From: Sarah Schlabach
To: Harris-Kojetin, Brian
Subject: Fwd: FW: ACS to Drop Marriage Question - Comments Needed by May 16!
Date: Tuesday, May 07, 2013 10:18:03 PM

Dr. Brian Harris-Kojetin,

My name is Sarah Schlabach and I am currently a PhD candidate at UCLA. My focus is on family demography and my current work examines the growing multiracial family population in the United States. The inclusion of questions regarding marriage history are not only vital to my work but are necessary to the work of many of my social science peers. I believe, dropping any question on marriage would hinder our study of the American population.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Sarah

From: IPUMS Project [mailto:ipums=umn.edu@mail123.us4.mcsv.net] **On Behalf Of** IPUMS Project
Sent: Monday, May 06, 2013 8:31 AM
To: Judith A. Seltzer
Subject: ACS to Drop Marriage Question - Comments Needed by May 16!

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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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