

DISABILITY AND REHABILITATION RESEARCH COALITION

1501 M STREET, N.W. SUITE 700 WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005

July 18, 2014

Submitted Via Email: acso.users.support@census.gov and thesec@doc.gov

The Honorable Penny S. Pritzker
Secretary of Commerce
Herbert Clark Hoover Building
1401 Constitution Avenue NW
Washington, D.C. 20230

RE: Comment on the American Community Survey - Six Disability Status Questions

Dear Secretary Pritzker:

On behalf of the Disability and Rehabilitation Research Coalition (DRRC), we appreciate the opportunity to provide comments on how much the disability community and disability advocates value and use the ACS and the six disability questions asked therein. The DRRC is a coalition of over 30 national non-profit organizations committed to improving the science of rehabilitation and disability. The DRRC seeks to maximize the return on the federal investment in rehabilitation and disability research with the goal of optimizing the health, function, and quality of life of persons with injuries, illnesses, disabilities, and chronic conditions.

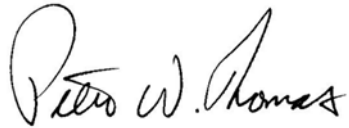
We support the comments submitted in the joint letter by the Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities (CCD) and the Partnership to Improve Patient Care (PIPC) and wish to echo their sentiments:

The six ACS disability questions comprise an integrated unit of questions that together address a wide range of significant disabilities, thereby identifying those who are most at risk with respect to poverty, unemployment, emergency planning, and so forth. Information from all the questions is used collectively to distinguish and follow trends experienced by people with disabilities, formulate federal policy, and allocate funding appropriately in distinct subject areas.

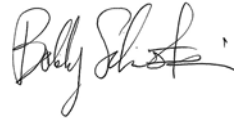
We believe that the six disability specific questions in the ACS are the backbone of the data we have about people with disabilities and help shape our programs and funding in the areas of education, employment, housing, transportation, healthcare services and benefits, long term services and supports, emergency preparedness, civic and social participation, as well as, health disparities and public health. We urge you to not alter or remove any of the six questions from the current ACS questionnaire.

Thank you once again for the opportunity to comment on six ACS disability questions and their vital importance to the disability community. If you have any questions, please contact Peter Thomas or Bobby Silverstein at (202) 466-6550 or by email at Peter.Thomas@ppsv.com and Bobby.Silverstein@ppsv.com.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Peter W. Thomas". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "P".

Peter W. Thomas, J.D.
DRRC Counsel

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bobby Silverstein". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "B".

Robert "Bobby" Silverstein, J.D.
DRRC Counsel

DRRC Member Organizations

American Academy of Neurology
American Academy of Orthotists & Prosthetists
American Academy of Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation
American Association of People with Disabilities
American Association of Spinal Cord Injury Psychologists and Social Workers
American Association on Health and Disability
American Congress of Rehabilitation Medicine
American Hospital Association
American Medical Rehabilitation Providers Association
American Music Therapy Association
American Occupational Therapy Association
American Physical Therapy Association
American Speech-Language-Hearing Association
American Therapeutic Recreation Association
Amputee Coalition of America
Arthritis Foundation
Association of Academic Physiatrists
Association of Rehabilitation Nurses
Brain Injury Association of America
Child Neurology Foundation
Child Neurology Society
Christopher and Dana Reeve Foundation
Disability Rights Education and Defense Fund
Federation for American Hospitals
March of Dimes
National Association for the Advancement Orthotics & Prosthetics
National Association of Rehabilitation Research Training Centers
National Association of State Head Injury Administrators
National Association of Veterans' Research and Education Foundations
National Council on Independent Living
National Multiple Sclerosis Society
North American Brain Injury Society
Paralyzed Veterans of America
RESNA
United Spinal Association