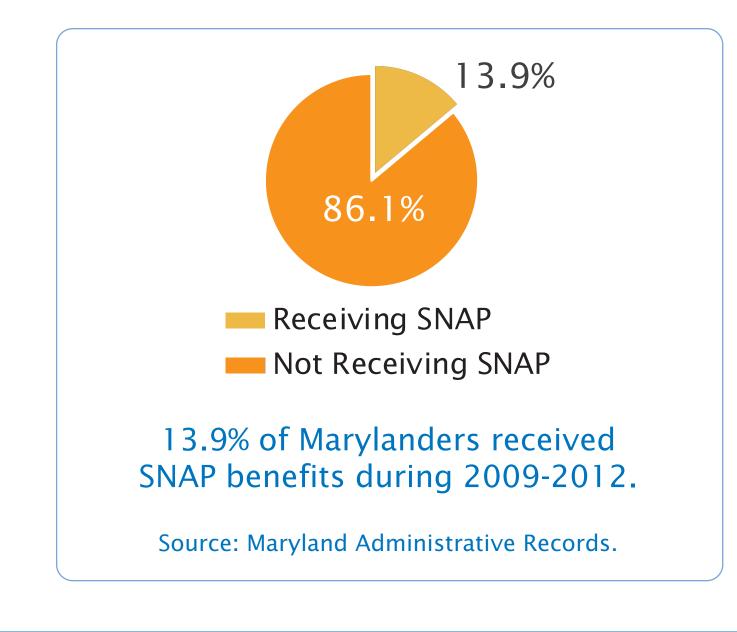
Does Source Matter? Using State-Level SNAP Records to Evaluate Supplemental Poverty

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Motivation

DATA DRIVEN DECISION-MAKING: Policy leaders today look to quality statistics to help inform and guide programmatic decisions. Assessing the quality and validity of major household surveys in capturing accurate program participation is important.

We examine the extent to which the Current Population Survey Annual Social and Economic Supplement (CPS-ASEC) self-reported participation in and receipt amount from the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) reflects SNAP administrative records in the state of Maryland. We then re-estimate the Supplemental Poverty Measure (SPM) in Maryland using pooled CPS data from 2009 to 2012 linked to SNAP administrative records.



We report the extent of mismatch between self-report and administrative records and assess dollar amount variation. Our results inform future CPS data quality improvements and shed light on implications for poverty measurement. This project establishes a framework for conducting future SPM evaluation with administrative records.

Differences between self-reported SNAP participation and administrative records

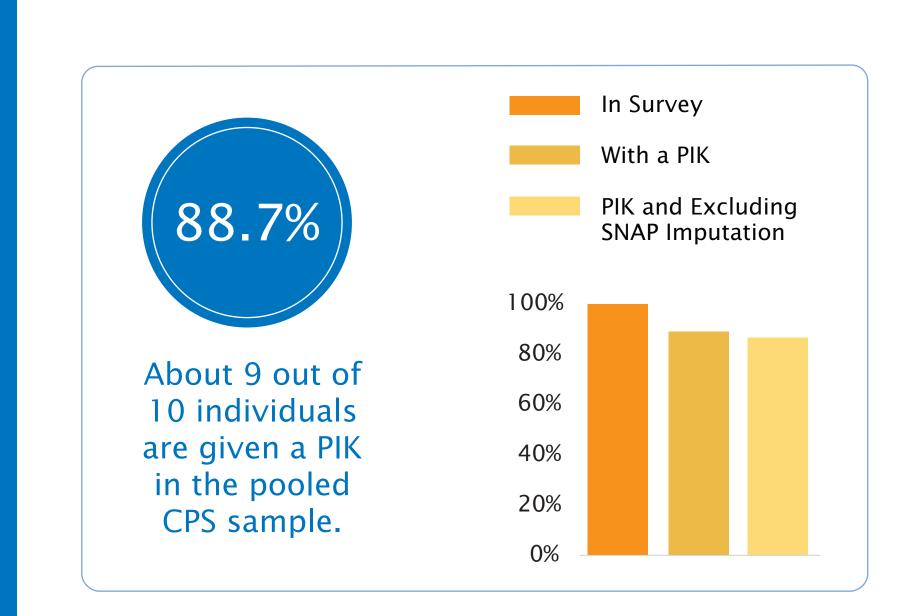
Misreporting in Maryland SNAP Benefits: CPS ASEC vs. Administrative Data, 2009–2012

		Administrative Records			
17,051				Not Received	Received
is the total number of individuals in the sample.		Not Received	N	14,640	1,404
91.3%	CPS Data		Percent	85.7	8.3
is the share of households that		Received	N	59	948
report the same in CPS and administrative data.			Percent	0.4	5.6

Note: Adjusted using inverse probability weights (IPW) and excluding imputed SNAP values



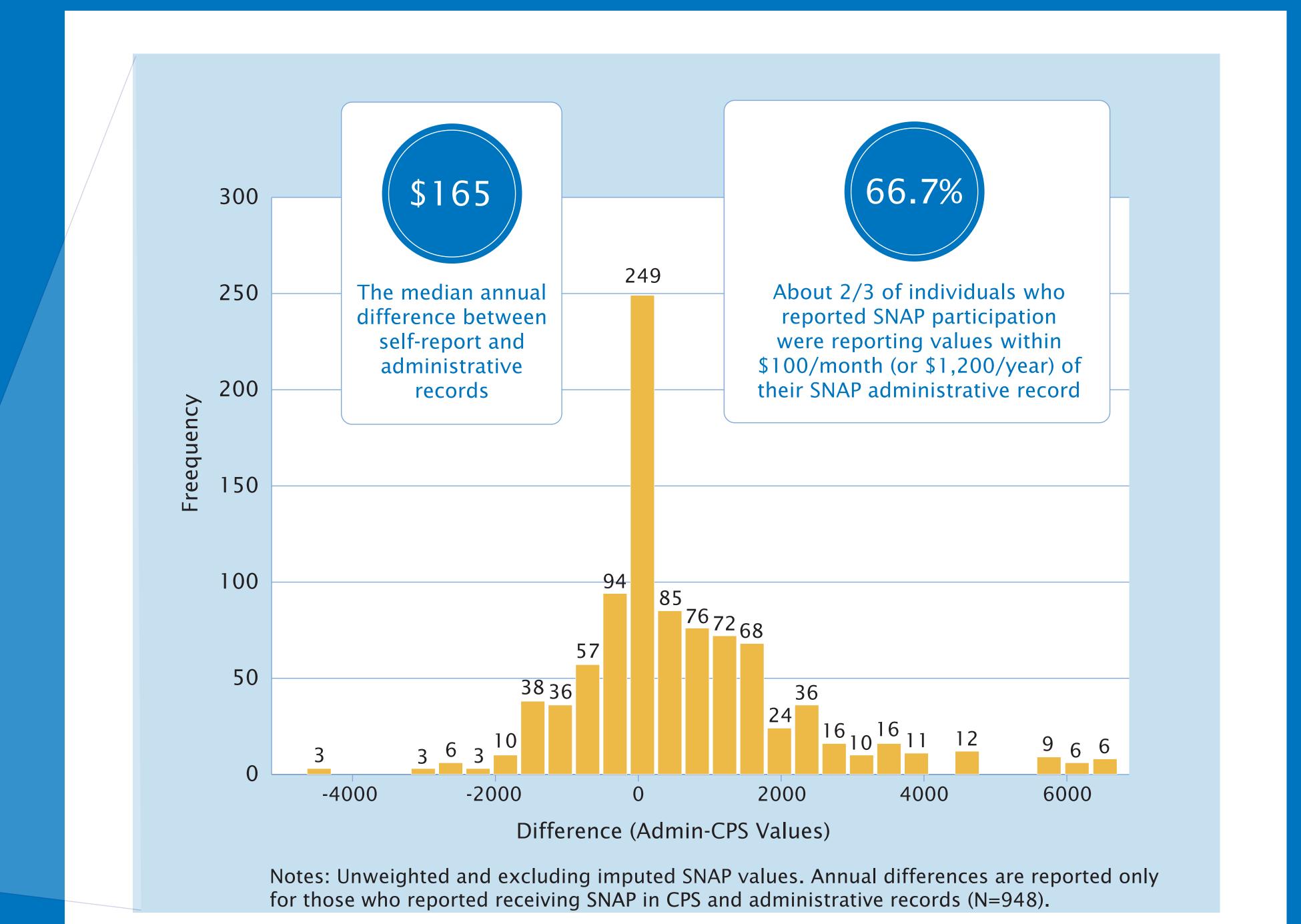
Data



This paper pools data from the CPS-ASEC for calendar years 2009 to 2012 and links to SNAP administrative records from the state of Maryland. Links are created using the Census Bureau's Personal Identifier Key (PIK) process.

There are 19,693 individuals in the pooled CPS sample. Of those, 17,445 individuals had PIKs and no state mismatches. We then exclude individuals whose SNAP benefits were imputed, and the final sample includes 17,051 individuals.

Annual difference between self-reported SNAP amounts and administrative records

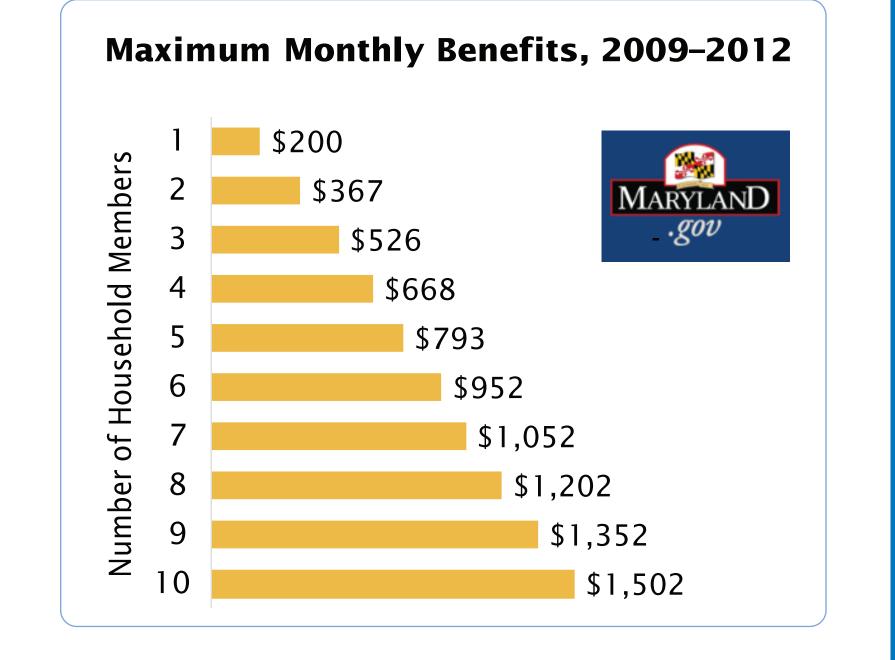


About Maryland SNAP

Eligibility and State Facts:

May qualify if working for low wages, unemployed or working part time, receiving public assistance, are elderly, disabled and living on a low income, or homeless.

Must be a U.S. Citizen (some immigrants, refugees, and asylees qualify), working or looking to work, and have verification of income, medical expenses, and immigrant status.



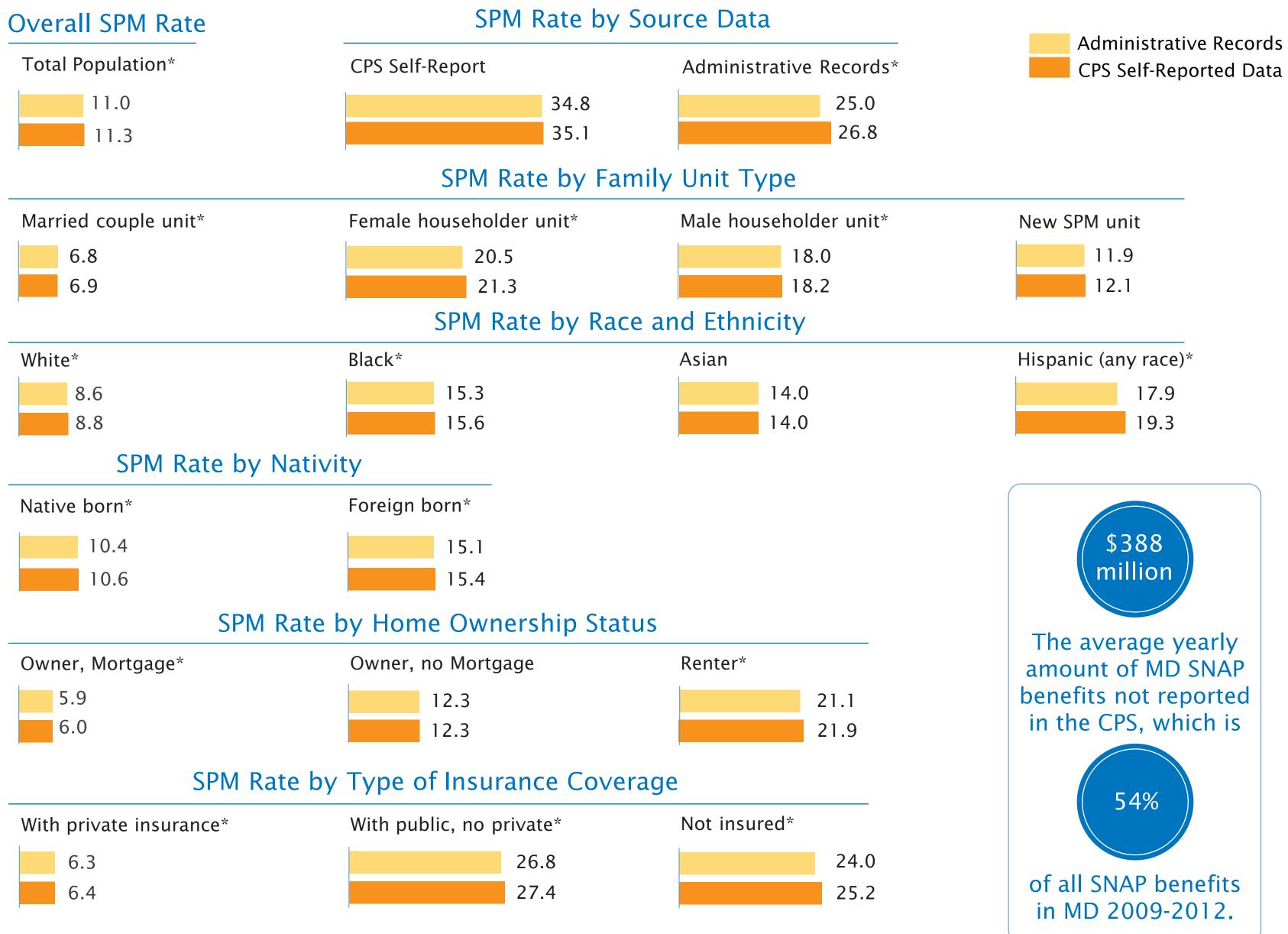
Who underreports?

	Unreported SNAP Receipt	Underreported SNAP Value (2)	
	(1)		
Married Couple Unit (excluded)			
Female Householder Unit	-0.101 ***	-265.20	
Male Householder Unit	0.054	-250.50	
New SPM Unit	-0.056	93.71	
White (excluded)			
Black	0.055 *	-365.70 *	
Asian	-0.048	-946.10 **	
Hispanic (any race)	0.037	-636.90 *	
Not Foreign Born (excluded)			
Foreign Born	-0.073 *	937.90 ***	
Homeowner, Mortgage (excluded)			
Homeowner, No Mortgage	-0.075 *	-301.10	
Renter	-0.098 ***	-3.07	
Private Health Insurance (excluded)			
Public Health Insurance	-0.376 ***	123.70	
No Health Insurance	-0.008	204.40	
Ln(lncome)	0.025 ***	62.94	
N	2,352	948	

Notes: (1) Probability of non-response in CPS conditional on positive value in administrative data, (2) Predicted annual shortfall in self-reported SNAP, conditional on positive value in both CPS and administrative data. Regressions include controls for year, age, gender, MSA, employment, and disability status. Statistical significance as follows: * p<0.05, ** p<0.01, *** p<0.001

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Supplemental Poverty Measure (SPM) Rates



Note: Using IPW and excluding imputed values of SNAP. Significant difference: * p<0.10.

Summary

Self-reported SNAP participation in the CPS and state administrative records differ. In Maryland, individuals underreport SNAP participation by almost 60%. Of records that match, around two-thirds report values within \$100/month of the administrative records. Both families with children (not shown) and foreign born individuals are more likely to un-derreport SNAP dollar values, conditional on reporting benefit receipt. Blacks, Asians, and Hispanics all over-report SNAP benefits compared to Whites.

Underreporting of SNAP participation inflates the SPM rate by 0.3 percentage points (from 11.0 to 11.3 percent). The biggest impact is on the groups that are most likely to receive SNAP benefits: those with a disability (results not shown), Hispanic individuals, uninsured, female-householder units, renters, individuals residing in principal cities and children (results not shown).

Our analysis highlights the need to reduce false negatives in self-reported SNAP receipt. Next steps will expand our analysis using administrative records from more states and years. More importantly, our project will evaluate additional SPM resource components beyond SNAP administrative records.

> This poster is released to inform interested parties of ongoing research and to encourage discussion. Any views expressed are those of the authors and not necessarily those of the U.S. Census Bureau.