From: Nathan D. Grawe
To: Harris-Kojetin, Brian
Subject: ACS question on number of times married
Date: Monday, May 06, 2013 12:22:28 PM

Dear Mr. Harris-Kojetin,

I am writing in response to the call for comments on the plan to eliminate the question in the American Community Survey regarding number of times married. As a social science researcher (PhD in Economics, University of Chicago) I strongly urge a reconsideration of this choice. In my area of research, family economics, it is clear that the instability of marital relationships is one of the defining characteristics of American society. In particular, we have a very different demographic make-up in this regard when compared to otherwise very similar countries like Canada. It is equally clear that marital instability accounts for a substantial proportion of child poverty and intergenerational transmission of advantages/disadvantages. If we lose this key measure of marital stability, it will hamper our ability to understand questions critical to sound decision- (and policy-) making.

Respectfully submitted,
Nathan D. Grawe

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Nathan D. Grawe
Associate Professor of Economics
Carleton College
One North College Street
Northfield, MN 55057

(507) 222-5239