From:	Kristin F Butcher
To:	Harris-Kojetin, Brian
Subject:	Please keep the "number of times married" question on the ACS
Date:	Monday, May 06, 2013 11:51:20 AM

Dear Dr. Harris-Kojetin:

I am writing to ask that the American Communities Survey retain the question about "number of times married." I am sure you will hear from many researchers for whom the information on number of times married is critical to their work. I also think that the ACS provides critical information on marital formation and stability that is not replicated elsewhere.

In addition to those researchers who use this information to provide critical, policy relevant, analyses related to marital stability, I wanted to let you know about another group that uses this information: undergraduate researchers. I teach an undergraduate econometrics class that requires students to write an empirical research paper. Every year, a core group of students is interested in questions about marital formation and dissolution. While these are learning experiences that do not necessarily immediately provide policy actionable research results, it is critical that educators have access to data on issues that deeply move our students. Questions about how education relates to marriage and divorce probabilities, how "no-fault" divorce policies relate to marital outcomes, are questions that are salient for the undergraduate population and motivates students to pursue empirical skills in ways that (perhaps sadly) questions about unemployment do not.

From both the research and pedagogical perspectives, I urge you to retain the information on "times married" in the ACS.

Sincerely,

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