

Biography
Dr. Rebecca Blank
Under Secretary of Commerce for Economic Affairs

Rebecca Blank, PhD, was sworn in on Tuesday, June 09, 2009, as the Under Secretary of Commerce for Economic Affairs. As the Economic Advisor to the Secretary of Commerce, and head of the Economic and Statistics Administration (ESA), Dr. Blank has management responsibility for the two top statistical agencies in the United States, the Census Bureau and the Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA).

Dr. Blank was confirmed by the U.S. Senate on Thursday, May 21st after a successful nomination hearing before the Senate Commerce, Science & Transportation Committee on May 19, 2009.

Blank, a native of Missouri, is a summa cum laude graduate in Economics from the University of Minnesota, and holds a Ph.D. in Economics from MIT. She was dean of the Gerald R. Ford School of Public Policy at the University of Michigan and co-director of the National Poverty Center. Dr. Blank served as a member of President Clinton's Council of Economic Advisers. She has also taught economics at Northwestern University and Princeton and is a member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences and a Lifetime Associate at the National Academies of Science.

Dr. Blank has been the Robert S. Kerr Senior Fellow at the Brookings Institution since July 2008. Prior to coming to Brookings, she was dean of the Gerald R. Ford School of Public Policy at the University of Michigan and co-director of the National Poverty Center. She served as a Member of the President's Council of Economic Advisers, from 1997-1999. She has been 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 interactions between the macroeconomy, government policy, and the behavior and well-being of American 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, Russell Sage Press, 2009.) She is a faculty affiliate of the National Bureau of Economic Research and a member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. Dr. Blank has served in a wide variety of advisory and professional roles, and is currently on the Board of Directors of MDRC, the Economic Policy Institute, and the Urban Institute.

The Economics and Statistics Administration (ESA) informs critical policymaking through comprehensive economic analysis, reports and forecasts. Moreover, ESA develops domestic and international economic policy.

