

american political science association

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February 22, 2005

Amy A. Hobby
Bureau of Labor Statistics Clearance Officer
Division of Management Systems
Bureau of Labor Statistics, Room 4080
2 Massachusetts Avenue, NE
Washington, DC 20212

Dear Ms. Hobby:

The American Political Science Association would like to urge the Bureau of Labor Statistics to reconsider its proposal to eliminate the collection of gender specific data from the Current Employment Statistics (CES) program. We consider the survey of 283,000 businesses to be the most reliable means of tracking employment figures, hours, and earnings of all employees on a monthly basis. It is also the best means of tracking industry data as well as job gains and losses by gender. The BLS is suggesting that researchers rely solely on the Current Population Survey (CPS). Although this survey of 60,000 households is very important, it is equally necessary to have access to the more comprehensive survey data coming directly from employers themselves. Relying only on the CPS will compromise the quality of the data because of its smaller sampling size and self-reporting methods.

Given the significant gender differences in pay, earnings potential, care-work responsibilities, career patterns, and life expectancies, we believe the collection of CES data disaggregated by gender is critical. The elimination of this data will affect our association's capacity, and that of other social scientists, to carry out quality research and teaching in public policy, women's studies, comparative politics, political economy, and many other fields within our discipline. It will impede research on labor markets, Social Security, health care and tax policies, just to name a few areas, and undermine the knowledge base necessary to make informed policy decisions.

We strongly urge you to continue collecting the CES data on women's worker data.

Sincerely,



Margaret Levi
President

APSA Council, 2004-2005

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