From: peter.m.rich@gmail.com on behalf of Peter Rich
To: Harris-Kojetin, Brian
Subject: Concern re: ACS change
Date: Monday, May 06, 2013 1:17:36 PM

Dear Dr. Brian Harris-Kojetin,

I am a doctoral student in Sociology and an active user of data from the American Community Survey to study social processes related to marriage, divorce, cohabitation and race.

The Minnesota Population Center has alerted me that a proposed change to the ACS--eliminating the "Number of times married" question--is mentioned in the Federal Register. This change would be a major problem for research and would harm our nation's statistical infrastructure. We rely on this question to understand marital history in the population. By dropping this question, we lose the opportunity to deduce frequency of remarriage by age and cohort across multiple data collection points. We also lose important information that we might 'control' for when analyzing other important aspects of family life, such as fertility or income.

Please do not remove this question from the ACS.

Thank you,
Peter Rich
NYU Sociology
Doctoral Candidate