

REBECCA M. BLANK
Under Secretary for Economic Affairs
U.S. Department of Commerce

Rebecca M. Blank was sworn in June 2009 as the Under Secretary for Economic Affairs at the Department of Commerce. As the Economic Advisor to the Secretary of Commerce and head of the Economics and Statistics Administration (ESA), she has oversight responsibility for the two premier statistical agencies in the United States, the Census Bureau and the Bureau of Economic Analysis. She is appointed by the Secretary of Commerce as his Board Representative to the Pension Benefit Guarantee Corporation. Within ESA, she supervises a staff of economists and policy analysts who produce a wide variety of reports and forecasts that help develop and assess domestic and international policy.

Dr. Blank was the Robert S. Kerr Senior Fellow at the Brookings Institution from 2008-09. Prior to her arrival at Brookings, she was dean of the Gerald R. Ford School of Public Policy at the University of Michigan (UM), where she implemented a major expansion of its faculty and programs. She also served as co-director of UM's National Poverty Center.

Dr. Blank was previously in government service as one of the three Members of the President's Council of Economic Advisers under President Clinton from 1997-1999. In this role, she participated in White House decision-making on a host of economic, social, and regulatory policy issues. Prior to this she was Professor of Economics at Northwestern University and Director of the Northwestern University/University of Chicago Joint Center for Poverty Research.

Dr. Blank's research has focused on the interaction between the macro economy, government social policy programs, and the behavior and well-being of low-income families. Her 1997 book, It Takes A Nation: A New Agenda for Fighting Poverty, won the Richard A. Lester Prize for the Outstanding Book in Labor Economics and Industrial Relations. Her more recent work includes the books The New World of Welfare (co-edited with Ron Haskins, 2001, Brookings Press), Is the Market Moral? (Co-authored with William McGurn, 2003, Brookings Press), Working and Poor (co-edited with Sheldon Danziger and Robert Schoeni, 2006, Russell Sage Press) and Insufficient Funds: Savings, Assets, Credit, and Banking among Low-Income Families (co-edited with Michael Barr, 2009, Russell Sage Press.)

Dr. Blank is a member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, a Fellow of the Society of Labor Economists, and a Lifetime Associate at the National Academies of Science. She has served in a wide variety of advisory and professional roles, including service on the Boards of Directors of MDRC, the Economic Policy Institute, and the Urban Institute. She was a long-time faculty affiliate of the National Bureau of Economic Research, Vice-President of the American Economic Association, and President of the Association for Public Policy Analysis and Management.