

# Consumer News & Views

Published monthly

July, 2018



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### Consumer Confidence Slips Slightly in June.

The Conference Board **Consumer Confidence Index**® decreased in June, following an increase in May. The Index now stands at 126.4 (1985=100), down from 128.8 in May.

The monthly **Consumer Confidence Survey**® is conducted for The Conference Board by Nielsen, a leading global provider of information and analytics around what consumers buy and watch. The cutoff date for the preliminary results was June 15.

"Consumer confidence declined in June after improving in May," said Lynn Franco, Director of Economic Indicators at The Conference Board. "Consumers' assessment of present-day conditions was relatively unchanged, suggesting that the level of economic growth remains strong. While expectations remain high by historical standards, the modest curtailment in optimism suggests that consumers do not foresee the economy gaining much momentum in the months ahead."



Consumers' appraisal of current conditions was relatively unchanged in June. The percentage stating business conditions are "good" decreased from 38.6 percent to 36.0 percent, while those saying business conditions are "bad" also decreased, from 12.6 percent to 11.7 percent. Consumers' assessment of the labor market was also mixed. The percentage of consumers claiming jobs are "plentiful" decreased from 42.1 percent to 40.0 percent, but those claiming jobs are "hard to get" also decreased, from 15.6 percent to 14.9 percent.

Consumers' optimism about the short-term outlook eased in June. The percentage of consumers anticipating business conditions will improve over the next six months decreased from 23.3 percent to 21.4 percent, while those expecting business conditions will worsen rose from 7.8 percent to 9.8 percent. Consumers' outlook for the labor market, however, was slightly more favorable. The proportion expecting more jobs in the months ahead increased marginally, from 19.7 percent to 20.0 percent, while those anticipating fewer jobs decreased, from 13.1 percent to 12.6 percent. Regarding their short-term income prospects, the percentage of consumers expecting an improvement declined, from 21.4 percent to 18.8 percent, while the proportion expecting a decrease rose from 8.0 percent to 8.7 percent.

Source: June 2018 **Consumer Confidence Survey**®

ACC 2018 Annual Meeting Highlights. The American Consumer Council held its 2018 annual meeting on Friday, June 15, at the Park Hyatt Aviara in Carlsbad, CA. In addition to ACC's Board of Directors, many members from various state consumer councils attended to discuss their issues and concerns. Among the top three concerns are (1) the growing number of regulations that are driving up the cost for consumers goods and services; (2) concerns among consumers who feel they were duped into buying time shares and now want help in exiting those contracts; and (3) an increase in the number of consumers who want to join credit unions but feel hampered by Field of Membership restrictions imposed by the National Credit Union Administration.



*Consumers listen to an ACC presentation on regulatory issues that are impacting the cost of goods*

ACC's Board of Directors reported that it had completed the third phase of its chapter expansion and Bylaws amendments to allow for corporate memberships and other important governance changes that were approved in December at ACC's mid-year Board of Directors meeting. The changes allow for the creation of more chapters at the local level as well as Bylaw changes that will allow non-profit organizations and new business members to join ACC with full voting rights.

ACC's staff has been working to help local chapters in Pennsylvania, New York, Wyoming and Tennessee complete their local chapter expansion and governance changes. New chapters were established in January in Altoona, PA; Johnstown, PA; Lehigh Valley, PA; Scranton-Wilks Barre, PA; Memphis, TN; Cheyenne, WY; San Bernardino, CA; Sacramento, CA; Fresno, CA; Westchester County, NY; and, Dallas, TX. Additional local chapters will be announced following ACC's annual meeting in June. Each chapter now has a physical office and is staffed on a full-time basis.

Also, on April 16, ACC's Board of Directors announced that the organization has officially passed the membership mark of 225,000 members nationwide. As a result of its growth in the northeast and southeast, ACC responded to requests from local members to create more local chapters that now operate with their own bylaws and governance structure. Each of the new chapters will remain part of their respective state consumer council and the ACC organizational umbrella.

## **ACC's Friend of the Consumer Award Recognizes Outstanding Businesses.**

Is your business consumer-friendly? Does your business deserve greater recognition for its service to consumers? If so, you should apply for the American Consumer Council's Friend of the Consumer Award. Now is the time to apply!

Throughout the year, ACC presents its "Friend of the Consumer" Awards. This prestigious award recognizes manufacturers, retailers, and other businesses that produce or sell products in the United States that meet or exceed federally-mandated standards and are touted by consumers as "consumer friendly."

Each year, ACC awards numerous "Friend of the Consumer" Awards to deserving companies and organizations because they have "demonstrated a commitment to American consumers by providing a specific product or service that fosters

consumer confidence and market acceptance."



To apply for the "Friend of the Consumer" Award, complete the online application and return it to ACC with the application fee. Applicants will be notified within 5 days of receipt of their application. Thereafter, a panel of independent judges will review your application and make a formal recommendation within 20 days of receipt of your award application.

For more information, visit: <http://www.americanconsumercouncil.org/awards.asp>

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### **Green C<sup>SM</sup> Certification Accepting Applications for 2018 Cycle:**

If your company or organization would like to increase its credibility with consumers, you should consider applying for the **Green C<sup>SM</sup> Certification**. Applications for the 2018 cycle are now being accepted through August 31, 2018.

It's a proven fact that consumers want to do business with companies that are eco-friendly and practice Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). The process is straight-forward and all applicants are recognized by ACC and the Green USA Institute.

All applicants complete the criteria and submit their responses to ACC's Green Consumer Council for review, assessment and feedback. Program details and the **Green C<sup>SM</sup> Certification** criteria can be viewed at ACC's website located at: <http://americanconsumercouncil.org/greenc.asp>

