# POSITION DESCRIPTION

# commissioner of labor statistics, Department of labor

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| **OVERVIEW** |
| Senate Committee | Health, Education, Labor and Pensions |
| Agency Mission | The mission of the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) is to collect, analyze and disseminate essential economic and statistical information to the American public, Congress, other federal agencies, state and local governments, businesses, and labor groups in support of public and private decision-making. BLS administers 20 economic programs and produces seven Principal Federal Economic Indicators, including the monthly employment and unemployment statistics and the consumer price index. Like all federal statistical agencies, BLS executes its statistical mission with independence, serving its users by providing products and services that are accurate, objective, relevant, timely and accessible.  |
| Position Overview | The commissioner of labor statistics heads the principal federal statistical agency responsible for measuring labor market activity, working conditions and price changes in the economy. The commissioner serves a four-year term. The term of the current commissioner ends on January 27, 2017. |
| Compensation | Level IV $155,500 (5 U.S.C. § 5315)[[1]](#endnote-1) |
| Position Reports to | Secretary of Labor |
| **RESPONSIBILITIES** |
| Management Scope | The BLS has more than 2,400 federal employees, 700 contractors and an appropriation of $609 million. There are 23 senior executives and five senior-level employees under the commissioner’s management authority. |
| Primary Responsibilities | * Provides executive leadership to the bureau’s statistical, research and operational support programs
* Provides guidance on the design and development of concepts, methods and outputs of statistical programs
* Ensures the analysis of economic data produced by BLS is informative, insightful and impartial
* Recommends new and improved research projects and economic and social statistics programs
* Assures the effective operation of data users and technical advisory committees to BLS
* Participates in intra- and interagency committees and task forces
* Represents the bureau’s interests and policies with Congress, OMB, other government agencies, academia, think tanks, the public and international statistical groups
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| Strategic Goals and Priorities | [Depends on policy priorities of the administration] |
| **REQUIREMENTS AND COMPETENCIES** |
| Requirements | * Demonstrated and recognized expert-level knowledge of economic theory and analysis, survey and other methods for producing impartial economic data; practices and processes for federal statistics; and the needs for, and uses of, economic data for decision-making
* Demonstrated experience in independently and apolitically guiding the design and development of concepts, methods and outputs of statistical programs
* Demonstrated experience in successfully managing the accomplishment of operational and strategic plans of a large, complex organization, including the management of organizational performance, financial and human resources, and information technology
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| Competencies | * Ability to maintain real and apparent objectivity and impartiality at all times, as the commissioner should be an apolitical appointment
* Deep breadth of understanding of labor markets, extending to the full range of labor economic phenomena operative in our society
* Ability to represent the Bureau of Labor Statistics before national and international economic forums
* Excellent interpersonal skills and ability to work with a career workforce, given that the commissioner is the only political appointee within the bureau
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| **PAST APPOINTEES** |
| Erica Groshen (2013 to 2017) – Vice President in the Research and Statistics Group, Federal Reserve Bank of New York; Visiting Economist, Bank for International Settlements; Advisory Boards, Bureau of Labor Statistics and the U.S. Census Bureau[[2]](#endnote-2) |
| Keith Hall (2007 to 2012) – Chief Economist, Department of Commerce; Senior International Economist, Research Division, International Trade Commission; Chief Economist, White House Council of Economic Advisors.[[3]](#endnote-3) |

1. The Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2017 (Public Law 115-31, May 5, 2017), contains a provision that continues the freeze on the payable pay rates for certain senior political officials at 2013 levels during calendar year 2017. [↑](#endnote-ref-1)
2. <http://www.bls.gov/bls/history/commissioners/groshen.htm> [↑](#endnote-ref-2)
3. <http://www.bls.gov/bls/history/commissioners/hall.htm> [↑](#endnote-ref-3)