

Friday General Session

October 9, 2009

11:00 am – 12:30 pm



GAIL WILENSKY, PhD

Gail Wilensky is an economist and a senior fellow at Project HOPE, an international health education foundation. Among her appointments and assignments, Dr. Wilensky is the president of the Defense Health Board, a federal advisory board to the Secretary of Defense, and also chairs the DHB Health Care Subcommittee. In addition, she serves as a trustee of the Combined Benefits Fund of the United Mineworkers of America and the National Opinion Research Center, is on the Board of Regents of the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences and the Visiting Committee of Harvard Medical and Dental Schools. She recently served as a commissioner on the World Health Organization's Commission on the Social Determinants of Health and co-chaired the Department of Defense Task Force on the Future of Military Health Care.

She is an elected member of the Institute of Medicine and has served two terms on its governing council. She is a former chair of the board of directors of Academy Health, a former trustee of the American Heart Association and a current or former director of numerous other non-profit organizations. She is also a director on several corporate boards.

From 1990-1992, she was Administrator of the Health Care Financing Administration (now known as the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services), directing the Medicare and Medicaid programs. She also served as Deputy Assistant for Policy Development to President George W. Bush, advising him on health and welfare issues from 1992-1993.

From 1997-2001, she chaired the Medicare Payment Advisory Commission, which advises Congress on payment and other issues relating to Medicare and previously chaired one of its predecessor commissions, the Physician Payment Review Commission. From 2001 to 2003, she co-chaired the President's Task Force to Improve Health Care Delivery for our nation's veterans and in 2007 served as a commissioner on the President's Commission on Care for America's Returning Wounded Warriors.

Dr. Wilensky testifies frequently before Congressional committees, serves as an advisor to members of Congress and other elected officials, and speaks nationally and internationally before professional, business and consumer groups. She received a bachelor's degree in psychology and a PhD in economics from the University of Michigan and has received several honorary degrees.