

November 28, 2016

Carol Rowan, BLS Clearance Officer
Division of Management Systems
Bureau of Labor Statistics
Room 4080
2 Massachusetts Avenue NE
Washington, DC 20212
Fax: 202-691-5111 and email: rowan.carol@bls.gov

Re: Contingent Worker Supplement to the Current Population Survey

Dear Ms. Rowan:

I am writing to provide comments in support of the proposed reinstatement with change of the Contingent Worker Supplement (CWS) to the Current Population Survey (CPS) as described in the *Federal Register* on September 26, 2016.

As an associate professor in the economics department and co-director of the Research Program on Forecasting at the George Washington University, my research focuses on modeling and forecasting changes in the labor market. I am also a senior fellow with Indeed, a leading job search site. In both roles I rely on a range of data sources measuring the structure and evolution of the modern labor market. From these perspectives I see substantial value in updating the time series on the CWS and also on collecting information about new forms of work, particularly at this time. Thus I strongly support the reinstatement of the CWS as well as the addition of the four questions regarding the use of the electronic matching platforms that have arisen since the last fielding of the CWS.

There is much anecdotal evidence that contingent work is on the rise in the US and that this increase is at least in part due to the development of electronic matching platforms such as ride hailing apps, online marketplaces for freelance work, etc. Contingent work produces particular measurement and policy challenges as it represents a substantially different work structure than the standard employer-employee relationship. If we remain ignorant of the information that could be obtained from an update to the CWS then we will have to continue to rely on smaller surveys conducted by other sources that may not be properly representative of the US labor force. This may lead to inaccurate models and forecasts as well as misguided policies for our modern labor market. The reinstatement of the CWS would allow us to get a measure of

the growth in contingent work over the last 12 years as well as a baseline measure of the role of electronic matching platforms. This information is critical for researchers and policymakers to understand the evolving nature of work in the US.

I appreciate the opportunity to express my support for the proposed reinstatement with change of the Contingent Worker Supplement to the CPS and hope my feedback is helpful.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "T. Sinclair". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Tara M. Sinclair
Associate Professor of Economics and International Affairs
Co-Director of the Research Program on Forecasting
Email: tsinc@gwu.edu
Phone: 202-994-7988