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Relation of the Directors to the Work and Publications of the NBER

1. The object of the NBER is to ascertain and present to the economics profession, and to the public more generally, important economic facts and their interpretation in a scientific manner without policy recommendations. The Board of Directors is charged with the responsibility of ensuring that the work of the NBER is carried on in strict conformity with this object.

2. The President shall establish an internal review process to ensure that book manuscripts proposed for publication DO NOT contain policy recommendations. This shall apply both to the proceedings of conferences and to manuscripts by a single author or by one or more co-authors but shall not apply to authors of comments at NBER conferences who are not NBER affiliates.

3. No book manuscript reporting research shall be published by the NBER until the President has sent to each member of the Board a notice that a manuscript is recommended for publication and that in the President’s opinion it is suitable for publication in accordance with the above principles of the NBER. Such notification will include a table of contents and an abstract or summary of the manuscript’s content, a list of contributors if applicable, and a response form for use by Directors who desire a copy of the manuscript for review. Each manuscript shall contain a summary drawing attention to the nature and treatment of the problem studied and the main conclusions reached.

4. No volume shall be published until forty-five days have elapsed from the above notification of intention to publish it. During this period a copy shall be sent to any Director requesting it, and if any Director objects to publication on the grounds that the manuscript contains policy recommendations, the objection will be presented to the author(s) or editor(s). In case of dispute, all members of the Board shall be notified, and the President shall appoint an ad hoc committee of the Board to decide the matter; thirty days additional shall be granted for this purpose.

5. The President shall present annually to the Board a report describing the internal manuscript review process, any objections made by Directors before publication or by anyone after publication, any disputes about such matters, and how they were handled.

6. Publications of the NBER issued for informational purposes concerning the work of the Bureau, or issued to inform the public of the activities at the Bureau, including but not limited to the NBER Digest and Reporter, shall be consistent with the object stated in paragraph 1. They shall contain a specific disclaimer noting that they have not passed through the review procedures required in this resolution. The Executive Committee of the Board is charged with the review of all such publications from time to time.
7. NBER working papers and manuscripts distributed on the Bureau’s web site are not deemed to be publications for the purpose of this resolution, but they shall be consistent with the object stated in paragraph 1. Working papers shall contain a specific disclaimer noting that they have not passed through the review procedures required in this resolution. The NBER’s web site shall contain a similar disclaimer. The President shall establish an internal review process to ensure that the working papers and the web site do not contain policy recommendations, and shall report annually to the Board on this process and any concerns raised in connection with it.

8. Unless otherwise determined by the Board or exempted by the terms of paragraphs 6 and 7, a copy of this resolution shall be printed in each NBER publication as described in paragraph 2 above.
Acknowledgments

The job of serving as a conference organizer and volume editor can be either a delight or a strain, depending on the quality of the assistance one receives along the way. Thanks once again to the professionalism of the NBER staff, organizing the Tax Policy and Economy conference and editing the annual volume is a professional joy. The NBER conference department, including Director Carl Beck, Lita Kimble, and especially Rob Shannon, consistently delivers a high-quality product. I am especially grateful for their optimism and “can-do” attitude at all stages of the process. I am also grateful to Helena Fitz-Patrick for her skill and her patience when guiding the publication process. Above all, I thank Jim Poterba, who, through his roles as former TPE organizer and as current NBER president, shows unwavering support of this annual event.

The authors also deserve special thanks because the conference and this volume are only as good as the research underlying them. I am pleased with the high quality of the contributions this year. I am also grateful to the authors for their willingness to package important economics research in a manner that makes it accessible to a broad policy audience.

Finally, I wish to thank Jan Eberly, who at the time of this conference was serving as the Assistant Secretary for Economic Policy at the US Department of Treasury, for delivering a luncheon address. She began her remarks with a summary of where the United States stood in terms of its economic recovery from the global financial crisis. While striking an overall optimistic note about the near-term conditions for growth, she was also clear about the challenging economic headwinds, including the existing fiscal backdrop. She articulated a view that, given current conditions, it would be difficult for the United States to engage in fiscal consolidation without negative economic consequences. She then turned to education policy: specifically, how to make higher education accessible
across the income distribution. Throughout her talk, she underscored the important role that economic analysis has played in informing the decision-making process.