted significant fluctuations in data from one week to the next in certain small states, and have therefore declined to make comparisons over time, and in some instances, I have not used those data points at all. I have noted that one of our member organizations, the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, chose to average data over two weeks to smooth out some of that variation. The Census Bureau's guidance about statistical significance of comparisons, perhaps provided through a brief publication, would be extremely helpful.

With the pandemic's impact expected to be more long-lived than many foresaw, it will be disappointing if the Household Pulse Survey is not continued. The data can provide extremely important guidance in the kinds of policies that would offer the most targeted help. Many thanks for the innovative and very constructive approach you have offered – we very much hope it can be

continued throughout the period of this national emergency.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if I may be of assistance (dweinstein@chn.org; cell: 301-873-1324).

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Deborah Weinstein", with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

Deborah Weinstein,
Executive Director

Deborah Weinstein
Executive Director
Coalition on Human Needs
dweinstein@chn.org
cell: (301) 873-1324

CHN's street address, whenever we get back in:
1825 K Street, NW, Suite 411
Washington, DC 20006

OMB Control Number 0607-1013

Alena Stern <alena7690@gmail.com>

Sun 8/2/2020 11:16 PM

To: Cassandra Logan (CENSUS/ADDP FED) <Cassandra.Logan@census.gov>

Cc: PRAcomments@doc.gov <PRAcomments@doc.gov>

Dear Ms. Logan,

I am writing to encourage the Department of Commerce to extend the Household Pulse Survey for another 12 weeks. I am a data scientist at the Urban Institute and have extensively used the data from the Household Pulse Survey for analysis. I have heard consistently from other researchers at the Urban Institute, members of the media, and community organizations that the Household Pulse Survey is the only data source that can enable them to understand how the impacts of COVID-19 at the national, state, and metropolitan area level are changing over time. The provision of the raw public use files enables the calculation of a variety of disaggregated statistics, which are critical for understanding the disparate impacts of COVID-19 on different communities - especially as we know that communities of color have been particularly hard hit by the virus and the economic impacts.

This data provides a critical input to policymakers and nonprofits aiming to develop targeted responses to COVID-19. As cases increase across most of the United States and millions of Americans face eviction and economic hardship as the CARES act programs - including the supplemental unemployment insurance - expired on July 31st - these data are more critical than ever. I strongly encourage the Department of Commerce to continue the Household Pulse Survey.

Thank you very much for the opportunity to provide comment and I am happy to provide further clarification on any of the above.

Best,
Alena Stern

OMB Control Number 0607-1013

Denice Ross <Denice.Ross@georgetown.edu>

Mon 8/3/2020 2:56 PM

To: Cassandra Logan (CENSUS/ADDP FED) <Cassandra.Logan@census.gov>

Cassandra Logan

Survey Director

U.S. Census Bureau

OMB Control Number 0607-1013

Census Household Pulse Survey

Dear Dr. Logan,

I moved to New Orleans in 2001 to organize decennial census data into neighborhoods and publish it on the web in an easy to use format. The idea was that we could democratize data -- so that instead of data being used by people in power to make decisions about communities behind closed doors, that communities would have access to the data themselves to advocate for their own destinies. We spent four years after the release of the first 2000 Census data helping to build local capacity to use data. But on August 29, 2005, all of those numbers became instantly obsolete as 80% of the city flooded and New Orleans residents scattered across the nation.

In the aftermath, we were flying blind as a community. The old way of making decisions, based on precedent and who you know, didn't work anymore. And there was no data to fill the gap. What kinds of social services did returning residents need -- food pantries, free clinics, housing? How was their mental health faring? What about their physical health? Did they have health insurance? How are children doing? Do households have access to the internet (a crucial tool for recovery)? Was the recovery equitable, or were certain populations being left behind?

A survey like the Household Pulse would have been a huge blessing after Katrina.

In the absence of such an effort at the federal level, nonprofits took it upon themselves to collect data. Some hard-hit neighborhoods like the Lower Ninth Ward were so overwhelmed by well-meaning survey-takers that residents stopped answering the doors. The methodology of these home-grown surveys rendered many of the results unactionable, and most organizations weren't sharing the data, anyway.

A few academics came in and orchestrated surveys. Though they recruited local volunteers to collect data, some never followed through on their promises to share the data with the community. Those data re-appeared years later in peer-reviewed journals, too late to be useful.

None of the groups conducting surveys had the resources to compile data for the long haul of the recovery, so it was hard to benchmark over time, let alone compare across geographies. This haphazard and low-value surveying during the recovery left us in the dark, and ultimately probably

did more harm than good.

The Census Household Pulse Survey is a tremendous asset in the pandemic recovery, with its nationwide, weekly data on households available by state, with breakdowns by age, race/ethnicity, and educational attainment. The Pulse Survey enables state and local governments, nonprofits, schools, and other frontline providers to focus on improving the lives and livelihoods of their communities rather than collecting data to figure out what's needed. And, it gives the American public context to see how we are faring over time, and across states.

As the patterns of this pandemic continue to change rapidly, weekly Household Pulse Surveys will be a key part of our nation's recovery toolkit. I encourage the Department of Commerce to continue the Household Pulse Survey and its companion, the Small Business Pulse Survey, throughout the course of the pandemic and our nation's subsequent recovery.

Thank you!

Denice Ross
Former Co-Director
Greater New Orleans Community Data Center

Comment re OMB Control Number 0607-1013

ejnaor@gmail.com <ejnaor@gmail.com>

Sun 8/2/2020 3:46 PM

To: Cassandra Logan (CENSUS/ADDP FED) <Cassandra.Logan@census.gov>

Hello,

We urge you to reconsider the planned termination of the Household Pulse Survey as of the end of July. The Household Pulse Survey has been a critical tool for assessing the household needs that COVID-19 has exacerbated. As Federal Eviction protections have now expired, it is imperative that this tool is retained!

Thank you for your attention.

Jacob and Ellen Naor
3403 NE 80th St
Seattle, WA 98115



Virus-free. www.avg.com

OMB Control Number 0607-1013

jmmcc3@verizon.net <jmmcc3@verizon.net>

Sun 8/2/2020 2:06 PM

To: Cassandra Logan (CENSUS/ADDP FED) <Cassandra.Logan@census.gov>

re: OMB Control Number 0607- 1013

Dear Cassandra Logan,

I want to add my voice to those who support the continuation of the Household Pulse Survey conducted by the Census Bureau. The information generated by this survey provides valuable insight as to the trends affecting Americans during the COVID-19 pandemic. This information is not available elsewhere and so enables public knowledge concerning the impacts. It would be a great loss to stop the Survey as the pandemic continues to grow throughout the nation.

Thank you for your time & consideration of this important matter.

Sincerely,

James McCurley
Pittsburgh, PA

0607-1013 The need to continue the pulse survey

Jessie Moore <jbmoore@stanford.edu>

Sun 8/2/2020 8:14 PM

To: Cassandra Logan (CENSUS/ADDP FED) <Cassandra.Logan@census.gov>

Cc: PRAcomments@doc.gov <PRAcomments@doc.gov>

Hi Cassandra,

OMB Control Number: 0607-1013

I am a graduate student at the Stanford School of Medicine, studying community health and prevention research. I have been working first-hand on assessing the impact of COVID-19 on families in the San Francisco Bay Area.

The Pulse survey should without a doubt be **extended**. This survey has given researchers, policymakers, and individuals working in food advocacy a better understanding of food insecurity during this time. Unemployment has improved, but food insecurity remains a critical and widespread issue for many American families.

Similarly, I propose adding several questions to better understand the effectiveness and impacts of several government measures taken during COVID-19. We must know if P-EBT was in fact utilized by those in need, if there were pitfalls in outreach, and should it be extended. This can both give information on whether or not P-EBT should be reinstated and how to better engage with families in need in future crises. It may also be beneficial to ask questions on families change in sedentary behavior or physical activity. This pandemic disproportionately affects black and brown individuals, as well as low-income families. The effects of shelter-in-place and business closures may very well be disproportionately be affecting these same individuals. We must better understand all of the economic, as well as health effects from COVID-19 in order to inform policymakers.

I have data on school district P-EBT outreach such as only 8% of school districts in the San Francisco Bay Area gave information about P-EBT on their homepage. Similarly, I have examined the difference in site participation of the Seamless Summer Option (SSO) and the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) between 2019 and 2020. Sadly, less sites in California are participating in these programs this summer, a time when families have been at most need for food. Lastly, I looked at the spread of meal pick-up sites within school districts to better assess the equity of distribution. There was large variation in meal availability and method of delivery (bus stop delivery, pick-up only sites, etc.).

Please feel free to contact me with any questions that you may have.

Please do your best to fight for the extension of the Pulse Survey!

Thanks,
Jessie

OMB Control Number: 0607-1013

Comment: OMB Control Number 0607-1013

Cline, Michael E <michael.cline@osbm.nc.gov>

Fri 7/31/2020 1:58 PM

To: Cassandra Logan (CENSUS/ADDP FED) <Cassandra.Logan@census.gov>

The Household PULSE survey has been invaluable and timely for helping our budget office and our partners in the North Carolina Dept. of Commerce evaluate and track the impacts of COVID and indicators of economic recovery. We have also used the household survey to evaluate the impact to Medicaid spending in order to alter our projections of future Medicaid spending.

Although this is not the only resource we have used, it provides an additional data point with which to reflect.

We ask that you continue this survey.

Dr. Michael (Mike) Cline

State Demographer

Demographic and Economic Analysis Section

NC Office of State Budget and Management

Tel: 984-236-0686 | Fax: 984-236-0630

Email: Michael.Cline@osbm.nc.gov

Twitter: [@NCDemographer](https://twitter.com/NCDemographer)

430 N. Salisbury St., 4th Floor | Raleigh, NC 27603
(Currently operating from the home office in SW Raleigh)
Mailing address:
20320 Mail Service Center | Raleigh, NC 27699-0320

Municipal Population Estimates & County Population Estimates/Projections:

<https://demography.osbm.nc.gov>

Make NC Count!

<https://census.nc.gov/>



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July 31, 2020

United States Census Bureau,

Data collected through the Household Pulse Survey during the COVID-19 pandemic has been invaluable for policymakers and for advocates. The Census Bureau is providing Americans with a clear picture of how people are faring during a difficult and turbulent period. We applaud the Bureau's efforts to gather this important information under these circumstances, developing the survey with unprecedented speed, using innovative approaches to reach families, and releasing data in days rather than months. This work must continue. **We submit this comment in favor of extending data collection for the Household Pulse Survey during the COVID-19 pandemic. We also propose that current questions be updated and important new questions be added to better capture the effect of the pandemic on children and families.**

Voices for Georgia's Children, as the only comprehensive child-focused policy and advocacy organization in Georgia, is a data-driven, nonpartisan organization that is focused on equitable policy solutions for Georgia's children. The data collected in the Household Pulse Survey has strengthened our advocacy for: the extension of flexibilities offered in United States Department of Agriculture food waivers – addressing families' access to food; the federal moratorium on evictions and mortgage foreclosures – addressing families' housing security; increased investment in schools and internet connectivity – addressing children's access to education; continued enhanced unemployment insurance compensation – addressing families' ability to meet their most basic needs; and caregiver mental health—addressing access to mental health resources. In several communications with upwards of 10,000 people interested in fighting for children's well-being, we have used this data to highlight the dramatic impact that COVID-19 has had on millions of Georgia families and children. This data will be a critical tool going forward, as we continue to assess needs and strategize advocacy for policy change accordingly.

We ask that the Census Bureau **extend data collection for the Household Pulse Survey during the COVID-19 pandemic for at least another 14 weeks.** While early hotspots like New York and Seattle have seen major reductions in cases of the disease since March, the number of cases of COVID-19 have increased in Georgia, as well as places like Florida, Texas, Arizona, and California. Experts suggest they do not anticipate this increase to slow down for some time. State and local policymakers will continue to need to determine, week by week, whether schools and businesses can open and whether people who have lost jobs continue to need help. The information in this survey is essential to helping them decide which policy interventions are most needed to protect the physical and financial health of American families.

For example, responses to the question about expected loss of income reveal how this pandemic has affected different parts of the country in disparate ways over time. During survey Week 2 (May 7-12), 46 percent of respondents in New York state — but 37 percent of Texans — expected to lose employment income soon. By Week 10 (July 2-10), 40 percent of New



Yorkers but 43 percent of respondents in Texas expected a loss of employment income. Without Household Pulse Survey data, these trends could not be seen, making it impossible for policymakers to respond to the needs of American families in real time.

The data collected through the Household Pulse Survey has been especially important to the child advocacy community in our fight for better policy solutions for children and families. In particular, questions about access to medical care, health insurance status, education, housing, employment, and nutrition are critical to understanding the impacts of this pandemic on children. This survey is essential because it provides statistically significant data for each state that reflects the rapid changes week by week. Thus we strongly support the continuation of this survey for at least 14 more weeks, and preferably through at least the beginning of 2021, or until widespread vaccination has ended the pandemic and allowed these critical indicators to stabilize.

Though the current iteration of the Household Pulse Survey asks important questions, it can be doing more to better capture the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on children and families. We therefore also recommend that the following questions be updated and/or added to improve upon the survey.

How many children in the household are under 5? How many are 5 to 12? How many are 13-17?

The Household Pulse Survey collects data on the number of children living in a respondent's household, but it does not ask about the age of any children living in the home. The needs of children vary drastically by age, which has consequences for families' finances as well as school systems and plays a large role in how both families and school administrators are thinking about education and child care decisions. We suggest that the current question be updated to ask how many children in the household are under 5, how many are 5 to 12, and how many are 13 to 17. This adjustment would give us insight into families' needs for full time child care and part-time child care and whether education programs are working well for elementary and secondary students.

What kind of child care services are being utilized by members of the household? What would be your preferred setting for children in the household?

Many families with young children are facing difficult choices about whether to send their children to child care settings. During the pandemic, child care centers experience many of the same operational challenges as schools (e.g. smaller class sizes, requiring children to be six feet apart, increased need for additional supplies in order to reduce sharing among children, etc.). However, financing and oversight for child care centers is far different from schools. This means that policy solutions that aim to protect children attending schools are much more difficult to extend to younger children who are in child care settings. In addition, parents of school-aged children may need more hours of child care if schools offer reduced hours of in-person



instruction, perhaps needing three days a week, or only afternoons. Existing programs are not currently designed to offer these hours.

We are proposing that the Census Bureau add questions to the Household Pulse Survey about the decisions families are making around child care. It should ask what kind of child care services they are using (child care centers/preschool; before/after care; paid day care in someone else's home; paid or no-cost care by friends and family; parental/guardian care at home; taking the child to work; child left unattended at home.) In addition to asking about what child care setting families have chosen, there should also be a question asking what their preferred child care setting would be, and if it's different than the one they are using, whether they have been unable to find such a program, unable to afford it, or the hours do not match their needs. Finding affordable child care is one of the greatest challenges facing parents and caretakers who work outside the home. Child care programs have incurred significantly increased costs and reduced income in order to meet COVID safety requirements, including reduced class size, new equipment, and increased cleaning costs. Many programs have closed temporarily or permanently and others may be raising their fees. For these working families, the economic fallout of the COVID-19 pandemic could be exacerbated by challenges in securing child care. Without data on this matter, policymakers are unable to consider targeted solutions for families with young children.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit this comment. If you have any questions, you can reach me at efenersitkoff@georgiavoices.org.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ef", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Erica Fener Sitkoff, PhD.
Executive Director
Voices for Georgia's Children



August 3, 2020

United States Census Bureau,

The Household Pulse Survey began on April 23, 2020 to collect data on household experiences during the COVID-19 pandemic and has been invaluable for policymakers and advocates. Through this survey, the Census Bureau is providing Americans with a clear picture of a number of socioeconomic indicators reflecting how people are faring during a difficult and turbulent period.

We applaud the Bureau's efforts to gather this important information under these circumstances, developing the survey with unprecedented speed, using innovative approaches to reach families, and releasing data in days rather than months. This work must continue. **We submit this comment in favor of extending data collection for the Household Pulse Survey for the duration of the COVID-19 pandemic.**

The Center for Science in the Public Interest (CSPI) is America's food and health watchdog. We are responding to the COVID-19 pandemic by working to stop the spread of disease, support food chain workers, and alleviate food insecurity and improve health by championing SNAP, school meals and other government programs. In this work, the Household Pulse Survey has proved vital.

Household Pulse Survey asks questions about access to food, medical care, health insurance status, education, housing, and employment that are critical to understanding the impacts of this pandemic on households. The data collected through the survey have supported our work and those of others to alleviate food insecurity and improve health for millions of families across the country. For example, we recently drew upon data from the survey to communicate household food insecurity data in an [article we wrote for The Hill](#) and as [evidence to vouch for universal school meals](#).

This survey is also essential because it provides data for each state that reflect the rapid changes week by week. As the number of cases of COVID-19 increased recently in places like Florida, Texas, Arizona, and California, state and local policymakers will continue to need to determine, week by week, whether schools and businesses can open and whether people who are losing their jobs continue to need help. The information in this survey is essential to helping decide the policy interventions that are most needed to protect the physical and financial health of families.

Though the current iteration of the Household Pulse Survey asks important questions, it can do more to better capture the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on children and families. The survey collects data on the number of children living in a respondent's household, but it does not ask about the age of any children living in the home. We suggest that the current question be updated to ask about age of children in the household.

The Census Bureau should also add questions assessing experiences at work during COVID-19, such as the ability to social distance, access to protective equipment and countermeasures and the availability of paid sick leave for COVID and other illness, as well as an individual's confidence in employers' steps to protect their employees, and their level of concerns associated with potential exposure to COVID-19 at work.



We ask that the Census Bureau **extend data collection** for the Household Pulse Survey during the COVID-19 pandemic through at least the beginning of 2021, and continue to collect data until widespread vaccination has ended the pandemic and its associated economic upheaval, allowing these critical indicators to stabilize.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit this comment. If you have any questions, you can reach me at msandalow@cspinet.org.

Sincerely,

Maya Sandalow, MPH
Policy Associate
[Center for Science in the Public Interest](http://www.cspinet.org)

July 30, 2020

United States Census Bureau,

Data collected through the Household Pulse Survey during the COVID-19 pandemic has been invaluable for policymakers and for advocates. The Census Bureau is providing Americans with a clear picture of how people are faring during a difficult and turbulent period. We applaud the Bureau's efforts to gather this important information under these circumstances, developing the survey with unprecedented speed, using innovative approaches to reach families, and releasing data in days rather than months. This work must continue. **We submit this comment in favor of extending data collection for the Household Pulse Survey during the COVID-19 pandemic. We also propose that current questions be updated and important new questions be added to better capture the effect of the pandemic on children and families.**

Every Texan is dedicated to advancing policies that will measurably improve equity in and access to health care, food security, education, and financial security in Texas. The Household Pulse survey's state-level data on how these areas have been impacted by the pandemic has thus been invaluable in guiding our recent policy research and recommendations. Every Texan has published Household Pulse statistics to support policy recommendations for streamlining unemployment and underemployment claims processing, expanding access to SNAP and EBT benefits, increasing eligibility for paid sick leave, streamlining Medicaid and CHIP enrollment, and reinstating Texas' moratorium on evictions. Further publications which will utilize Household Pulse survey data -- including one focusing on healthcare access and another on economic recovery during the pandemic -- are in process. As COVID-19 cases continue to climb in Texas, the Household Pulse survey's ongoing translation of the pandemic's impacts on our communities into data is needed now more than ever.

We ask that the Census Bureau **extend data collection for the Household Pulse Survey during the COVID-19 pandemic for at least another 14 weeks.** While early hotspots like New York and Seattle have seen major reductions in cases of the disease since March, the number of cases of COVID-19 have increased in places like Florida, Texas, Arizona, and California. State and local policymakers will continue to need to determine, week by week, whether schools and businesses can open and whether people who have lost jobs continue to need help. The information in this survey is essential to helping them decide which policy interventions are most needed to protect the physical and financial health of American families.

For example, responses to the question about expected loss of income reveal how this pandemic has affected different parts of the country in disparate ways over time. During survey Week 2 (May 7-12), 46 percent of respondents in New York state — but 37 percent of Texans — expected to lose employment income soon. By Week 10 (July 2-10), 40 percent of New Yorkers but 43 percent of respondents in Texas expected a loss of employment income. Without Household Pulse Survey data, these trends could not be seen, making it difficult for policymakers to respond to the needs of American families in real time.

The data collected through the Household Pulse Survey has been especially important to the child advocacy community in our fight for better policy solutions for children and families. In particular, questions about access to medical care, health insurance status, education, housing, employment, and nutrition are critical to understanding the impacts of this pandemic on children. This survey is essential because it provides statistically significant data for each state that reflects the rapid changes week by week. Thus we strongly support the continuation of this survey for at least 14 more weeks, and preferably

through at least the beginning of 2021, or until widespread vaccination has ended the pandemic and allowed these critical indicators to stabilize.

Though the current iteration of the Household Pulse Survey asks important questions, it can be doing more to better capture the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on children and families. We therefore also recommend that the following questions be updated and/or added to improve upon the survey.

How many children in the household are under 5? How many are 5 to 12? How many are 13-17?

The Household Pulse Survey collects data on the number of children living in a respondent's household, but it does not ask about the age of any children living in the home. The needs of children vary drastically by age, which has consequences for families' finances as well as school systems and plays a large role in how both families and school administrators are thinking about education and child care decisions. We suggest that the current question be updated to ask how many children in the household are under 5, how many are 5 to 12, and how many are 13 to 17. This adjustment would give us insight into families' needs for full time child care and part-time child care and whether education programs are working well for elementary and secondary students.

What kind of child care services are being utilized by members of the household? What would be your preferred setting for children in the household?

Many families with young children are facing difficult choices about whether to send their children to child care settings. During the pandemic, child care centers experience many of the same operational challenges as schools (e.g. smaller class sizes, requiring children to be six feet apart, increased need for additional supplies in order to reduce sharing among children, etc.). However, financing and oversight for child care centers is far different from schools. This means that policy solutions that aim to protect children attending schools are much more difficult to extend to younger children who are in child care settings. In addition, parents of school-aged children may need more hours of child care if schools offer reduced hours of in-person instruction, perhaps needing three days a week, or only afternoons. Existing programs are not currently designed to offer these hours.

We are proposing that the Census Bureau add questions to the Household Pulse Survey about the decisions families are making around child care. It should ask what kind of child care services they are using (child care centers/preschool; before/after care; paid day care in someone else's home; paid or no-cost care by friends and family; parental/guardian care at home; taking the child to work; child left unattended at home.) In addition to asking about what child care setting families have chosen, there should also be a question asking what their preferred child care setting would be, and if it's different than the one they are using, whether they have been unable to find such a program, unable to afford it, or the hours do not match their needs. Finding affordable child care is one of the greatest challenges facing parents and caretakers who work outside the home. Child care programs have incurred significantly increased costs and reduced income in order to meet COVID safety requirements, including reduced class size, new equipment, and increased cleaning costs. Many programs have closed temporarily or permanently and others may be raising their fees. For these working families, the economic fallout of the COVID-19 pandemic could be exacerbated by challenges in securing child care. Without data on this matter, policymakers are unable to consider targeted solutions for families with young children.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit this comment. If you have any questions, you can reach me at knop-narbutis@everytexan.org.

Sincerely,

Amy Knop-Narbutis
Research and Data Director
Every Texan

August 3rd, 2020

United States Census Bureau,

Data collected through the Household Pulse Survey during the COVID-19 pandemic has been invaluable for policymakers and for advocates. The Census Bureau is providing Americans with a clear picture of how people are faring during a difficult and turbulent period. We applaud the Bureau's efforts to gather this important information under these circumstances, developing the survey with unprecedented speed, using innovative approaches to reach families, and releasing data in days rather than months. This work must continue. **We submit this comment in favor of extending data collection for the Household Pulse Survey during the COVID-19 pandemic. We also propose that current questions be updated and important new questions be added to better capture the effect of the pandemic on children and families.**

The Michigan League for Public Policy is a nonpartisan policy institute dedicated to economic opportunity for all. It is the only state-level organization that addresses poverty in a comprehensive way and analyzes the impact of state and federal budgets and policies on residents with low incomes. All of the League's work is done through a racial equity lens.

The *Kids Count in Michigan* project at the League is part of a broad national effort to measure the well-being of children at the state and local levels and use that information to shape policy and programs to improve the lives of children. Kids Count staff have used Pulse Survey data to highlight food insecurity during the pandemic and analyze disparities in food insecurity by income and race through an article in [Michigan Advance](#). These data helped justify the need for state policy intervention, such as continuing pandemic food benefits, and advocate for approaches that are grounded in principles of racial equity, such as Governor Whitmer's Coronavirus Task Force on Racial Disparities.

We ask that the Census Bureau **extend data collection for the Household Pulse Survey during the COVID-19 pandemic for at least another 14 weeks**. While early hotspots like New York and Seattle saw reductions in cases of the disease since March, the number of cases of COVID-19 have increased in places like Florida, Texas, Arizona, and California. Cases are again on the rise across the country, including in Michigan. State and local policymakers will continue to need to determine, week by week, whether schools and businesses can open and whether people who have lost jobs continue to need help. The information in this survey is essential to helping them decide which policy interventions are most needed to protect the physical and financial health of American families.

For example, responses to the question about expected loss of income reveal how this pandemic has affected different parts of the country in disparate ways over time. During survey Week 2 (May 7-12), 46 percent of respondents in New York state — but 37 percent of Texans — expected to lose employment income soon. By Week 10 (July 2-10), 40 percent of New Yorkers but 43 percent of respondents in Texas expected a loss of employment income. Without Household Pulse Survey data, these trends could not be seen, making it impossible for policymakers to respond to the needs of American families in real time.

The data collected through the Household Pulse Survey has been especially important to the child advocacy community in our fight for better policy solutions for children and families. In particular, questions about access to medical care, health insurance status, education, housing, employment, and nutrition are critical to understanding the impacts of this pandemic on children. This survey is essential because it provides statistically significant data for each state that reflects the rapid changes week by week. Thus we strongly support the continuation of this survey for at least 14 more weeks, and preferably through at least the beginning of 2021, or until widespread vaccination has ended the pandemic and allowed these critical indicators to stabilize.

Though the current iteration of the Household Pulse Survey asks important questions, it can be doing more to better capture the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on children and families. We therefore also recommend that the following questions be updated and/or added to improve upon the survey.

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The Household Pulse Survey collects data on the number of children living in a respondent's household, but it does not ask about the age of any children living in the home. The needs of children vary drastically by age, which has consequences for families' finances as well as school systems and plays a large role in how both families and school administrators are thinking about education and child care decisions. We suggest that the current question be updated to ask how many children in the household are under 5, how many are 5 to 12, and how many are 13 to 17. This adjustment would give us insight into families' needs for full time child care and part-time child care and whether education programs are working well for elementary and secondary students.

What kind of child care services are being utilized by members of the household? What would be your preferred setting for children in the household?

Many families with young children are facing difficult choices about whether to send their children to child care settings. During the pandemic, child care centers experience many of the same operational challenges as schools (e.g. smaller class sizes, requiring children to be six feet apart, increased need for additional supplies in order to reduce sharing among children, etc.). However, financing and oversight for child care centers is far different from schools. This means that policy solutions that aim to protect children attending schools are much more difficult to extend to younger children who are in child care settings. In addition, parents of school-aged children may need more hours of child care if schools offer reduced hours of in-person instruction, perhaps needing three days a week, or only afternoons. Existing programs are not currently designed to offer these hours.

We are proposing that the Census Bureau add questions to the Household Pulse Survey about the decisions families are making around child care. It should ask what kind of child care services they are using (child care centers/preschool; before/after care; paid day care in

someone else's home; paid or no-cost care by friends and family; parental/guardian care at home; taking the child to work; child left unattended at home.) In addition to asking about what child care setting families have chosen, there should also be a question asking what their preferred child care setting would be, and if it's different than the one they are using, whether they have been unable to find such a program, unable to afford it, or the hours do not match their needs. Finding affordable child care is one of the greatest challenges facing parents and caretakers who work outside the home. Child care programs have incurred significantly increased costs and reduced income in order to meet COVID safety requirements, including reduced class size, new equipment, and increased cleaning costs. Many programs have closed temporarily or permanently and others may be raising their fees. For these working families, the economic fallout of the COVID-19 pandemic could be exacerbated by challenges in securing child care. Without data on this matter, policymakers are unable to consider targeted solutions for families with young children.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit this comment. If you have any questions, you can reach us at kperdue@mlpp.org.

Sincerely,

Kelsey Perdue
Kids Count in Michigan Project Director
Michigan League for Public Policy

Parker James
Kids Count in Michigan Policy Analyst
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August 3, 2020

Cassandra Logan
Survey Director
U.S. Census Bureau
4600 Silver Hill Road
HQ-7H157
Washington, DC 20233

RE: Agency Information Collection Activities; Submission to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for Review and Approval; Comment Request; Household Pulse Survey OMB Control Number 0607-1013

Dear Ms. Logan,

The National Women's Law Center (the "Center") appreciates the opportunity to comment on the Federal Register Notice (FRN) regarding the Census Household Pulse Survey. The Center submits this comment in favor of extending the information collection for the Household Pulse Survey during the COVID-19 pandemic and proposes updating the questions to better capture the effect of the pandemic on women, children, and families.

The Center fights for gender justice — in the courts, in public policy, and in society — working across the issues that are central to the lives of women and girls. The Center uses the law in all its forms to change culture and drive solutions to the gender inequity that shapes society and to break down the barriers that harm everyone — especially those who face multiple forms of discrimination. For more than 45 years, the Center has been on the leading edge of every major legal and policy victory for women.

The Center has continuously advocated to expand opportunities for women and girls, with particular emphasis on women with low incomes and those who face multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination. Census data has been, and continues to be, pivotal to the Center's advocacy. The Center relies on census data to identify the needs of women and their families, to highlight the various policy implications of legislation, fight back against unfair practices and policies, illuminate the different ways women and girls experience life in the United States, and develop evidence-based solutions for health, education, workplace, and income security policy.

The Household Pulse Survey has been useful to the Center and other stakeholders, providing us with data about the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and related economic fallout on different demographic groups in real time rather than waiting until annual poverty or other data is released. This has helped the Center's advocacy on

health and economic responses to COVID-19, including food and housing assistance, expanded unemployment assistance, cash assistance, and other income supports, as well as health and education responses. The Center urges the Census to continue to collect and publish this useful data past July 31, 2020 to assist with continued COVID-19 response and recovery as this public health crisis has no end in sight. Because the proposed information collection requests an extension for 24 weeks, and the recovery will last into 2021 and possibly beyond, the Center urges an additional solicitation of comments about the utility of a longer extension.

In addition, the Center suggests the following to enhance the quality and utility of this survey:

- **Publish tables with crosstabs for gender and race, gender and households with children vs. without children, and any other crosstabs with gender that are feasible.** This would improve our knowledge of how women in communities disproportionately impacted by COVID-19 are faring and consequently improve our advocacy for policy changes to improve their health and economic security during this recession.
- **Editing the question asking about the number of children living in a respondent's household to ask how many children in the household are under five, how many are five to 12, and how many are 13 to 17.** The needs of children vary drastically by age, which has consequences for families' finances as well as school systems and plays a large role in education and child care decision making by families and school administrators. This adjustment would give the Center and other stakeholders insight into families' needs for full-time child care and part-time child care and whether education programs are working well for elementary and secondary students.
- **Adding questions about the decisions families are making around child care such as "What kind of child care services are being utilized by members of the household? What would be your preferred setting for children in the household?"** Many women and families with young children face difficult choices about whether to send their children to child care settings. During the pandemic, child care centers experience many of the same operational challenges as schools (e.g. smaller class sizes, requiring physical distancing, needing additional supplies to reduce sharing among children, etc.). However, financing and oversight for child care centers is far different from schools, so policy solutions aiming to protect children attending schools are more difficult to extend to younger children in child care settings. In addition, parents of school-aged children may need more hours of child care if schools offer reduced hours of in-person instruction, perhaps needing three days a week, or only afternoons. Existing programs are not currently designed to offer these hours. The first proposed question could be multiple-choice with response options such as child care centers/preschool, before/after care, paid day care in someone else's home, paid or no-cost care by friends and family, parental/guardian care at home, taking the child to work, or child left unattended at home. The second proposed question could utilize the same multiple-choice response options for efficiency, but stakeholders would receive more useful information to develop targeted solutions from a more probing question asking what their preferred child

care setting would be, and if it's different than the one they are using, whether they have been unable to find such a program, unable to afford it, or the hours do not match their needs.

- **Adding similar questions for care of adult disabled dependents and/or older family members.** COVID-19 has also posed challenges for caregiving of disabled adult dependents and caregiving for older family members. The availability of in-home caregivers, adult day programs, and other forms of care has shifted for many families.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit these comments on this important information collection. If you have questions, please contact Jasmine Tucker at jtucker@nwlc.org and/or Sarah Hassmer at shassmer@nwlc.org.

Sincerely,



Melissa Boteach
Vice President for Income Security and Child Care/Early Learning
National Women's Law Center



Jasmine Tucker
Director of Research
National Women's Law Center



Sarah Hassmer
Senior Counsel for Income Security
National Women's Law Center



ZERO TO THREE
Early connections last a lifetime

Attn:
Cassandra Logan
Survey Director, U.S. Census Bureau
4600 Silver Hill Road, HQ-7H157
Washington, DC 20233

From:
Myra Jones-Taylor
Chief Policy Officer, ZERO TO THREE
1255 23rd Street NW, Suite 350,
Washington, DC 20037

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Matthew E. Melmed

Dear Cassandra Logan,

On behalf of ZERO TO THREE, I write to offer comments on the continuation of data collection for the U.S. Census Bureau's Household Pulse Survey. We strongly urge the Census Bureau to continue this critical data collection through the end of the year. This data has been invaluable in gauging and quantifying the current health pandemic's impact on families and will continue to be essential in crafting responses to promote the recovery of our nation. The real-time data provided by the Bureau in this manner allows policymakers to better tap into what households need and therefore allows for more informed policymaking aimed at supporting families.

Founded more than 40 years ago, ZERO TO THREE is a national nonprofit organization whose mission is to ensure that all babies and toddlers have a strong start in life. We translate the science of early childhood development into useful knowledge and strategies for parents, practitioners, and policymakers. We work to ensure that babies and toddlers benefit from the family and community connections critical to their well-being and healthy development. In this vein, we have been particularly concerned about the resounding impact that the COVID-19 pandemic has had and will continue to have on very young children. Research tells us that children develop and learn through their lived experiences – both positive and negative. Now more than ever, families are under an unprecedented amount of stress in terms of their own health and physical well-being, but also extreme economic pressure that can be felt by the youngest members of their households. Informed policymaking, targeted at families most in need of support is critical should the nation fully recover from the virus – physically, emotionally, and economically.

As the Coronavirus continues to circulate across the nation, along with widespread economic distress families are experiencing, policymakers will continue to need frequent updates on the social and economic impacts of COVID-19 on families to determine, week by week as the Household Pulse Survey is collected and shared, how to best help, support, and plan for the rapidly changing needs of the people in their communities. The information compiled in this survey is essential to helping them decide which policy interventions are most critical to protect the physical, social and emotional, and financial health of families across the country.

For example, according to the most recent data available, the Household Pulse Survey paints a chilling picture of how households are faring economically as it



ZERO TO THREE
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pertains to keeping a stable roof over their head – just as federal eviction moratoriums have reached their expiration. During the week of July 16th, 26% of households with children were admittedly behind on last month's rent – nearly double that of households without children. Further, the data show that approximately 45% of households with children have slight or no confidence that they will make next month's (August) rent. This sort of timely and reliable data, broken down by state, is particularly helpful for state and local policymakers. Without this data, these trends could not be seen, making it nearly impossible for policymakers to respond to the needs of families in real time.

Beyond the Household Pulse Survey being key for policymakers at the federal and state/local level, the real-time information it provides has been immeasurably helpful for advocacy organizations such as ZERO TO THREE in our work to promote policies and approaches that best support families with young children. The thoughtfulness of the survey's composition, as it includes questions quantifying households' food security, housing stability, income loss, medical care, and insurance status, has been vital in our understanding of the impacts of this pandemic on households with children. The survey provides statistically significant data for each state that reflects the rapid changes felt by families each week. **For these reasons, we strongly support the continuation of this survey through at least the beginning of 2021, or until widespread vaccination has ended the pandemic and thus the critical indicators in this survey have stabilized.**

We have two suggestions that would improve the survey's usefulness as we seek to gauge the pandemic's impact on young children whose rapid development could mean that they will carry the imprint of this disaster the rest of their lives. We greatly appreciate and find most helpful that the survey breaks down data tables by characteristics such as race and ethnicity, age, and how many children under 18 live in each household. However, we urge the Census Bureau to consider further breaking down this data to determine the age of children in each household. The needs of children vary drastically by age, which has reverberating consequences for families' finances and well-being. Along with other expert advocates in the field, we recommend that the current question on household composition be updated and broken down more specifically to ask: *How many children in the household are under 5 years of age, how many children are 5-12, and how many children are 13-17.* This slight adjustment would give advocates and policymakers alike greater insight into families' needs for child care, how children in varying age brackets are experiencing the impacts of the pandemic differently, and how to best serve households with children of differing ages.

Lastly, we recommend adding an additional question addressing child care services being utilized by families with young children. The questions that we recommend adding are: *What kind of child care services are being utilized by*



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members of your household? Is this your preferred setting for children in the household? We urge these additions because anecdotal evidence and other surveys are reporting that many families with young children are facing difficult choices about whether to send their children to child care settings in order to either return to work or re-enter the workforce. During the pandemic, child care centers have experienced similar operational challenges to those found in K-12 schools; however, policy solutions that aim to protect children attending K-12 schools are much more difficult to extend to younger children in child care settings – especially for infants and toddlers. Finding quality, affordable child care is one of the greatest challenges parents and caregivers are facing. Many programs have already closed – either permanently or temporarily – and another 40% of programs expect to be forced to close without significant federal investment in the system. Just as the current indicators included in the survey can be used to better inform policy solutions for households across the nation and in each state, data collected on households' child care situations will be essential to create effective targeted solutions for households with young children.

We cannot stress enough how valuable the data put forth in this experimental survey has been. While the end of the COVID-19 pandemic and economic fallout is not yet in sight, the reliable and expert data put forth by the Census Bureau has been and will continue to be a guiding light in informing intentional policy decisions. We greatly appreciate the work of the Census Bureau in putting together this survey and urge the continuation of the Household Pulse Survey data collection.

Thank you for your time and your commitment to our nation's babies and toddlers.

Sincerely,

Myra Jones-Taylor, Ph.D.
Chief Policy Officer
ZERO TO THREE