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*Monthly New York State Consumer Confidence Index including Gas and Food Analysis*

**For Immediate Release: Tuesday, September 29, 2009**

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**National Confidence Surges towards “Not Bad”; New York Lags Behind**  
***Downstate Sees Brightening Future, Upstate Remains Pessimistic***  
**Buying Plans Flat; Most Consumers Reluctant to Spend**  
**Concern over Gas/Food Prices Stable but High**

**Loudonville, NY** - New York State consumer confidence decreased 0.5 points in September, while the nation’s confidence increased 7.8 points, according to the latest poll by the Siena (College) Research Institute (SRI). At 68.6, New York’s overall consumer confidence is 4.9 points below the nation’s\* 73.5 confidence level.

September 2009 Consumer Confidence:	The Nation*	New York State	diff. points	New York State	Metro NYC	Upstate NY
<b>Overall</b>	<b>73.5 (7.8)</b>	<b>68.6 (-0.5)</b>	<b>-4.9</b>	<b>68.6 (-0.5)</b>	<b>73.2 (0.7)</b>	<b>60.9 (-1.9)</b>
<b>Current</b>	<b>73.4 (6.8)</b>	<b>65.6 (0.8)</b>	<b>-7.8</b>	<b>65.6 (0.8)</b>	<b>65.2 (2.3)</b>	<b>66.0 (-1.1)</b>
<b>Future</b>	<b>73.5 (8.5)</b>	<b>70.6 (-1.2)</b>	<b>-2.9</b>	<b>70.6 (-1.2)</b>	<b>78.3 (-0.2)</b>	<b>57.7 (-2.4)</b>

( ) reflects the point change from previous month. \*National data compiled by the U. of Michigan

In September, buying plans were up for: *furniture*, 1.9 points to 16.9%; and *major home improvements*, 0.1 points to 13.4%. Buying plans were down for: *cars/trucks*, 1.2 points to 8.7%; *computers*, 1.3 points to 13.6%; and *homes*, 0.4 points to 3.1%;

**“While national consumer confidence jumped by nearly eight points approaching the point where equal percentages of people are both optimistic and pessimistic, New Yorkers’ willingness to spend lags behind,”** according to Dr. Douglas Lonnstrom, professor of statistics and finance at Siena College and SRI Founding Director. **“Right now in New York we have a tale of two states. Downstaters see a half full future economic glass while Upstaters say, “our cup is empty.” Pronouncements of the end of the recession have yet to come home to New Yorkers who continue at a rate of over three to one to say that they are worse off today than they were a year ago.”**

Each month since January 1999, the SRI survey establishes a Consumer Confidence index number for New York State consumers. This index number allows a direct comparison of New Yorkers to all Americans (“the nation”) as surveyed by the University of Michigan’s Consumer Sentiment index. The SRI survey measures *current* and *future* consumer confidence, which combined provides the *overall* consumer confidence. SRI further looks at confidence in New York State by region (metro New York City and Upstate), age, income, gender and party.

<b>Consumer Confidence in New York State (index numbers):</b>			
<b>September 2009</b>			
<b>(Groups listed in descending order by Overall CCI Rating)</b>			
	<b>Overall</b>	<b>Current</b>	<b>Future</b>
Democrats	74.2 (-1.7)	64.8 (-2.7)	80.3 (-1.0)
Metro NYC	73.2 (0.7)	65.2 (2.3)	78.3 (-0.2)
Under Age 55	72.8 (0.5)	65.6 (0.8)	77.4 (0.3)
Higher income	72.2 (0.8)	70.5 (-1.1)	73.2 (1.9)
Men	69.8 (-2.7)	70.1 (0.4)	69.6 (-4.6)
<b>New York State</b>	<b>68.6 (-0.5)</b>	<b>65.6 (0.8)</b>	<b>70.6 (-1.2)</b>
Women	67.6 (1.7)	61.4 (1.1)	71.5 (1.9)
Republicans	65.8 (5.3)	67.5 (7.6)	64.7 (3.9)
Age 55+	65.4 (-0.8)	64.8 (0.4)	65.7 (-1.7)
Lower income	65.2 (-0.4)	60.3 (4.2)	68.4 (-3.4)
Upstate NY	60.9 (-1.9)	66.0 (-1.1)	57.7 (-2.4)

Consumer Confidence and Buying Plans; Summary of Previous 24 Months								
	Consumer Confidence			Buying Plans				
	Overall Index	Current Index	Future Index	Car/ Truck	Computer	Furniture	Home	Major Home Improvement
Sep 2007	74.4	80.3	70.6	12.1%	13.1%	17.1%	5.0%	16.1%
Sep 2008	56.3	55.0	57.2	8.7%	10.5%	13.5%	3.4%	14.6%
Sep 2009	68.6	65.6	70.6	8.7%	13.6%	16.9%	3.1%	13.4%
2 Year Difference	-5.8	-14.7	0.0	-3.4	0.5	-0.2	-1.9	-2.7
Highest	74.4 (Sep 07)	80.3 (Sep 07 & Oct 07)	71.8 (Aug 09)	12.6% (Oct 07)	15.5% (Dec 07)	18.5% (Nov 07)	5.0% (Sep 07)	17.9% (Apr 08)
Lowest	51.6 (Oct 08)	49.7 (Oct 08)	49.9 (Jun 08)	7.7% (Jul 08 & Jan 09)	7.4% (Oct 08)	10.3% (Nov 08)	2.2% (Jan 09)	10.9% (Nov 08)

### Gas and Food Price Analysis

Fifty-one percent of all New Yorkers say that current gasoline prices are having a very serious or somewhat serious impact on their financial condition, up two points from last month. Sixty-three percent of state residents indicate that the amount of money they spend on groceries is having either a very serious or somewhat serious impact on their finances. Forty-two percent of state residents say that both gasoline and food prices are having either a somewhat or very serious impact on their finances down from a high of 71% in July 2008.

**“Plans to purchase cars and trucks appear to have ended with the clunker program. Consumers continue to focus on getting by rather than buying now as all plans to purchase major items are well below their two-year high. And getting by is hard enough. Half of all New Yorkers continue to worry about gas prices and nearly two-thirds are concerned about the cost of food. While those seriousness percentages are stable, that’s the good news, they remain at a height that places a difficult drain on the overall economy,”** according to Dr. Lonnstrom.

The following chart shows the percentage of New York State residents by income, political party, age, location and gender that report a hardship from 1) gasoline prices, 2) food prices, and 3) both gas and food prices.

Seriousness of Gas and Food Prices: Percentage of NY'ers												
Total percent by category indicating a somewhat or very serious problem.												
	Gasoline				Food				Both Gas and Food			
	Sep 2009	Aug 2009	Jul 2009	Jul 2008	Sep 2009	Aug 2009	Jul 2009	Jul 2008	Sep 2009	Aug 2009	Jul 2009	Jul 2008
Upstate NY	61%	56%	66%	79%	65%	62%	68%	80%	50%	45%	55%	73%
Lower Income	55%	54%	58%	81%	70%	73%	74%	87%	48%	47%	50%	77%
Under age 55	54%	51%	55%	80%	65%	64%	62%	83%	43%	42%	41%	74%
Women	52%	46%	58%	81%	68%	65%	66%	84%	44%	39%	46%	75%
<b>New York State</b>	<b>51%</b>	<b>49%</b>	<b>55%</b>	<b>78%</b>	<b>63%</b>	<b>62%</b>	<b>62%</b>	<b>81%</b>	<b>42%</b>	<b>39%</b>	<b>43%</b>	<b>71%</b>
Men	51%	52%	52%	75%	59%	58%	56%	77%	40%	40%	40%	67%
Democrats	50%	44%	50%	76%	64%	64%	62%	83%	40%	36%	41%	68%
Age 55+	50%	47%	55%	76%	63%	60%	61%	79%	41%	38%	44%	69%
Republicans	48%	56%	57%	80%	58%	59%	60%	76%	42%	46%	44%	72%
Higher Income	47%	44%	51%	76%	58%	53%	52%	76%	36%	33%	36%	67%
Metro NYC	45%	44%	49%	77%	63%	61%	58%	81%	37%	36%	36%	69%

The SRI survey of Consumer Confidence was conducted in September 2009 by random telephone calls to 804 New York State residents over the age of 18. As consumer confidence is expressed as an index number developed after statistical calculations to a series of questions, “margin of error” does not apply. Buying plans, which are shown as a percentage based on answers to specific questions, do have a margin of error of  $\pm 3.5$  points. For more information or comments, please call Dr. Douglas Lonnstrom, SRI’s Founding Director, at 518-783-2362. Survey cross-tabulations and buying plans can be found at [www.siena.edu/sri/cci](http://www.siena.edu/sri/cci). SRI is an independent, non-partisan research institute. SRI subscribes to the American Association of Public Opinion Research (AAPOR) Code of Professional Ethics and Practices.