

Director's Message

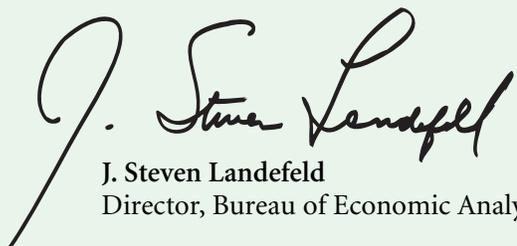
The role of health care in the economy has never been more critical, and I am pleased to note that the Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA) is actively involved in various efforts to develop better health care-related statistics within the national economic accounts. To that end, BEA organized two health care sessions for the annual Allied Social Sciences Association meetings, held in Chicago in January. This issue of the *SURVEY OF CURRENT BUSINESS* includes four studies presented in the session, "Beyond Drug and Hospital Costs: Comprehensive Accounting for Health Care," and summaries of studies presented in another session, "Approaches for Measuring the Cost of Health Care Services."

Elsewhere in this issue, we present the most recent statistics of the travel and tourism satellite accounts, which this year have incorporated a number of methodological improvements. In particular, the accounts now include the value of vacation home rentals and an improved method of estimating the volume of gas consumed in travel activity.

A separate article discusses a proposed method to include the value of the use of motor vehicles in the travel and tourism accounts and demonstrates the effect such a move would have on the 1998 accounts. A satellite account is the ideal place for working out such issues on a what-if basis. At present, BEA has no plan to capitalize motor vehicle services.

In addition, another article updates statistics about foreign direct investment in the United States in 2006, which was the highest since 2000.

As always, you can view the most recent gross domestic product estimates in our easy-to-view format. Government receipts and expenditures for the first quarter are presented in a similar format.



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