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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.
This marks the 28th year that the National Bureau of Economic Research has organized the annual Tax Policy and the Economy conference in Washington DC. In each of those years, the conference has been a success thanks to the dedication and efforts of numerous individuals. Let me begin by thanking Carl Beck, Lita Kimble, and especially Rob Shannon for their expert handling of all aspects of the conference. This year was particularly challenging because the government shutdown created substantial uncertainty about attendance and the availability of speakers. Even in the face of this uncertainty, the conference department staff handled all of the details with their usual grace and expertise. I am also grateful to Helena Fitzpatrick for carefully and successfully guiding us through the publication process.

I extend special thanks for the support of NBER president (and former TPE organizer) Jim Poterba for his unwavering support of this conference. He is always gracious with his time and enormously helpful in identifying potential authors.

All of the authors deserve a special note of gratitude. Each year, various authors put a substantial amount of work into conducting policy-relevant research that is suitable for this conference. I am especially thankful for the authors’ enthusiasm this year, despite the challenges presented by the shutdown.

Five individuals (Bill Randolph, Eric Toder, Damien Moore, Bill Gale, and Curtis Carlson) graciously agreed to serve as paper discussants, a new feature of the TPE conference this year. All five of them read the papers and prepared insightful remarks. Unfortunately, three of the five were prohibited by their employers from participating in the conference during the shutdown, and thus the audience was unable to benefit from their insights. These discussants have shared their ideas with the
authors independently, however, and some of their suggestions are embedded in the final papers presented in this volume.

Another TPE tradition is to have a keynote speaker over lunch; often, it is an NBER research associate on leave serving in a position in government. This year, Harvard Professor Jim Stock, who is serving as a member of the Council of Economic Advisers, agreed to fill this role. Although he, too, was prevented from delivering his remarks due to the shutdown, I am grateful for his willingness to support this conference.

Finally, I wish to thank the participants in the conference whose thoughtful engagement with each other and with the authors is what makes this conference such a worthwhile endeavor. Although our numbers were down this year, the conversations and discussions were every bit as interesting, rigorous, and insightful as in years past.