

FLORIDA CONSUMER CONFIDENCE INDEX
May 30, 2006
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



From:
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Consumer Confidence

Consumer confidence among Floridians was unchanged in May, remaining at 86 for the overall index. There was some movement within the five indexes that make up consumer confidence. Perceptions of personal finances now compared to a year ago rose five points to 89 while expectations about future finances remained unchanged at 92. This rise was offset by a decline in expectations about US business conditions over the next year which fell from 76 in April to 72 in May, and expectations of US business conditions over the next five years which fell two points to 76. Perceptions of whether it is a good time to buy big-ticket items rose a point to 103.

“Confidence remains low as gas prices remain near historical highs with no sign that they will retreat any time soon,” said Chris McCarty, the Survey Director. “We are also seeing an anticipated softening in the real estate market, particularly among those using Florida real estate as an investment. Existing home sales are down and inventories are up and new home sales are sluggish considering the incentives builders must offer to lure buyers. These two effects combined will likely affect consumer sales as the year progresses. Until now sales have been buoyed by equity from real estate and high levels of employment.”

Although consumer confidence remained unchanged among Floridians as a whole, there were large differences when looking at subgroups. There was a one point increase in confidence among households making over \$30,000 annually, while those making less than \$30,000 declined eight points to 67. This was particularly pronounced when looking at personal finances now compared to a year ago which fell among lower income households by 18 points. In contrast confidence among Florida seniors actually rose by two points to 83 based on increased optimism about personal finances.

“Moving ahead, we expect consumer confidence to remain at this level and perhaps decline further,” said McCarty. “Gas prices will remain high over the summer and the real estate market will continue to decline as interest rates rise and inventories build (particularly of condos). These factors, combined with the potential for an active hurricane season, may spell trouble for Florida consumers in the months ahead.”

FLORIDA ECONOMIC AND CONSUMER SURVEY†
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May-05 Jun-05 Jul-05 Aug-05 Sep-05 Oct-05 Nov-05 Dec-05 Jan-06 Feb-06 Mar-06 Apr-06* May-06†

Consumer Confidence Index													
FLORIDA	91	96	95	89	78	80	84	91	95	87	91	86	86
Men	96	99	99	94	85	88	88	96	99	92	99	94	93
Women	87	93	91	86	71	74	80	87	92	83	84	82	82
Under age 60	97	98	97	93	79	82	85	95	96	89	94	91	89
Aged 60 and over	81	91	89	82	74	74	82	83	92	84	86	81	83
Income under \$30,000	77	79	82	75	57	67	72	81	83	77	77	75	67
Income \$30,000 and over	99	101	103	96	86	86	89	97	100	92	97	93	94

Personal financial situation now compared to a year ago													
FLORIDA	87	90	87	86	80	79	80	88	88	83	89	84	89
Men	95	92	91	88	90	87	84	90	94	89	95	91	94
Women	81	88	85	85	71	73	76	85	84	78	83	80	86
Under age 60	96	95	93	96	86	86	85	93	93	88	98	94	99
Aged 60 and over	72	80	73	65	66	62	71	76	80	76	73	67	71
Income under \$30,000	61	64	66	61	48	51	54	61	61	71	66	65	48
Income \$30,000 and over	102	100	99	99	94	91	91	98	97	91	101	94	104

Personal financial situation expected one year from now													
FLORIDA	96	98	100	97	90	90	92	95	99	95	96	92	92
Men	99	98	102	94	95	94	93	100	104	97	102	95	98
Women	94	98	98	99	86	87	90	92	96	93	90	90	88
Under age 60	107	104	107	104	98	98	101	105	109	106	107	107	100
Aged 60 and over	76	80	83	81	72	71	75	73	83	77	75	68	77
Income under \$30,000	84	88	95	90	74	81	78	89	96	81	85	82	75
Income \$30,000 and over	104	102	106	103	98	96	100	99	104	103	101	101	99

Expected national economic conditions over the next year													
FLORIDA	79	84	84	75	56	66	72	84	86	77	81	76	72
Men	86	93	90	83	67	78	74	90	92	81	93	88	83
Women	74	84	79	70	47	58	70	79	81	74	70	68	65
Under age 60	83	90	85	75	53	67	73	87	84	78	78	74	68
Aged 60 and over	69	82	83	76	64	68	72	81	89	76	86	80	79
Income under \$30,000	69	74	71	59	37	61	68	86	80	69	71	71	59
Income \$30,000 and over	83	90	93	80	61	68	73	86	90	81	82	79	77

Expected national economic conditions over the next 5 years													
FLORIDA	82	88	88	80	70	76	78	84	90	79	83	78	76
Men	90	95	96	89	76	86	84	91	94	85	96	91	81
Women	76	85	83	74	65	69	73	78	87	74	72	70	72
Under age 60	86	89	87	78	68	74	77	86	86	76	84	79	74
Aged 60 and over	76	93	92	84	72	81	80	81	97	84	84	80	79
Income under \$30,000	70	72	78	70	53	65	74	82	78	66	73	68	62
Income \$30,000 and over	90	93	96	84	76	81	78	86	94	84	86	86	82

Is this a good time to buy major household items?													
FLORIDA	111	113	113	109	91	88	98	105	109	102	106	102	103
Men	113	119	115	117	99	95	107	107	109	107	109	104	111
Women	109	110	112	104	85	83	90	103	109	97	104	101	98
Under age 60	111	111	113	111	89	88	91	104	109	98	104	101	102
Aged 60 and over	113	120	113	103	95	90	110	105	113	107	110	107	107
Income under \$30,000	101	96	100	94	72	78	85	89	100	101	91	91	90
Income \$30,000 and over	116	121	119	114	101	96	103	114	113	101	112	107	106

*Revised. †Preliminary.

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CHARACTERISTICS OF SURVEY RESPONDENTS FOR CURRENT MONTH

Sample Size	416	Race		Gender	
		% Non-white	17	% Male	41
Average age	52	% White	83	% Female	59
Income Characteristics		Hispanic Origin		Region	
% less than \$20,000	12	% Yes	11	% North	24
% \$20,000 to \$29,999	15	% No	89	% Central	17
% \$30,000 to \$49,999	23			% Southeast	26
% over \$50,000	50			% Southwest	33