

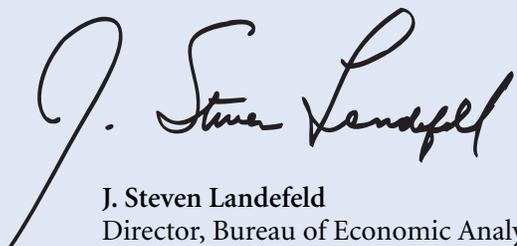
Director's Message

The Bureau of Economic Analysis gross domestic product (GDP) accounts reflect the economic activity of governments at all levels—federal, state, and local. This activity is captured in our government accounts and is the focus of a *BEA Briefing* in this month's issue of the SURVEY OF CURRENT BUSINESS. The goal of this briefing is to familiarize readers with the basic concepts and demonstrate how the government accounts fit within the large national income and product accounts (NIPAs).

In that vein, another article presents our translation of the President's budget for fiscal year 2009 into a NIPA framework. The annual translation, which researchers find useful, provides a tool to help gauge how proposed federal spending might affect gross domestic product and other measures.

Elsewhere in this issue, we provide a preview of the upcoming comprehensive revision of the NIPAs. This preview lays out how the accounts will be affected by the incorporation of the 2002 benchmark input-output (I-O) accounts, which were released in September 2007. The incorporation of the benchmark I-O accounts into the NIPAs is considered an important milestone; it provides a way to update the NIPAs with statistics based on the highest quality source data, among other things. We intend to publish additional previews of the NIPA comprehensive revision, scheduled for 2009, later this year.

As always, you'll find the latest estimates of GDP—in this case the "preliminary" estimates for the fourth quarter of 2007—in an easy-to-read format.



J. Steven Landefeld
Director, Bureau of Economic Analysis