



December 30, 2014

Ms. Jennifer Jessup
Departmental Paperwork Clearance Officer
U.S. Department of Commerce, Room 6616
14th and Constitution Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20230

Re: Proposed Information Collection; Comment Request; The American Community Survey Content Review Results (Document Citation: 79 FR 64743)

Dear Ms. Jessup:

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to the proposed information collection published by the Census Bureau (the Bureau) on October 31, 2014 at 79 Fed. Reg. 64743, which would eliminate six questions from the American Community Survey (ACS). On behalf of the nearly 170,000 bipartisan members and supporters of the American Association of University Women (AAUW), I would like to share AAUW's input on the importance of the ACS data. AAUW believes the ACS is an essential service and stands with many other groups in supporting the ACS and its important role.ⁱ Because ACS's data is so important to AAUW's research, we are concerned with the proposed elimination of questions from the ACS regarding undergraduate field of degree and marital status.

AAUW relies on this information to further our research promoting pay equity and closing the wage gap. AAUW's member-adopted Public Policy Principles affirm our opposition to "all forms of discrimination" and commitment to "an economy that provides equitable employment opportunities."ⁱⁱ To further these goals, AAUW publishes original research reports analyzing the national gender pay gap as well as the gap in all fifty states and Washington DC. Using the data provided by ACS, AAUW has found that undergraduate field of study and marital status are both factors that contribute to pay inequality.ⁱⁱⁱ Since changes in marital status and choice of undergraduate field have both economic and social impacts on women, it is imperative that AAUW continues receiving this data so we can continue to back up proposed policy changes that will benefit women and their families.

The ACS is the *only source* of objective, consistent, and comprehensive information about the nation's social, economic, and demographic characteristics down to the neighborhood level. Because questions regarding undergraduate field of degree and marital status are critical to our research, AAUW strongly believes that these six questions should continue to be collected by ACS. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Lisa M. Maatz
Director, Public Policy and Government Relations
American Association of University Women

ⁱ The Census Project. (May 16, 2012). *Letter to Senate Leadership on FY 2013 Census Bureau Funding, Including American Community Survey Funding May 16, 2012*. Retrieved December 19, 2014, from www.thecensusproject.org/letters/2012-05-21-Senate-Census-Budget-Ltr-SenateLeadership-Final-Signed.pdf

ⁱⁱ American Association of University Women. (2013). *Biennial Action Priorities*. Retrieved December 19, 2014, from <http://www.aauw.org/resource/principles-and-priorities/>

ⁱⁱⁱ AAUW. (Fall, 2014). *The Simple Truth About the Wage Gap*. Retrieved December 19, 2014, from http://www.aauw.org/files/2014/09/The-Simple-Truth_Fall.pdf