From:	christina.jenq@gmail.com on behalf of Christina Jenq
To:	Harris-Kojetin, Brian
Subject:	Re: Decision to drop number of times married question in ACS
Date:	Monday, May 06, 2013 12:30:50 PM

Dear Dr. Brian Harris-Kojetin,

I am an Economics PhD student at the University of Chicago studying the link between marriage and labor markets in China.

As someone who is very interested in data relating to marital history, I am writing to express my opinion that not eliciting information about the number of times married would be a loss to social science research trying to understand the nature of the evolution of American society.

I am of the opinion that this decision may be motivated by a desire to limit the amount shame or discomfort respondents might experience if answering that one has been married multiple times. I believe that this can be remedied by changing the framing or placement of the question within the survey; I think one simply needs to consult those trained in psychology or counseling to determine a more sensitive way of eliciting information about the number of times married. Or perhaps it would require special training of an enumerator.

Overall, I do believe there are very good reasons to elicit information about marital history in the ACS and I do believe there are ways for elicitation of this information to be less uncomfortable.

Best,
Christina Jenq
Candidate, Economics PhD
University of Chicago
Booth School of Business