

MAY 22 2012



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

Bureau of the Census

Washington, DC 20233-0001

OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR

Ms. Katherine K. Wallman
Chief Statistician
Statistical and Science Policy Branch
Office of Management and Budget
Washington, DC 20503

Dear Katherine:

Following our telephone conversation of the past week, I am writing to request a deletion from the request for forms clearance involving the American Community Survey (ACS). This concerns the proposed addition of Parental Place of Birth measurements to ACS.

The U.S. Census Bureau recognizes the importance of parental place-of-birth data for policy decision making, especially given the growth of the foreign-born population and their second-generation children in recent decades. However, at this time, I feel it best not to add questions to the ACS questionnaire that may appear to our respondents as conceptually redundant with other variables, including race, Hispanic origin, ancestry, and place of birth. As part of the 2010 Census Alternative Questionnaire Experiment (AQE) research, we are analyzing different question strategies for race and Hispanic origin on the census and various surveys, including the ACS. This may make the need for a separate ancestry question unnecessary and, by extension, open the possibility for inclusion of the parental place-of-birth questions. As this research is completed, we may revisit including parental place of birth on the ACS questionnaire in the future.

For these reasons, I ask that you omit the proposed addition of parental place-of-birth questions in the clearance package your office has received.

The clearance package contains supporting statements in multiple sections that reference the addition of questions on Parental Place of Birth. These include part A.1 (Necessity of the Information Collection, Changes in ACS Content for 2013) and part A.2 (Needs and Uses, New Questions). In addition, Attachment Rpt4 provided additional justification for adding the Parental Place of Birth questions. Finally, the sample questionnaires provided as attachments for all of the data collection modes (attachments C, E, H, I, L, M, N, S, T, CP2, and CP3) currently include these questions. Please ignore the reference to the Parental Place of Birth questions when reviewing those sections of the clearance package.

I would be happy to discuss this with you at any time. Thank you for your assistance in this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Robert M. Groves". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Robert M. Groves
Director