

FLORIDA CONSUMER CONFIDENCE INDEX
August 31, 2004
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



**UNIVERSITY OF
FLORIDA**

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Consumer Confidence

Consumer confidence among Floridians rose in August by two points to 96, the same level as national consumer confidence as measured by the University of Michigan. The rise in confidence was almost entirely due to increases in perceptions of personal finances now compared to a year ago, which rose five points to 88, and a year from now which rose nine points to 104. Perceptions of short term US economic conditions fell a point from 91 in July to 90 in August, and long term perceptions of US economic conditions fell five points to 89. Perceptions of whether it is a good time to buy rose a point to 108.

“The improvement in perceptions of personal finances was likely due to some increases in the stock market as well as lower gas prices,” said Chris McCarty, the Survey Director. “At this point consumers have become accustomed to the rise in gasoline prices which was placed a drag on these components in previous months. It is also possible that some consumers are looking toward the elections in November positively, whoever their chosen candidate may be.”

Nationally the economy remains mixed. While the recovery continues, job creation is much slower than in previous recoveries. Higher gas prices in previous months have now stabilized reducing upward pressure on inflation. Year over year sales growth is relatively weak, and chain store sales have been lackluster. As the Federal Reserve continues to raise interest rates, consumers may respond by curtailing spending.

“One area of concern is what is now a downward trend in confidence among Florida’s seniors,” said McCarty. “Overall confidence among Floridians age 60 and over fell seven points to 80, four points lower than the same time last year when we were earlier in the recovery. Contrary to their younger counterparts, seniors this month expressed pessimism over their current and future finances. They were also far more pessimistic about long term business conditions. This will certainly play a role in the upcoming elections.”

FLORIDA ECONOMIC AND CONSUMER SURVEY
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Aug-03 Sep-03 Oct-03 Nov-03 Dec-03 Jan-04 Feb-04 Mar-04 Apr-04 May-04 Jun-04 Jul-04* Aug-04†

Consumer Confidence Index													
FLORIDA	90	91	95	94	96	97	97	94	96	93	95	94	96
Men	100	96	99	103	105	102	100	101	102	97	100	98	105
Women	83	86	91	84	89	91	95	88	90	89	91	92	90
Under age 60	93	93	98	97	98	99	100	96	98	94	99	97	103
Aged 60 and over	84	84	87	86	91	93	91	88	91	91	86	87	80
Income under \$30,000	75	80	84	80	83	86	83	81	84	84	79	80	87
Income \$30,000 and over	100	96	101	101	105	102	103	101	102	100	102	102	104

Personal financial situation now compared to a year ago													
FLORIDA	82	84	82	81	85	85	88	84	86	82	86	83	88
Men	90	83	84	88	94	90	90	89	93	89	89	83	99
Women	75	84	79	74	78	80	86	81	80	77	83	83	82
Under age 60	88	91	86	87	91	89	93	88	94	90	91	90	99
Aged 60 and over	65	64	72	67	71	77	75	75	71	65	72	67	60
Income under \$30,000	58	74	63	57	74	61	64	63	62	67	58	61	70
Income \$30,000 and over	95	90	91	93	95	96	100	96	98	94	98	96	100

Personal financial situation expected one year from now													
FLORIDA	100	101	101	100	100	102	100	101	102	99	104	95	104
Men	104	104	103	106	101	101	98	113	108	98	109	99	113
Women	96	98	99	95	100	103	102	92	96	100	99	93	98
Under age 60	106	109	108	110	108	112	107	110	111	106	111	101	116
Aged 60 and over	82	77	81	80	83	78	84	81	82	85	85	81	76
Income under \$30,000	86	91	96	91	91	90	90	91	96	95	87	85	99
Income \$30,000 and over	109	108	106	106	109	110	105	107	106	106	109	102	108

Expected national economic conditions over the next year													
FLORIDA	83	85	91	92	97	97	97	87	90	85	88	91	90
Men	97	95	94	106	110	105	101	96	96	93	93	95	98
Women	72	77	88	79	86	90	94	81	84	79	85	89	85
Under age 60	83	85	95	94	96	98	100	88	91	81	91	93	92
Aged 60 and over	85	86	83	88	96	98	92	85	88	95	83	88	86
Income under \$30,000	74	75	74	84	83	87	86	79	74	78	71	82	88
Income \$30,000 and over	89	89	100	96	106	101	102	93	98	88	97	98	94

Expected national economic conditions over the next 5 years													
FLORIDA	82	84	85	88	89	92	84	88	87	90	88	94	89
Men	99	100	93	103	105	101	91	96	94	100	95	99	102
Women	69	72	79	74	78	81	79	82	80	83	81	91	81
Under age 60	82	83	90	91	87	89	84	87	84	89	89	93	94
Aged 60 and over	83	87	77	84	94	97	85	87	93	94	84	97	79
Income under \$30,000	66	74	75	76	76	85	70	78	83	80	78	84	75
Income \$30,000 and over	93	88	92	94	98	93	90	93	89	97	91	98	99

Is this a good time to buy major household items?													
FLORIDA	106	100	114	106	107	109	117	108	115	107	109	107	108
Men	110	100	119	114	114	116	118	111	119	107	112	112	115
Women	102	101	110	99	102	102	115	105	111	107	107	105	104
Under age 60	106	99	113	106	106	108	116	106	112	103	110	109	112
Aged 60 and over	106	106	120	111	110	113	118	112	121	114	107	103	101
Income under \$30,000	91	87	110	91	89	109	107	94	106	99	102	89	100
Income \$30,000 and over	114	106	117	114	116	109	121	116	119	113	113	116	118

*Revised. †Preliminary.

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CHARACTERISTICS OF SURVEY RESPONDENTS FOR CURRENT MONTH

Sample Size	455	Race		Gender	
		% Non-white	19	% Male	38
Average age	49	% White	81	% Female	62
Income Characteristics		Hispanic Origin		Region	
% less than \$20,000	19	% Yes	12	% North	25
% \$20,000 to \$29,999	14	% No	88	% Central	16
% \$30,000 to \$49,999	22			% Southeast	25
% over \$50,000	45			% Southwest	34