From:	Lauren Menard
To:	Harris-Kojetin, Brian
Subject:	Fwd: ACS to Drop Marriage Question - Comments Needed by May 16!
Date:	Monday, May 06, 2013 12:16:04 PM

Hello Harris-Kojetin,

My apologies for, perhaps, being one more email in a bombardment sent your way. I do not agree with mass emailing.

However, I do strongly agree that national surveys should not be limited in order to reflect only preferred agendas. Dramatic drops in the number of young American parents and rising divorce rates are troubling findings that will never be found when those variables are not in surveys.

The American Community Survey and online data analysis serves the purposes of giving researchers worldwide opportunities to confirm trends reported from other sources and verify findings. Removing the divorce question would limit research in an area with much potential for informing societal trends.

Thank you for your work on the important American Community Survey. I appreciate having access to this data.

Lauren Menard, EdD.
Northwestern State University Louisiana

---------- Forwarded message ----------
From: **IPUMS Project** <ipums@umn.edu>
Date: Mon, May 6, 2013 at 10:25 AM
Subject: ACS to Drop Marriage Question - Comments Needed by May 16!
To: Lauren <laurenannmenard@gmail.com>

Minnesota Population Center: Home of the IPUMS Is this email not displaying correctly? View it in your browser.

IPUMS

Dear IPUMS User,

I am writing to alert you that the Census Bureau is planning to drop the question on "number of times married" from the American Community Survey. For those of us who study family demography, this change would be a major loss. The times married question is not only vital for understanding blended families, it is also necessary for basic studies of nuptiality and marital instability. A recent working paper by Sheela Kennedy and myself demonstrated that the ACS is the only reliable source currently available for national divorce statistics. Without the number of times married, however, the divorce data will be badly compromised; for example, it will be impossible to construct a life table for first marriages, or to estimate the percentage of people who have ever divorced.

The news of this plan appears in the Federal Register in a single sentence at the end of an otherwise harmless notice of request for comments. If you believe as I do that this change would significantly harm the nation's statistical infrastructure, you should make your feelings known to the responsible OMB desk officer, Dr. Brian Harris-Kojetin. He can be reached at (202) 395-7245 or by email at bharrisk@omb.eop.gov. The deadline for comments is May 16.

Thank you,

Steven Ruggles
Regents Professor
Director, Minnesota Population Center

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Our mailing address is:
Minnesota Population Center
225 19th Ave South
Minneapolis, MN 55455

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To avoid criticism, do nothing, say nothing, and be nothing. Elbert Hubbard, American editor

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