

News Release

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For Release 10:00 AM ET, March 17, 2017

The Conference Board Leading Economic Index® (LEI) for the U.S. Increased in February
Index at Highest Level in Over a Decade

NEW YORK, March 17, 2017...The Conference Board Leading Economic Index® (LEI) for the U.S. increased 0.6 percent in February to 126.2 (2010 = 100), following a 0.6 percent increase in January, and a 0.6 percent increase in December.

“After six consecutive monthly gains, the U.S. LEI is at its highest level in over a decade. Widespread gains across a majority of the leading indicators points to an improving economic outlook for 2017, although GDP growth is likely to remain moderate,” said Ataman Ozyildirim, Director of Business Cycles and Growth Research at The Conference Board. “Only housing permits contributed negatively to the LEI in February, reversing gains over the previous two months.”

The Conference Board Coincident Economic Index® (CEI) for the U.S. increased 0.3 percent in February to 114.9 (2010 = 100), following a 0.1 percent increase in January, and a 0.4 percent increase in December.

The Conference Board Lagging Economic Index® (LAG) for the U.S. increased 0.2 percent in February to 123.5 (2010 = 100), following a 0.2 percent increase in January, and a 0.3 percent increase in December.

About The Conference Board Leading Economic Index® (LEI) for the U.S.

The composite economic indexes are the key elements in an analytic system designed to signal peaks and troughs in the business cycle. The leading, coincident, and lagging economic indexes are essentially composite averages of several individual leading, coincident, or lagging indicators. They are constructed to summarize and reveal common turning point patterns in economic data in a clearer and more convincing manner than any individual component – primarily because they smooth out some of the volatility of individual components.

The ten components of **The Conference Board Leading Economic Index®** for the U.S. include:

- Average weekly hours, manufacturing
- Average weekly initial claims for unemployment insurance
- Manufacturers' new orders, consumer goods and materials
- ISM® Index of New Orders
- Manufacturers' new orders, nondefense capital goods excluding aircraft orders
- Building permits, new private housing units
- Stock prices, 500 common stocks
- Leading Credit Index™*
- Interest rate spread, 10-year Treasury bonds less federal funds
- Average consumer expectations for business conditions

For full press release and technical notes:

<http://www.conference-board.org/data/bcicountry.cfm?cid=1>

For more information about The Conference Board global business cycle indicators:

<http://www.conference-board.org/data/bci.cfm>

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