

**Draft ICR request -- High-Frequency Surveys Program/Household Pulse Survey (OMB Control #: 0607–XXXX)**

Andrew Reamer <areamer@gwu.edu>

Thu 8/17/2023 10:19 AM

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

Cc: PRAcomments <PRAcomments@doc.gov>

Dear Ms. Logan,

On behalf of the American Economic Association (AEA) and the Industry Studies Association (ISA), I request a copy of the draft ICR for the High-Frequency Surveys Program/Household Pulse Survey (OMB Control #: 0607–XXXX), as invited by the August 17 [Federal Register](#). Thank you--we look forward to seeing the draft data collection instrument and supporting statement.

In the meantime, I've posted the following for AEA and ISA members <https://www.aeaweb.org/forum/3954/frequency-surveys-program-household-comments-invited-renewal> and am happy to revise on the receipt of the draft ICR materials.

Sincerely,

Andrew Reamer  
Research Professor  
George Washington Institute of Public Policy  
George Washington University

805 21 St., NW, Room 613  
Washington, DC 20052

[areamer@gwu.edu](mailto:areamer@gwu.edu)  
(202) 994-7866



To: Cassandra Logan  
Survey Director, U.S. Census Bureau  
[Cassandra.Logan@census.gov](mailto:Cassandra.Logan@census.gov)

RE: High-Frequency and Rapid Response Surveys/Household Pulse Survey

Cassandra,

The [Census Bureau's Household Pulse Survey](#) has been an invaluable resource for legislative decision-making regarding housing in our state. Data obtained from the Pulse Survey provides information on the number of people behind on rent, whether they have been able to access assistance, whether they feel that they are likely to experience an eviction, whether they have had to rely on savings, credit cards or family to make ends meet, and whether they have been forced to move because of a rent increase. No other publicly accessible survey gives legislators this kind of insight.

As we move forward with housing policy advances and budget investments, the continuation of this survey is vital to the development of informed leadership strategies and the wellbeing of Washington residents. We, the undersigned, strongly encourage the Census Bureau to continue collecting this critical data.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Strom Peterson".

*Representative Strom Peterson*

Housing Committee Chair

Washington State House of Representatives | 21st Legislative District  
324 John L. O'Brien Building | Olympia, WA 98504 | 360.786.7950

STATE REPRESENTATIVE  
21<sup>ST</sup> LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT  
**STROM H. PETERSON**

State of  
Washington  
House of  
Representatives



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CAPITAL BUDGET  
CIVIL RIGHTS &  
JUDICIARY

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**Rep. Jake Fey**  
27<sup>th</sup> Legislative District  
**Chair**, Transportation  
Environment & Energy

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**Rep. Liz Berry**  
36<sup>th</sup> Legislative District  
**Chair**, Labor & Workplace Standards  
Environment & Energy  
Transportation

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**Rep. Mia Gregerson**  
33<sup>rd</sup> Legislative District  
**Vice Chair**, Appropriations  
Rules  
State Government & Tribal Relations

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**Rep. Nicole Macri**  
43<sup>rd</sup> Legislative District  
**Vice Chair**, Appropriations  
Health Care & Wellness

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**Rep. Cindy Ryu**  
32<sup>nd</sup> Legislative District  
**Chair**, Innovation, Community & Economic  
Development, & Veterans  
Appropriations  
Consumer Protection & Business

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**Rep. Sharlett Mena**  
29<sup>th</sup> Legislative District  
**Vice Chair**, Environment & Energy  
State Government & Tribal Relations  
Transportation

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21<sup>ST</sup> LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT  
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**Rep. Steve Tharinger**  
24<sup>th</sup> Legislative District  
**Chair**, Capital Budget  
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**Rep. Alex Ramel**  
**Majority Whip**  
40<sup>th</sup> Legislative District  
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Rules  
Transportation

**Rep. Amy Walen**  
48<sup>th</sup> Legislative District  
**Chair**, Consumer Protection & Business  
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Finance

**Rep. Beth Doglio**  
22<sup>nd</sup> Legislative District  
**Chair**, Environment & Energy  
Labor & Workplace Standards  
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**Rep. Sharon Tomiko Santos**  
37<sup>th</sup> Legislative District  
**Chair**, Education  
Consumer Protection & Business  
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**Rep. Roger Goodman**  
45<sup>th</sup> Legislative District  
**Chair**, Community Safety, Justice, & Reentry  
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**Rep. Julia Reed**  
36<sup>th</sup> Legislative District  
**Chair**, Postsecondary Education & Workforce  
Capital Budget  
Housing

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**Rep. Shelley Kloba**  
1<sup>st</sup> Legislative District  
**Co-Chair**, Regulated Substances & Gaming  
Agriculture & Natural Resources  
Capital Budget

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**Rep. Dave Paul**  
**Deputy Majority Floor Leader**  
10<sup>th</sup> Legislative District  
**Vice-Chair**, Transportation  
Innovation, Community & Economic  
Development, & Veterans  
Postsecondary Education & Workforce

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**Rep. Mari Leavitt**  
**Deputy Majority Whip**  
28<sup>th</sup> Legislative District  
**Vice-Chair**, Housing  
Capital Budget  
Postsecondary Education & Workforce  
Rules

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Tana Senn".

**Rep. Tana Senn**  
41<sup>st</sup> Legislative District  
**Chair**, Human Services, Youth, & Early Learning  
Appropriations  
Innovation, Community & Economic  
Development, & Veterans

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Mary Fosse".

**Rep. Mary Fosse**  
**Assistant Majority Whip**  
38<sup>th</sup> Legislative District  
**Vice-Chair**, Labor & Workplace Standards  
Capital Budget  
Community Safety, Justice, & Reentry

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**Rep. Emily Alvarado**  
34<sup>th</sup> Legislative District  
**Vice Chair**, Housing  
**Vice Chair**, Local government  
Capital Budget

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jamila Taylor".

**Rep. Jamila Taylor**  
**Majority Caucus Vice Chair**  
30<sup>th</sup> Legislative District  
**Vice Chair**, Human Services, Youth, & Early  
Learning  
Housing  
Transportation

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "M. Riccelli".

**Rep. Marcus Riccelli**  
3<sup>rd</sup> Legislative District  
**Chair**, Health Care & Wellness  
Appropriations  
Local government

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**Rep. April Berg**  
44<sup>th</sup> Legislative District  
**Chair**, Finance  
Appropriations  
Local Government

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bill Ramos".

**Rep. Bill Ramos**  
5<sup>th</sup> Legislative District  
**Chair**, State Government & Tribal Relations  
Community Safety, Justice, & Reentry  
Transportation

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Vandana Slatter".

**Rep. Vandana Slatter**  
48<sup>th</sup> Legislative District  
**Chair**, Postsecondary Education & Workforce  
Appropriations  
Environment & Energy

STATE REPRESENTATIVE  
21<sup>ST</sup> LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT  
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State of  
Washington  
House of  
Representatives



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CHAIR  
CAPITAL BUDGET  
CIVIL RIGHTS &  
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A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lillian Ortiz-Self".

**Rep. Lillian Ortiz-Self**  
**Majority Caucus Chair**  
21<sup>st</sup> Legislative District  
Education  
Human Services, Youth, & Early Learning  
Labor & Workplace Standards  
Rules

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lauren Davis".

**Rep. Lauren Davis**  
32<sup>nd</sup> Legislative District  
Appropriations  
Community Safety, Justice, & Reentry  
Health Care & Wellness  
Rules

## High-Frequency and Rapid Response Surveys/Household Pulse Survey: Comments

Erica DePalma <edepalma@uswateralliance.org>

Fri 10/13/2023 9:52 AM

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

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

You don't often get email from edepalma@uswateralliance.org. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear Cassandra,

On the Household Pulse Survey, I saw that there were a few questions related to energy bills:

- HSE10 In the last 12 months, how many months did your household reduce or forego expenses for basic household necessities, such as medicine or food, to pay an energy bill?
- HSE12 In the last 12 months, how many times was your household unable to pay an energy bill or unable to pay the full bill amount?

I would like to comment the value of replicating the above questions for **water bills**. Asking question(s) related to water bill debt would also be helpful. For example:

- In the last 12 months, how much debt has your household accrued because your household was unable to pay your water bill? (with answers ranging from a few hundred to a few thousand).

Having this information collected by the Census and publicly available for water service providers and others to access would be extremely beneficial to understand the tangible impacts that water bills have on households.

Providing reliable water and wastewater services is both expensive and imperative. If water utilities leaders and advocates have more information and data related to water bill burdens at the census level, solutions may be explored more readily, specifically to support low-income households.

Thank you for your time and consideration,  
Erica

Erica DePalma

Program Manager

[edepalma@uswateralliance.org](mailto:edepalma@uswateralliance.org)

Cell: (203)-640-8631

Pronouns: she, her, hers

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## High-Frequency and Rapid Response Surveys/Household Pulse Survey

Kasey Burton <KBurton@ccsww.org>

Mon 8/21/2023 4:38 PM

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

Good afternoon,

I am submitting this comment regarding the High-Frequency and Rapid Response Surveys/Household Pulse Survey.

I am grateful for the Bureau's work to gather this data and ask that it continues to do so. As a housing advocate, the Pulse surveys provide me with invaluable information. First, it helps me understand what is happening in my community and what people are going through. It also helps my team assess and amend our priorities as needed to ensure we are providing services that address the most pressing needs in our area. Further, this data helps inform our housing and policy advocacy efforts and ensures we are providing well-informed testimony, comments, and suggestions to stakeholders, government agencies, and elected officials.

Beyond the benefit to the work I do, I firmly believe that this data collection is beneficial to the government as a whole, as it has the same needs as my organization—namely, understanding what is happening with the nation's population regarding housing issues, regular reevaluation of priorities and projects, and the opportunity to review important information to engage in properly-informed decision-making.

I therefore ask that the Census Bureau continue to gather the information collected pursuant to the Pulse surveys, as it is indispensable.

Thank you for your time,

Kasey Burton  
Senior Staff Attorney  
Tenant Law Center | Catholic Community Services of Western Washington  
100 23<sup>rd</sup> Avenue South  
Seattle, WA 98144



November 30, 2023

U.S. Census Bureau, Department of Commerce

Re: High-Frequency Surveys Program/Household Pulse Survey

To Whom It May Concern,

The First Five Years Fund (FFYF) appreciates this opportunity to comment on the [U.S. Census Bureau, Department of Commerce's proposal](#) to collect information for the High-Frequency Surveys Program/Household Pulse Survey. FFYF's mission is to ensure all children from birth through age five have equitable access to affordable, comprehensive, high-quality early care and education (ECE) to support their healthy development and help them achieve their full potential in school and life. As part of this work, we encourage practitioners and policymakers on both sides of the aisle to use ECE data to make effective decisions about serving the nation's youngest learners and their families. This includes continuous and real-time data on the availability of child care, the types of child care that families want and need, the barriers that families face in accessing care, and the impact that access to these programs has on young children's development as well as families' ability to work and maintain economic stability. FFYF relies on the U.S. Census Bureau as the benchmark for high-quality data that is essential to understanding our nation's child care landscape and improving access to quality child care. FFYF commends the U.S. Census Bureau for its work on the Count All Kids initiative to reduce the undercount of young children and particularly acknowledges the Census for its recent efforts in collecting and analyzing data on child care arrangements in the Household Pulse Survey from September to December 2022. On behalf of the ECE field, we thank you for elevating the issue in releasing the article "[Most Parents Don't Have Any Formal Child Care Arrangements](#)". Having the U.S. Census Bureau weigh in on these issues is a significant stride forward in data collection for the ECE field. FFYF looks forward to continued leadership from the U.S. Census Bureau as it pertains to prioritizing data collection on young children, particularly as it relates to child care arrangements for families with children ages five and under.

FFYF firmly supports continuing to collect questions EMP7 and EMP8 about child care arrangements and believes amending D12, and EMP 4,7, and 8, as well as adding the additional questions described below, will increase our understanding of the complex and changing issues families with children ages five and under face, and help to improve access to high-quality early learning opportunities.

The COVID-19 pandemic upended the lives of parents and children in a multitude of ways; child care programs closed, stay-at-home orders were issued in many states, and parents struggled to take care of their children while balancing work and other responsibilities. While the child care sector was already fractured, the pandemic severely disrupted the child care landscape and shined a light on the essential role that child care plays in our nation's economy. Federal child care and early learning programs are essential to help working parents find and afford the care they need to go to work and ensure their kids can thrive. Yet the high cost and limited supply of quality, reliable child care that works for parents means it can be very hard to find. Wait lists are long and care can be so expensive that many working parents simply can't afford it. According

to [Child Care Aware of America](#), the national average price of child care in 2022 was \$10,853 per year, which on average represents 10% of a two-income family's earnings and 22% of a single parent's earnings.

However, timely and comprehensive data on ECE preferences and experiences, as well as barriers to access, quality, and affordability, are often unavailable or inaccessible. Given its scope and consistent collection, the Household Pulse Survey is well-positioned to better identify and understand the current issues and gaps families experience with child care in near real-time. This data is essential to make informed policy decisions about ECE.

FFYF appreciates the inclusion of questions relating to child care and recommends amending questions D12, and EMP 4,7, and 8 (see detailed amendments below) to more specifically isolate and understand the child care experiences of families with children ages five and under. Children ages five and under experience learning in a variety of early care and education environments and their families face a different set of challenges in finding and affording care than children who are older and can participate in the K-12 school system. These young children's social development and educational progress have been particularly impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic and more research is needed to properly measure where these young children are receiving care, the types of care that families want for their young children, the barriers that families face in accessing care that works best for their family, and the impacts that child care availability and affordability have on families' employment and economic stability.

Parents rely on a range of options for early learning and care for their children ages five and under, including center-based care, such as child care centers, on-site care (in or near a workplace), preschool, faith-based programs, as well as home-based care, which may include care in a family child care home, or from a relative, nanny, au pair, or babysitter. This diverse landscape of opportunities is often referred to as a mixed-delivery system since there are numerous programs and funding sources that work together to care for children. Given the multitude of options in the early care and education landscape and in order to analyze what child care options parents want and need, particularly after COVID-19 disrupted the child care sector, it is important for these child care options to be included in the survey and analyzed distinctly.

#### FFYF Suggested Amendments

**D12 “In your household, are there... Select all that apply. Children under 5 years old? (1), Children 5 through 11 years old? (2), Children 12 through 17 years old? (3)”**

- FFYF recommends amending the following response options:
  - From “Children under 5 years old” (1) to “Children 5 years and younger” (1)
  - From “Children 5 through 11 years old” (2) to “Children 6 through 11 years old” (2)

Justification: Child care and early learning programs serve children through their 5th year. In order for the ECE community to fully utilize the data efforts underway by the U.S. Census Bureau it is imperative to include 5-year-olds in the young children category. This aligns with the ECE sector's definition of serving children from birth through age five.



**EMP4 “What is your main reason for not working for pay or profit?”**

- FFYF recommends amending the response option from “I am/was caring for children not in school or daycare” to “I chose to care for my children not in school or daycare”.
- Additionally, FFYF recommends adding “I couldn’t find or afford child care” as one of the response options to this question.

Justification: Adding this option will help to distinguish parents who have stepped out of the labor force because they want to be the primary caregivers for their children from parents who want to work for pay or profit but can’t because they face barriers accessing child care. This is essential to understand the impact that lack of access to child care has on employment.

**EMP7 “Next, we are going to ask about the childcare arrangements for children in the household. At any time in the last 4 weeks, were any children in the household unable to attend daycare or another childcare arrangement as a result of child care being closed, unavailable, unaffordable, or because you are concerned about your child’s safety in care? Please include before school care, after school care, and all other forms of childcare that were unavailable.**

- For respondents who answered “Yes” to EMP7, FFYF recommends adding the question “What is the age(s) of the child(ren) who was unable to attend daycare or another childcare arrangement as a result of child care being closed, unavailable, unaffordable, or because you are concerned about your child’s safety in care?” Respondents may select more than one of the following: 0 to 3 years old (1), 3 through 5 years old (2), 6 through 11 years old (3), and 12 through 17 years old (4).

Justification: Adding this clarifying question will isolate the difficulty of accessing child care for families with children ages five and under from that of older children who can participate in the K-12 school system. Additionally, we know there is a pervasive need for infant and toddler care options. Including the 0 to 3 age range in this question would help further stratify that population, as they have unique needs.

- After this question, if a respondent selected that they have a child who is “0 to 3 years old” or “3 through 5 years old”, FFYF recommends adding the following question, “What was/is the primary reason this child was unable to attend daycare or another child care arrangement?” Select one among the following: It was closed (1), There were no more available slots (2), It was unaffordable (3), I was concerned about my child’s safety in care (4), It was not conveniently located (5), The available hours did not fit my family’s schedule (5), Other reason, please specify \_\_\_\_\_ (6).

Justification: There are a variety of different barriers families face when accessing child care. Adding this question will help to identify the most prominent barriers that families with young children face in near real-time, which is vital to inform federal policy solutions to improve access to quality child care.

**EMP8 “Which if any of the following occurred in the last 4 weeks as a result of childcare being closed, unavailable, unaffordable, or because you are concerned about your child’s safety in care?”**

- FFYF recommends subsequently adding the question “The affected child(ren)is/are:” Respondents may select more than one of the following: 0 to 3 years old (1), 3 through 5 years old (2), 6 through 11 years old (3), and 12 through 17 years old (4).



Justification: Adding this question is necessary to better understand the particular impact that child care options for young children have on parents' employment and economic stability.

**In addition to the above amendments to questions D12 and EMP 4,7, and 8, FFYF recommends adding the following questions after EMP8. Given the following questions focus on child care arrangements for families with children ages 5 and under, we recommend adding a section entitled “Child Care for Young Children” and making them available to respondents who selected “Children 5 years and younger” in question D12:**

This section includes questions on child care arrangements for families with children ages 5 and under.

- CARE1. Where is/are your child(ren) age five and under being cared for? Respondents may select more than one of the following: My partner or I care for my child (1), Family member, friend, or neighbor (2) Child care center (3), Family child care home (4), Faith-based program (5), Nanny, au pair, or babysitter (6), Head Start (7) Public Pre-K (8), Other, please specify \_\_\_\_ (9)
- CARE2. Are you satisfied with your current child care arrangement? Respondents must select one of the following: Yes (1), No (2), Unsure (3)
- CARE3. Have you had to change your child care arrangement in the last 2 months? Respondents must select one of the following: Yes (1), No (2)
- CARE4. If selected “Yes” to CARE3- What was the reason? Respondents may select more than one of the following: Previous child care closed (1), Previous child care was unaffordable (2), Previous child care was too far away or inaccessible (3), Previous child care did not fit the hours we needed care (4) I was concerned about my child’s safety in previous child care (5), We found child care that better fit our needs (6), We moved (7) Other, please specify \_\_\_\_ (8)
- CARE5. What are the barriers to getting the child care you need/prefer? Respondents may select as many as apply: Available care is too expensive (1), Available care is not conveniently located (2) Available care doesn’t fit my family’s needs (3), Care is not available (4), Care is not available at the times I need it (5), I want to care for my child but I am unable to (6) I want my partner or a family member to care for my child but they are unable to (7), There are no barriers (8), Other, please specify \_\_\_\_ (9)
- CARE6. What trade-offs have you had to make to access the care you have? Respondents may select as many as apply: I am borrowing money or using my savings to pay for child care (1), I have to arrive at work late or leave early to accommodate my current child care arrangement (2), I have to drive far distances to access child care (3), I had to turn down a promotion because my child care cannot cover more hours (4), I had to quit my job to care for my child (5), I have to work more/longer hours to afford child care (6), I am not making any tradeoffs (7) Other, please specify \_\_\_\_ (8)
- CARE7. How difficult was it to find child care that works for your family? Respondents must select one of the following: Not difficult (1), Somewhat difficult (2), Very difficult (3), Unable to find child care due to difficulty (4), Did not try to find child care (5)
- CARE8. How do you pay for child care? Respondents must select one of the following: I pay entirely out-of-pocket (1), I receive a subsidy voucher to attend a child care program (2), I receive free child care through Head Start (3), I receive free child care through a public Pre-K program (4) I do not pay for child care (5)

FFYF firmly believes that continuous, quality data collection through surveys is crucial to understanding the experiences of young children and their families and equipping leaders and policymakers with the information needed to improve the child care system. We appreciate your consideration of these comments and welcome further conversations and your partnership. If



you have any questions or if we can provide additional information, please do not hesitate to reach out to Amanda Guarino, Managing Director, Policy and National Partnerships, at [aguarino@ffyf.org](mailto:aguarino@ffyf.org).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Amanda Guarino". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Amanda" and last name "Guarino" clearly distinguishable.

Amanda Guarino  
Managing Director, Policy and National Partnerships  
First Five Years Fund



1350 I STREET NW  
SUITE 700  
WASHINGTON, DC 20005  
202-588-5180  
NWLC.ORG

November 28, 2023

Sheleen Dumas  
Department PRA Clearance Officer  
Office of the Chief Information Officer  
U.S. Department of Commerce  
*Submitted via reginfo.gov*

RE: Agency Information Collection Activities; Submission to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for Review and Approval; Comment Request; High-Frequency Surveys Program/Household Pulse Survey  
(OMB No. 0607-XXXX)

Dear Sheleen Dumas,

The National Women's Law Center (the "Center") appreciates the opportunity to comment on the Federal Register Notice (FRN) regarding the next phase of proposed changes to the U.S. Census Bureau Household Pulse Survey (the "Pulse Survey").<sup>1</sup>

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 over 50 years, the Center has been on the leading edge of every major legal and policy victory for women.

Census data has been and continues to be, pivotal to the Center's research and public education efforts. The Center relies on Census data to identify the needs of women and their families, highlight the various 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.

Long before the COVID-19 pandemic wreaked havoc on the already fragile child care sector, the Center spearheaded the effort to increase public understanding, support, and investments in the nation's child care infrastructure. The Pulse Survey has been a valuable source for the Center and other stakeholders, providing us with timely data on how access to child care among families with children has changed and the economic fallout from having no child care on different groups of women and families from April 2021 to August 2022 (Phases 3.1 to 3.5) and then from August to October 2023 (Phase 3.10), when child care questions were asked. To our knowledge, the Pulse Survey is the only nationally representative survey by the federal

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<sup>1</sup> Agency Information Collection Activities; Submission to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for Review and Approval; Comment Request; High-Frequency Surveys Program/Household Pulse Survey, 88 Fed. Reg. 74146 (Oct. 30, 2023), <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2023/10/30/2023-23896/agency-information-collection-activities-submission-to-the-office-of-management-and-budget-omb-for>.

government that provides such data in practically real-time. The Center has also used the rich demographic data in the Pulse Survey to document the disparities in child care access and the economic impacts of having no child care by gender, race, disability status, gender identity, and sexual orientation.<sup>2</sup>

Continuing the Pulse Survey and continuing to include questions on child care in future phases of the Pulse Survey will allow the Center and other stakeholders to track ongoing trends and disparities in access to child care and the economic impacts of having no child care on different groups of women and families at a critical time for the future of the child care sector. To stabilize the child care crisis exacerbated by the pandemic, Congress passed the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA), signed into law by President Biden in March 2021, providing \$24 billion in child care stabilization grants and \$15 billion in supplemental child care discretionary funds to states.<sup>3</sup> States had until September 30, 2023, to liquidate their ARPA stabilization funds and have until September 30, 2024, to liquidate the ARPA discretionary funds. The ARPA child care stabilization fund provided critical support to child care programs, early educators, and families with young children.<sup>4</sup> However, the recent expiration of the Child Care Stabilization program raises serious questions about how early educators and families with young children will fare in the coming months while facing another child care funding cliff in September 2024.

Because it might take months—if not years—for the impact of the ARPA child care funding cliffs to take shape, we need ongoing data collection to document the impact and to help educate the public on the importance of robust, long-term public investments in the child care sector and providing systemic support for women, children, and families. The Pulse Survey already has the data infrastructure for such an undertaking and has the unique advantage of having collected data on child care arrangements and the economic impacts of having no child care before the Child Care Stabilization program ended. In addition, the Pulse Survey has rich information on a variety of topics, which can be used to examine how experiencing child care disruptions might be correlated with changes in other aspects of economic and mental well-being, as well as how disparities in child care access and stability might be exacerbated by socioeconomic status.

The Center recommends the improvements below to increase the utility of the Pulse Survey pertaining to child care:

- The Center appreciates that the Pulse Survey added back child care questions (EMP7 and EMP8) in Phase 3.10. We also appreciate that EMP4 continues to include “caring for children not in school or daycare” as a response option. We strongly recommend including these questions and response categories pertaining to child care in future phases of the Pulse Survey. This would allow advocates and researchers to track the ever-changing child care access and the economic impact of not having child care among different groups of women and families in the aftermath of the ARPA child care cliffs.
- The current Survey asks about the number of children living in a respondent’s household. Respondents in the survey may be living with children who are not their own and answering questions about those children. It would be helpful to know if the children

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<sup>2</sup> National Women’s Law Center, “High Shares of Women with Children Under 12 Lack Access to Child Care As the Child Care Funding Cliff Approaches” (September 26, 2023), <https://nwlc.org/high-shares-of-women-with-children-under-12-lack-access-to-child-care-as-the-child-care-funding-cliff-approaches/>.

<sup>3</sup> American Rescue Plan Act of 2021, Pub. L. No. 117-2, 135 Stat. 31, 207 (2021).

<sup>4</sup> The White House Council of Economic Advisers Working Paper, “Did Stabilization Funds Help Mothers Get Back to Work After the COVID-19 Recession?” (November 7, 2023), <https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/Child-Care-Stabilization.pdf>.



are one's own versus just in the household. This would permit the Center and other researchers to identify mothers who, in particular, have been disproportionately impacted by child care disruptions, instead of women with children in the household. It could also be helpful to add a question on whether a respondent is raising children in the household (and differentiated by children's age group: under 5 years old, 5-17 years old), which would allow us to identify non-parent caregivers.

- If resources allow, the Center recommends adding questions on changes in child care costs for respondents raising young children. Here are examples of sample questions:

*(Universe: Raising children under 5 years old)*

Have your child care costs increased in the last 4 weeks?

Response options (select only one):

- Yes, I am paying more for child care, and I have the same number of children in child care and the same child care arrangement as I did 4 weeks ago.
- Yes, I am paying more for child care and I have the same number of children in child care, but my child care arrangements have changed since 4 weeks ago.
- Yes, I am paying more for child care because I am paying for more children in child care than 4 weeks ago.
- No, I am paying the same amount or less for child care while using the same child care arrangements as 4 weeks ago.
- No, I am paying the same amount or less for child care because I am paying for fewer children in child care or I am no longer using the same child care arrangement that I was using 4 weeks ago.
- No, I have not been paying for child care.

*If "Yes, I am paying more for child care and I have the same number of children in child care and the same child care arrangement as I did 4 weeks ago" or "Yes, I am paying more for child care and I have the same number of children in child care, but my child care arrangements have changed since 4 weeks ago":*

How much have your child care costs increased?

\$\_\_\_\_\_ per week

Thank you for the opportunity to submit these comments on this important information collection. If you have questions, please contact Melissa Boteach at [mboteach@nwlc.org](mailto:mboteach@nwlc.org), Karen Schulman at [kschulman@nwlc.org](mailto:kschulman@nwlc.org), Whitney Pesek at [wpesek@nwlc.org](mailto:wpesek@nwlc.org), and/or Shengwei Sun at [ssun@nwlc.org](mailto:ssun@nwlc.org).

Sincerely,



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Karen Schulman  
Director of State Child Care Policy



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