

MEMORANDUM

To: Board of Regents
From: Board Office
Subject: Approval to Award Honorary Degree, Iowa State University
Date: August 30, 2001

Recommended Action:

Approve Iowa State University's request to award an honorary doctorate of science degree to Katharine Abraham at Spring Commencement 2002.

Executive Summary:

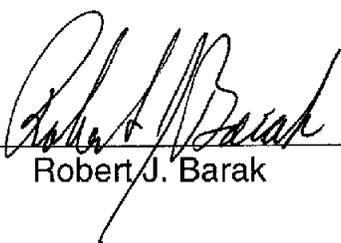
Iowa State University requests approval to award an honorary doctorate of science degree to Katharine Abraham. The University wishes to recognize Dr. Abraham for her extraordinary achievements in scholarly research and distinguished public service as Commissioner of the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS). As Commissioner of the BLS, she occupies one of the most visible and important professional positions dealing with economic performance and policy in the U.S. government. She is a distinguished alumnus of Iowa State University.

Dr. Abraham has achieved great success in leading the Bureau of Labor Statistics, one of the nation's premier statistical agencies that develops methods for compiling and disseminating important and sensitive data on employment, unemployment, prices, and wages in the U.S. economy. She has provided consistent and distinguished service since 1993, guiding the Bureau through a period of major reassessment and changes in data collection and index number construction for unemployment, employment, and cost-of-living measures. Her frequent appearances before Congress and in the national media attest to the recognition her work has received.

Before joining the BLS, Dr. Abraham compiled a distinguished academic record as a faculty member at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, the Brookings Institute, and the University of Maryland – College Park. She has published several books and a great many scholarly articles, book chapters, and conference papers in her area of expertise. Dr. Abraham's research focuses on such topics as analysis of the relationship between tenure, earnings, and

productivity, which has stimulated several new theoretical approaches to the labor market. She addresses questions that are central to economic science as well as to the lives of real people in the economy. For example, Dr. Abraham studied job vacancies, analyzing trends in the volume of help wanted ads.

In summary, Dr. Abraham is widely acclaimed for her contributions to our understanding of unemployment and wage markets. The Board Office recommends that ISU's request to award an honorary doctorate of science to this distinguished alumnus be granted.



Robert J. Barak