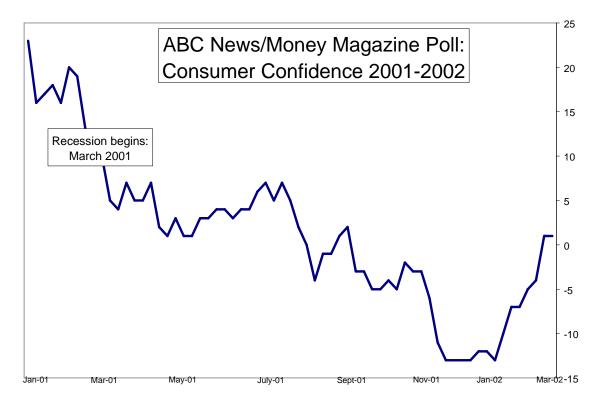
<u>ABC NEWS/MONEY MAGAZINE CONSUMER INDEX – 3/31/02</u> EMBARGOED FOR RELEASE AFTER 6:30 p.m. Tuesday, April 2, 2002

Consumer Confidence Steady, Retaining Last Week's Surge

Consumer confidence held steady this week, closing out the quarter in recovery mode, with Americans' ratings of the national economy and their personal finances their best since last fall.

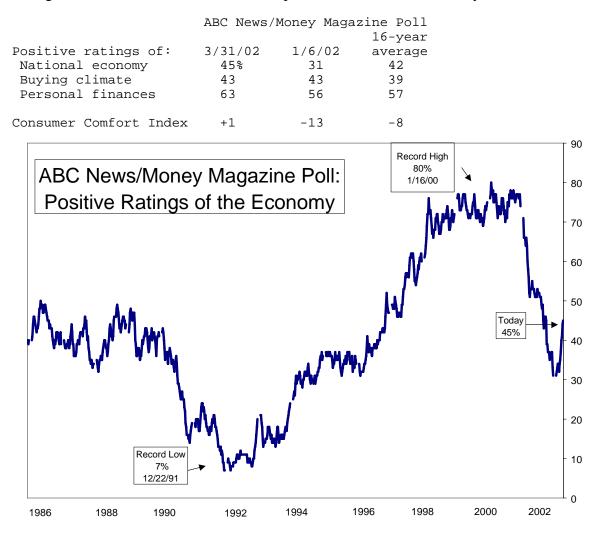
Forty-five percent of Americans rate the economy positively – still far from its peak, 80 percent in January 2000, but up 14 points this year to the most since Oct. 7. More – 63 percent – say their own finances are good, just seven points from the record high.

In a third measure, 43 percent call it a good time to buy things – essentially flat this year, and a reminder that inflation, lately including steeply higher gasoline prices, is always a danger.



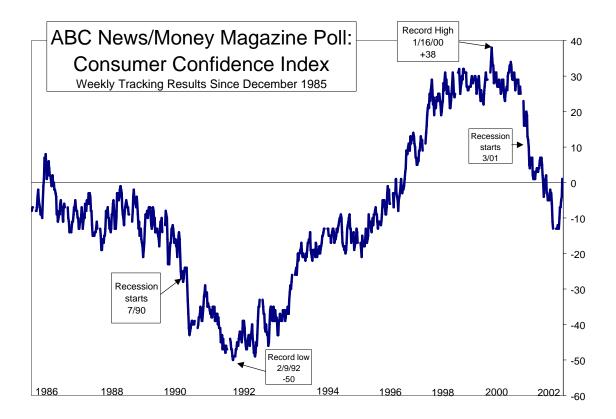
The ABC News/Money magazine Consumer Comfort Index, based on these gauges of current sentiment, is unchanged this week at +1 on its scale of +100 to -100. The index

thus held on to last week's rare five-point advance, its largest surge since January 1999. That gain followed a mid-March rise in expectations, to their best in 18 years.



TREND – The weekly index dropped throughout 2001, starting the year at +23 and finishing it at -13. It stayed there for the first six weeks of this year before moving up starting in mid-February. The index peaked at +38 on Jan. 16, 2000; its lowest was -50 on Feb. 9. 1992.

	ABC/Money	Index
Today	+ 1	
Last week	+ 1	
Two weeks ago	- 4	
Seven weeks ago	-13	
2002 average	- 8	
2001 average	+ 4	
2000 average	+29	Best full year
1992 average	-44	Worst full year
Jan. 16, 2000	+38	Record high
Feb. 9, 1992	-50	Record low
Average since 12/3	85 - 8	



GROUPS – As usual, confidence is higher among better-off Americans. The index is +33 in higher-income households compared to -41 in the lowest, +13 among college graduates while -20 among high-school dropouts, +6 among whites but -33 among blacks and +7 among men while -4 among women.

Here's a closer look at the three components of the ABC/Money index:

NATIONAL ECONOMY – Forty-five percent of Americans rate the nation's economy as excellent or good, up one point from last week. The best was 80 percent Jan. 16, 2000. The worst was seven percent in late 1991 and early 1992.

		Pos. NET	Excel.	Good	Neg. NET	Not good	Poor
This	week	45	2	43	55	42	13
Avg.	since 12/85	5 42	4	38	58	39	19

PERSONAL FINANCES – Sixty-three percent rate their own finances as excellent or good, up one point from last week. The best was 70 percent, set Aug. 30, 1998 and last matched in January 2000. The worst rating was 42 percent on March 14, 1993.

	Pos. NET	Excel.	Good	Neg. NET	Not good	Poor
This week	63	7	56	37	27	10
Avg. since 12/8	5 57	5	53	43	30	12

BUYING CLIMATE – Forty-three percent say it's an excellent or good time to buy things they want and need, down two points from last week. The best was 57 percent Jan. 16, 2000. The worst was 20 percent in fall 1990.

		Pos. NET	Excel.	Good	Neg. net	Not good	Poor
This	week	43	4	39	57	41	16
Avg.	since 12/8	5 39	3	36	61	41	21

METHODOLOGY - The ABC News/Money magazine Consumer Comfort Index represents a rolling average based on telephone interviews with a random sample of about 1,000 adults nationwide each month. This week's results are based on 1,014 interviews in the month ending March 31, 2002 and have an error margin of plus or minus three percentage points. Field work by ICR-International Communications Research of Media, Pa.

The ABC/Money index is derived as follows: The negative response to each index question is subtracted from the positive response to that question. The three resulting numbers are then added and divided by three. The index can range from +100 (everyone positive on all three measures) to -100 (all negative on all three measures). The survey began in December 1985.

Analysis by Gary Langer.

ABC News polls can be found at ABCNEWS.com on the Internet, at: http://abcnews.go.com/sections/us/PollVault/PollVault.html

Media contact: Todd Polkes, (212) 456-4586

03/31/02	This L Week	ast 4 Week						
Group								
GENERAL POPULATION Overall Index State of Economy Personal Finances Buying Climate	1 -10 26	-12 24	-26 20	-38 12	6 32	10 32	-38 12	-13 23
~		OVERA	LL IND	EX BY	DEMOG	RAPHIC	GROUPS	5
Sex: Men Women	7 -4	6 -5	3 -17			-	-6 -21	-
Age: 18 - 34 35 - 44 45 - 54 55 - 64 65 +	1 -1 2 19 -10	3 3 20		-13	4 11 1	9 11 20	-22	-2 -5 -3
Income: Under \$15K \$15K To \$24.9K \$25K To \$39.9K \$40K To \$49.9K Over \$50K	-31 -8	-6 2		-31 -16 3		$^{-14}_{21}$	-	-25 -8 4
Region: Northeast Midwest South West	-2 1 -1 7	3	-6 -14 -4 -6	-8 -12	10 4	13 8	-17 -15 -13 -21	0 -1
Race: White Black Politics:	6 -33		-2 -47			14 -8	-8 -51	

Republican Democrat Independent Education:	30 -15 -4	28 -15 -3	7 -16 -7	16 -26 -19	28 -7 2	34 2 4	5 -29 -19	21 -13 -6
< High School High Sch. Grad.	-20 -7	-20	-36	-18	-36	-15	-49 -18	-32 -7
College + Home:	13	13	0	-1	24	26	-5	11
Own Rent	8 -20	8 -20	-1 -21	-9 -23	12 -9	16 -1	-10 -27	4 -16
Marital Status:								
Single	-12	-10	-12	-16	5	15	-19	-1
Married	11	9	0	-7	16	17 -10	-7 -42	5 -25
Sep/Wid/Div Employ. Status:	-25	-23	-34	-31	-28	-10	-42	-25
Full-Time Part-Time Not Employed	9 9 -14	12 7 -18	1 3 -21	-1 -12 -27	11 9 -2	19 11 -1	-4 -15 -28	8 -3 -14

END