From:	Benjamin Galick
To:	Harris-Kojetin, Brian
Subject:	Fwd: ACS to Drop Marriage Question - Comments Needed by May 16!
Date:	Tuesday, May 07, 2013 2:01:47 PM

Dear Dr. Harris-Kojetin,

This is a quick note to express my concern with the Census' plan to drop the "number of times married" question from the ACS. I strongly oppose this plan as it would severely and negatively impact the quality of marriage-related research in the U.S. Not only will it impact my future career as a economist who studies family dynamics, it will also severely inhibit attempts to understand how and why family dynamics change over time.

Please do not remove this question.

Thank you,

Benjamin Galick
3rd year PhD student
Harris School of Public Policy Studies
The University of Chicago

---------- 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: Benjamin <bgalick@uchicago.edu>

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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