From: Joe Pittman
To: Harris-Kojetin, Brian
Subject: American Community Survey
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Dr. Harris-Kojetin, As a scholar of the family and the Head of a Department of Human Development and Family Studies in which a number of faculty study the role of family structure on the processes and outcomes of social development for individual family members as well as the families themselves, I strongly encourage you not to exclude from the next wave of the American Community Survey the very important information about the number of times participants have been married. This information is critical to many research questions and cannot be obtained any other way. It is so important for social science to understand the amount and role of family diversity and the loss of this information to social and family researchers would be damaging. A more detailed record of participants' marital history would be even more valuable, but at a minimum it is important to record the number of marriages participants have had. As you know, the American Community Survey is considered by many to be the most reliable current source of national divorce statistics. Without numbers of marriage, the quality of this data source will be compromised.

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