

For release: 10:00 a.m. (EDT), Wednesday, March 27, 2013

USDL-13-0541

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**CONSUMER EXPENDITURES MIDYEAR UPDATE -- JULY 2011
THROUGH JUNE 2012 AVERAGE**

Average expenditures per consumer unit¹ for July 2011 through June 2012 were 1.9 percent higher than the 2011 annual average, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. This gradual rise in spending continued the increase reported for all of 2011.

All major components of household spending except apparel increased over the 12 months ending in June 2012 compared to the 2011 annual average, as shown in table A. The 6.3-percent rise in cash contributions (including payments for support of college students, alimony and child support, and giving to charities and religious organizations) was the largest percentage increase among all major components. This was followed by a 4.6-percent increase in health care spending. Other spending highlights include 2.6-percent increases in both transportation and personal insurance and pensions, modest increases in food (+1.1 percent) and housing (+0.8 percent), no change in entertainment (0.0 percent), and a small drop in apparel and services spending (-0.6 percent). Average incomes also continued to rise.

Table A. Average expenditures and characteristics of all consumer units and percent changes, 2010 through June 2012

Item	2010* Annual Average	2011 Annual Average	July 2011- June 2012 Average	Percent change	
				2010-2011 Annual	2011 Annual to July 2011- June 2012
Income before taxes	\$62,481	\$63,685	\$65,132	1.9	2.3
Average annual expenditures	48,109	49,705	50,631	3.3	1.9
Food	6,129	6,458	6,532	5.4	1.1
Housing	16,557	16,803	16,940	1.5	0.8
Apparel and services	1,700	1,740	1,730	2.4	-0.6
Transportation	7,677	8,293	8,505	8.0	2.6
Health care	3,157	3,313	3,466	4.9	4.6
Entertainment	2,504	2,572	2,573	2.7	0.0
Cash contributions	1,633	1,721	1,829	5.4	6.3
Personal insurance and pensions	5,373	5,424	5,565	0.9	2.6
All other expenditures	3,379	3,381	3,489	0.1	3.2

*Midyear data prior to July 2011 - June 2012 are not available.

Consumer Expenditures New Midyear Data

This news release contains the first midyear update of consumer expenditure data and covers 12 months of expenditures for the last 6 months of 2011 and the first 6 months of 2012. It includes overlapping expenditures from July 2011-December 2011 that were previously included in the annual 2011 tables and adds information from January 2012-June 2012. As this midyear 2012 update involves new methods of data processing, previous midyear data are not available for comparison.

¹ Consumer units include families, single persons living alone or sharing a household with others but who are financially independent, or two or more persons living together who share expenses.

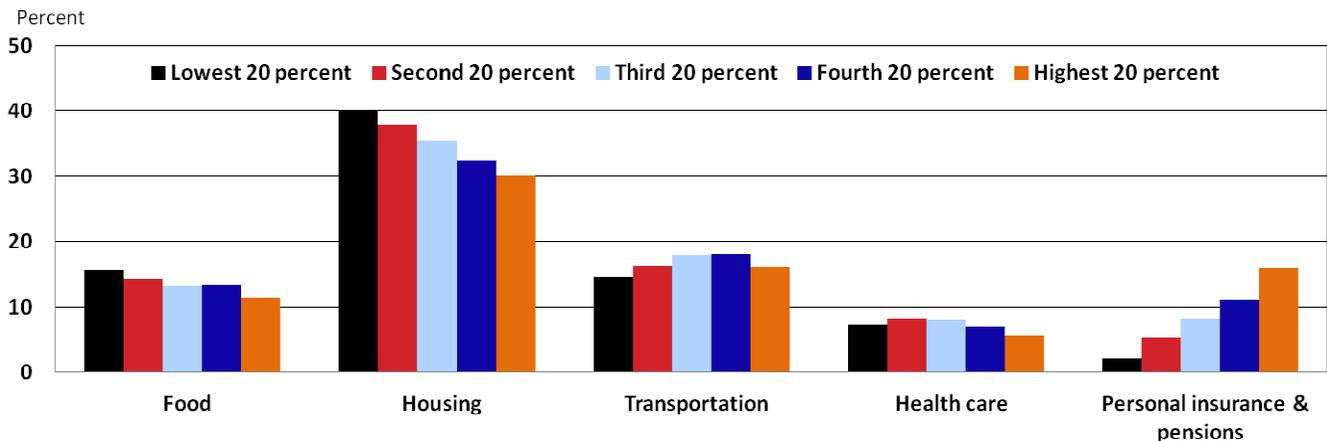
Spending by selected demographics

Consumer Expenditure Survey (CE) data measure how consumers allocate their spending among the various components of total expenditures. For example, table B and chart 1 compare the share allocated to selected expenditures by income quintiles. As in previous time periods, the lowest income quintile allocated larger shares to food and housing than the other quintiles. The highest income group allocated a larger share to personal insurance and pensions (including payments for life insurance, other nonhealth insurance, pensions, and Social Security) than any other group. No clear pattern existed for the shares allocated to transportation and health care among the income quintile groups.

Table B. Shares of average expenditures on selected major components by income quintiles, July 2011 through June 2012

Item	Lowest 20 percent	Second 20 percent	Third 20 percent	Fourth 20 percent	Highest 20 percent
Food	15.8	14.2	13.2	13.4	11.4
Housing	40.0	38.0	35.5	32.4	30.2
Transportation	14.6	16.3	17.9	18.1	16.2
Health care	7.3	8.2	8.0	7.0	5.7
Personal insurance & pensions	2.1	5.3	8.3	11.1	16.0

Chart 1. Shares of average expenditures on selected major components by income quintiles, July 2011 through June 2012



Spending patterns, 2010 through June 2012

Table C and chart 2 show amounts spent for selected expenditure components from 2010 through June 2012. Earlier spending trends continued into the new time period. Spending changes included:

- Mortgage interest and charges for owned homes, a subcomponent of housing, fell from \$3,351 on average in 2010 to \$3,153 for July 2011 through June 2012.
- Natural gas expenditures continued falling from \$440 in 2010 to \$420 in 2011 and then to \$377 for July 2011 through June 2012.
- Expenditures on gasoline and motor oil continued rising during the same period, increasing from the annual average of \$2,132 in 2010 to \$2,655 in 2011 to \$2,706 for July 2011 through June 2012.
- Health care spending rose from \$3,313 in 2011 to \$3,466 for July 2011 through June 2012. All the subcomponents of health care – health insurance, medical services, drugs, and medical

supplies – continued gradually increasing during the period. The level of spending for health care has increased every year starting in 1996.

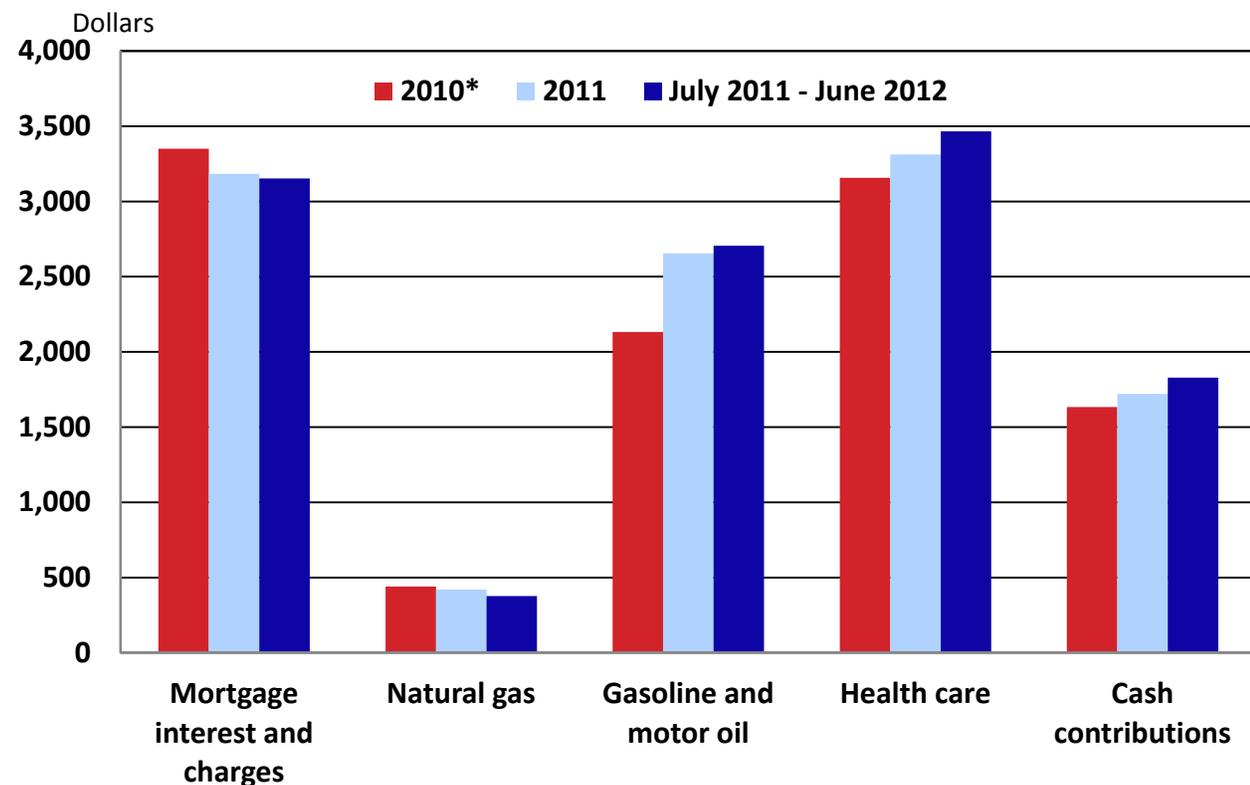
- Cash contributions, which include payments for support of college students, alimony and child support, and giving to charities and religious organizations, continued to increase.

Table C. Average consumer expenditures for selected components, 2010 through June 2012

Item	2010* Annual Average	2011 Annual Average	July 2011- June 2012 Average
Mortgage interest and charges	\$3,351	\$3,184	\$3,153
Natural gas	440	420	377
Gasoline and motor oil	2,132	2,655	2,706
Health care	3,157	3,313	3,466
Cash contributions	1,633	1,721	1,829

*Midyear data prior to July 2011 - June 2012 are not available.

Chart 2. Average consumer expenditures for selected components, 2010 through June 2012



*Midyear data prior to July 2011 - June 2012 are not available.

Consumer Expenditure Survey data include the expenditures and income of consumers, as well as the demographic characteristics of those consumers. Tables with more expenditure detail are available at www.bls.gov/cex. Newly published tables provide July 2011 through June 2012 average CE data by standard classifications that include income quintile, income class, age of reference person, size of consumer unit, number of earners, composition of consumer unit, region of residence, housing tenure, type of area (urban-rural), race, Hispanic origin, occupation, and education. In addition, these new mid-year update tables now include shares of expenditures and standard error. These tables include overlapping expenditures from July through December 2011 previously included in annual 2011 tables published September 2012. The midyear tables add spending information from January through June 2012 while dropping the January through June 2011 expenditures.

Other available data

A soon-to-be released Annual Report will include a brief discussion of expenditure changes in 2011 and tables with data classified by the standard characteristics that are included on the website. Future articles in the BLS *Beyond the Numbers* web report series will highlight recent trends in prices and spending in the U.S. economy, and will feature CE data. Recent CE-specific articles provide analyses of topical economic issues and long term spending trends, as well as comparisons of CE data to other data series (see <http://www.bls.gov/cex/csxwebarticles.htm> and <http://www.bls.gov/cex/cecomparison.htm>). Additional methodological and analytical articles using CE data will be published in 2013. All data published in the Annual Report and posted to the website are integrated from the two CE components—the quarterly Interview Survey and weekly Diary Survey.

Other survey information available on the Internet includes answers to frequently asked questions, a glossary, order forms for survey products, and analytical articles that use CE data. Also available are the Diary Survey questionnaire form and a modified version of the computer assisted personal interview (CAPI) instrument used to collect the Interview Survey data.

The 2010 and 2011 CE public-use microdata, including Interview Survey data, Diary Survey data, and paradata (information about the survey process), are available on the CE website for free electronic download. The Interview files contain expenditure data in two different formats: MTAB files that present monthly values in an item-coding framework based on the CPI pricing scheme, and EXPN files that organize expenditures by the section of the Interview questionnaire in which they are collected. Expenditure values on EXPN files cover different time periods depending on the specific questions asked, and the files also contain relevant non-expenditure information not found on the MTAB files. Prior releases will be posted incrementally online in reverse chronological order through the 1996 release. For releases prior to 1996 and those not yet available online for download, users can continue to purchase CDs using the public-use microdata order form (see <http://www.bls.gov/cex/pumhome.htm>). All future releases of public-use microdata will solely be available online for free electronic download.

Annual public-use microdata covering an entire calendar year will continue to be released in September, and will not be released on a rolling half-year basis.

The annual CE Microdata Users' Workshop and Survey Methods Symposium will be held July 16-19, 2013 at the Bureau of Labor Statistics national office. Registration is free. More information and the registration form are available at <http://www.bls.gov/cex/csxannualworkshop.htm>.

For further information, contact the Division of Consumer Expenditure Survey, Office of Prices and Living Conditions at (202) 691-6900 or by email at cexinfo@bls.gov. Information in this release will be made available to sensory impaired individuals upon request. Voice phone: (202) 691-5200; Federal Relay Service: 1 (800) 877-8339.