From: Katie Genadek
To: Harris-Kojetin, Brian
Subject: ACS marriage question
Date: Monday, May 06, 2013 11:46:26 AM

Dear Dr. Harris-Kojetin,

I am writing to you about the plan to drop the how many times married questions from the ACS. I am extremely concerned about this, both as a researcher and as the Outreach and Dissemination director of the Minnesota Population Center, one of the largest distributers of the ACS PUMS data.

In my position, I work closely with ACS PUMS microdata users from many backgrounds - academics to federal government employees. Currently, the ACS is one of the only nationally representative sources of this information and it is critical to understand divorce and family like in America. I believe the research community values and uses the data from this question.

I also do research divorce and the relationship between family and work. I believe one of the least developed areas in our understanding of families is second families and step families - especially later in the life course. This data is essential for understanding the impacts of remarriage for families and society, and has policy implications - for children especially.

Please consider this - and the many other people you will hear from about this - when deciding whether to drop this question. There are currently many surveys to get some information, such as data on health insurance (CPS, NHIS, and insurance companies themselves), and very few places to get information on marital histories.

Best,
Katie Genadek