## ABC NEWS/MONEY CONSUMER INDEX – 10/1/00

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## **Confidence Stands Pat**

Consumer confidence held steady this week, halting a modest three-week decline after approaching record levels a month ago.

Confidence still remains high by historical standards. Seventy-six percent of Americans say the economy's in good shape, four points from its record high. Sixty-five percent say their own finances are in good shape and 52 percent call it a good time to buy things, both five points from their respective highs.

		S	ince 12/	85
Positive ratings:	Today	Highest	Lowest	Average
National Economy	76%	80	7	40
Personal Finances	65	70	42	57
Buying Climate	52	57	20	38

INDEX - The ABC News/Money magazine Consumer Comfort Index, based on these ratings, stands at +29 on its scale of +100 to -100, the same as last week. The index has averaged, +29 this year, a point above its record 1999 average. Its lifetime average is -10, depressed by recession in the early 1990s.

	ABC/Money	Index
Today	+29	
Sept. 3, 2000	+34	
Jan. 16, 2000	+38	Record high
2000 average	+29	
1999 average	+28	Best full year
1992 average	-44	Worst full year
Feb. 9, 1992	-50	Record low
Average since 12	/85 -10	

Call the ABC News Polling Unit, ext. 2621, for a chart tracking the index over time.

GROUPS - As usual, confidence is higher among better-off Americans: The index is +60 in higher-income households compared to -23 in the lowest, +48 among college graduates but -21 among high-school dropouts, +30 among whites but +17 among blacks and +32 among men but +25 among women.

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

NATIONAL ECONOMY- The poll asks: Would you describe the state of the nation's economy these days as excellent, good, not so good or poor? Seventy-six percent of Americans rate the nation's economy as excellent or good, down one point from last

week. The best was 80 percent Jan. 16. The worst was seven percent in late 1991 and early 1992.

	Pos. NET	Excel.	Good	Neg. NET	Not good	Poor
This week	76	11	65	24	17	7
Avg. since 12/8	5 40	4	37	60	39	20

PERSONAL FINANCES - The poll asks: Would you describe the state of your own personal finances these days as excellent, good, not so good or poor? Sixty-five percent rate their own finances as excellent or good, the same as last week. The best was 70 percent, set Aug. 30, 1998 and last matched in January. The worst was 42 percent on March 14, 1993.

		Pos. NET	Excel.	Good	Neg. NET	Not good	Poor
This	week	65	6	59	35	24	11
Avg.	since 12/8	5 57	5	52	43	31	13

BUYING CLIMATE - The poll asks: Considering the cost of things today and your own personal finances, would you say now is an excellent time, a good time, a not-so-good time or a poor time to buy the things you want and need? Fifty-two percent say it's an excellent or good time to buy things they want and need, the same as last week. The best was 57 percent Jan. 16. The worst was 20 percent in fall 1990.

	Pos. NET	Excel.	Good	Neg. net	Not good	Poor
This week	52	3	49	48	34	14
Avg. since 12	/85 38	3	35	62	41	21

METHODOLOGY - The ABC News/Money magazine Consumer Comfort Index represents a rolling average based on telephone interviews with about 1,000 adults nationwide each month. This week's results are based on 1,031 interviews in the week ending Oct. 1 and have an error margin of plus or minus three percentage points. Fieldwork 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 Aaron Frechette.

ABC News polls can be found at ABCNEWS.com on the Internet, at: <a href="http://abcnews.go.com/sections/politics/PollVault/PollVault.html">http://abcnews.go.com/sections/politics/PollVault.html</a>

10/01/00	This	Last	4 Wks	3 Mo.	1 Yr.	12 Mo	12 Mo	12 Mo
	Week	Week	Ago	Ago	Ago	High	Low	Avg
Group								

GENERAL POPULATION:								
Overall Index	29	29	34	25	23	38	22	28
State of Economy	52	54	56	40	40	60	38	48
Personal Finances	30	30	38	36	30	40	28	34
Buying Climate	4	4	8	-2	-2	14	-6	3
		OVERALL	INDEX	BY	DEMOGRAI	PHIC	GROUPS	
Sex:								
Men	32	32	45	35	34	45	30	36
Women	25	27	23	14	11	30	11	21
Age:								
18 - 34	29	32	34	31	23	37	16	26
35 - 44	26	26	23	20	19	37	13	26
45 - 54	33	31	34	35	20	45	11	31
55 - 64	23	25	51	15	25	51	13	30
65 +	30	28	32	12	25	45	12	29
Income:								
Under \$15K	-23	-23		-30	-26	-12		-24
\$15K To \$24.9K	-5	-11	-9	-8	-7	26	-20	1
\$25K To \$39.9K	14	18	24	12	9	33	8	23
\$40K To \$49.9K	46	48	36	41	46	60	19	38
Over \$50K	60	65	66	56	53	68	53	61
Region:								
Northeast	28	32	34	22	40	48	17	33
Midwest	37	40	42	22	22	46	17	31
South	21	19	26	19	14	31	14	22
West	32	33	36	36	21	43	13	29
Race:								
White	30	33	37	27	27	43	25	33
Black	17	7	7	4	-10	25	-15	1
Politics:								
Republican	44	39	33	31	38	55	31	42
Democrat	33	31	32	17	18	38	7	27
Independent	16	22	39	31	16	39	13	23
Education:								
< High School	-21	-23	-9	-12	-24	13	-24	-9
High Sch. Grad.	24	24	23	15	19	32	8	19
College +	48	50	53	41	40	53	38	46
Home:								
Own	32	35	42	31	28	44	28	36
Rent	17	16	14	7	5	19	-3	8
Marital Status:								
Single	29	27	35	20	20	42	8	25
Married	32	33	37	30	28	44	27	34
Sep/Wid/Div	12	17	19	7	4	27	-9	7
Employ. Status:								
Full-Time	36	40	39	31	30	44	28	35
Part-Time	23	26	39	23	19	40	11	26
Not Employed	20	17	22	15	12	28	8	18

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