



May 19, 2004

Dear American Community Survey Data User:

By now you should have received an American Community Survey (ACS) Alert describing a May 14, 2004 *Federal Register* notice about our proposed changes to our data products. I am writing to encourage you to review this notice and the supporting documentation on our website at [http://www.census.gov/acs/www/product\\_review](http://www.census.gov/acs/www/product_review). As someone who has been intimately involved with the development of the ACS, I know you have an interesting perspective on this new survey and its data products. We greatly value your opinion on this proposal and any ideas you would like to share with us.

The *Federal Register* notice describes a set of proposed changes to some of our existing data products as well as some entirely new products. These proposals are the result of months of work with many of the analysts who deal with you and other data users on a regular basis. Nonetheless, this is merely our initial proposal, and we welcome comments and alternative approaches. I do ask that you consider these two points when formulating your comments: 1) what is the potential impact of your idea on the ability of the Census Bureau to produce timely estimates? and 2) are the estimates that you are requesting of interest to a wide group of data users, or are they more targeted to a much more narrow group? We have asked ourselves these questions as we went through the process of formulating our proposal. Indeed, it has been our goal to provide a richer set of estimates than is currently available in the Census 2000 Decennial Summary File 3 data product, while, at the same time, avoiding the inclusion of so many different estimates (and at such a fine level of detail) that we may not be able to produce these estimates in a timely fashion every year.

You will notice that we do not discuss the levels of geography for which we propose producing these data products. However, as we have stated on many occasions, we will publish estimates down to the same small geographic levels as was done in Summary File 3 for the 2000 Census, subject to any decisions made by the Disclosure Review Board.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Ken Bryson of our Outreach Staff at 301-763-1911.

All of us working on the ACS look forward to working with you on this exciting project over the coming years. Thanks in advance for your input on our data products proposals.

Sincerely,

*Lawrence S. McGinn* /signed/

Lawrence S. McGinn  
Chief, American Community Survey Office