PUBLIC SUBMISSION

As of: 11/2/22, 9:07 AM **Received:** October 24, 2022

Status: Pending_Post Tracking No. 19n-347w-v15w

Comments Due: November 14, 2022

Submission Type: API

Docket: USBC-2022-0014 American Community Survey

Comment On: USBC-2022-0014-0001

American Community Survey 60 Day Federal Register Notice

Document: USBC-2022-0014-DRAFT-0005

Comment on FR Doc # 2022-19705

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General Comment

As a society we need to know more about how the public connects to others and to civic institutions. For example, in identifying and measuring neighborhoods, we should ask how well residents know their neighbors. A question such as "How many of your (adult) neighbors do you know on a first-name basis?"

Many experts (and the public) have observed the growing political and cultural polarization in American society. This likely has many profound effects on how the public sees and values its institutions. To help assess how connectedness to public institutions are changing the ACS might ask a question along the lines of "Over the last year, approximately how many times have you attended public social and civic functions/gatherings such as at schools, museums, city hall, or other public places?" These data, especially over time, when combined with other summary data on voting participation, for example, can offer much insight into how our democracy is faring.

The relationship between home and work is also changing and should be measured for its economic, transportation, political, and social impacts, e.g., what is the effect of remote jobs on community association and participation.