



# WEEKLY ECONOMIC DIGEST

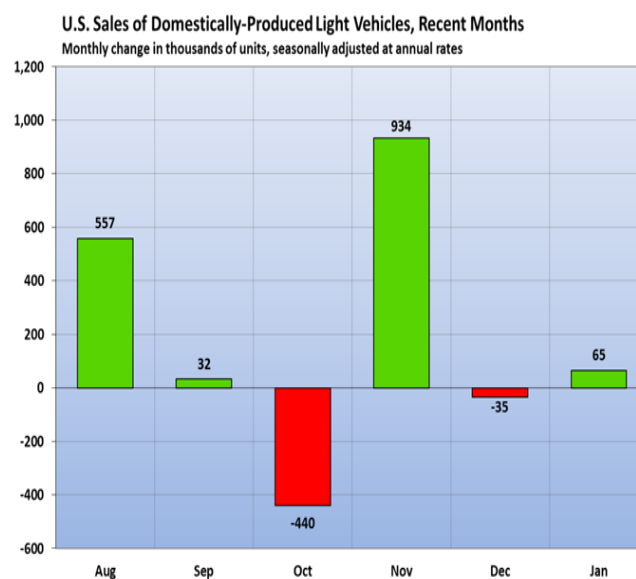
JOINT ECONOMIC COMMITTEE  
SENATOR ROBERT P. CASEY, JR., VICE CHAIRMAN DESIGNATE

UNITED STATES CONGRESS

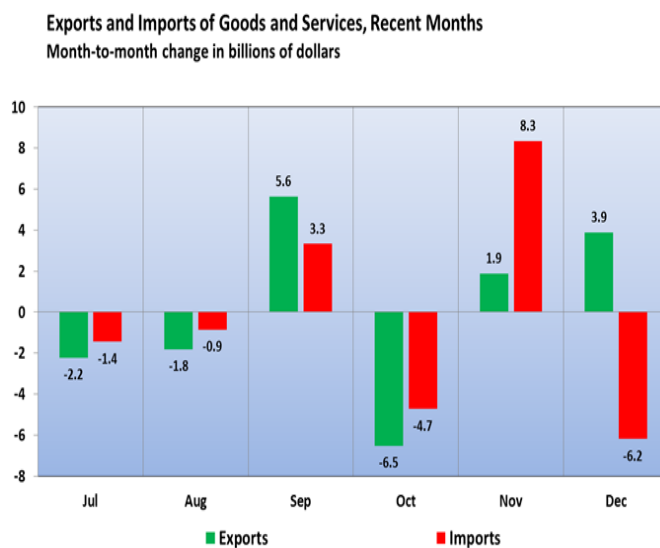
February 12, 2013

## Vehicle Sales Were Down in January as Import Volume Fell

- Unit vehicle sales declined in January. Total U.S. sales of light vehicles (autos and light trucks) decreased by 94 thousand units (seasonally adjusted, annual rate) last month to 15.231 million units at an annual rate. That January decrease in sales followed a December decline of 157 thousand units which, in turn, followed a post-storm sales rebound of 1.25 million units. The January drop was concentrated in imports. U.S. sales of domestic light vehicles (i.e., vehicles assembled in the United States, Canada, or Mexico) increased by 65 thousand units in January following a decline of 35 thousand units in December (see top chart).
- The U.S. trade gap narrowed in December. Exports of goods and services increased by \$3.9 billion in December and imports decreased by \$6.2 billion, according to data released by the Census Bureau (see bottom chart). As a result, the U.S. trade deficit for goods and services (imports minus exports) decreased by \$10.1 billion to \$38.5 billion. Petroleum imports declined 11.0 percent in December, reflecting unseasonably warm weather in most of the United States and declining prices.
- Capital goods orders picked up in December. New orders for nondefense capital goods increased 3.3 percent in December, largely reflecting an increase in aircraft orders which have been especially volatile in recent months. Excluding aircraft, new orders for nondefense capital goods edged down 0.3 percent in December following a 3.3 percent increase in November and a 3.0 percent gain in October. New orders for nondefense capital goods have been trending up since the end of summer last year.



SOURCE: Bureau of Economic Analysis, U.S. Department of Commerce.



SOURCE: Census Bureau, U.S. Department of Commerce.

# WEEKLY ECONOMIC DIGEST

## THE WEEK AHEAD

### DAY SELECTED UPCOMING DATA RELEASES & EVENTS

<b>Tuesday, Feb. 12</b>	Job Openings and Labor Turnover (December)
<b>Wednesday, Feb. 13</b>	Advance Monthly Sales for Retail and Food Services (January) U.S. Import and Export Price Indexes (January)
<b>Friday, Feb. 15</b>	Industrial Production and Capacity Utilization (January)

## THE ECONOMY AT A GLANCE

KEY INDICATORS	MONTH			QUARTER			YEAR	
	Jan.	Dec.	Nov.	2012Q4	2012Q3	2012Q2	2012	2011
<b><u>Economic Activity</u></b>								
Real gross domestic product	—	—	—	-0.1	3.1	1.3	2.2	1.8
Manufacturing production	n.a.	0.8	1.3	0.2	-1.0	0.8	4.0	4.3
Factory utilization rate (percent of capacity)	n.a.	77.4	76.9	76.8	77.0	77.5	77.2	75.0
Civilian unemployment rate (percent of labor force)	7.9	7.8	7.8	7.8	8.0	8.2	8.1	8.9
Housing starts (thousands of units, annual rates)	n.a.	954	851	898	774	736	781	612
Light vehicle sales, domestic (millions of units, annual rates)	12,077	12,012	12,047	11,724	11,346	10,995	11.242	9.805
Retail & food service sales	n.a.	0.5	0.4	5.8	5.3	-1.0	5.0	8.0
Real disposable personal income	n.a.	2.8	1.3	6.8	0.5	2.2	1.5	1.3
Personal saving rate (percent of disposable income)	n.a.	6.5	4.1	4.7	3.6	3.8	3.9	4.2
<b><u>Inflation &amp; Productivity</u></b>								
CPI-U inflation	n.a.	0	-0.3	2.1	2.3	0.8	2.1	3.1
Core CPI-U inflation	n.a.	0.1	0.1	1.6	1.5	2.6	2.1	1.7
Output per hour, nonfarm bus.	—	—	—	-2.0	3.2	1.9	1.0	0.7
Unit labor costs, nonfarm bus.	—	—	—	4.5	-2.3	-0.5	0.7	2.0
Employment Cost Index	—	—	—	2.1	1.7	2.1	1.9	2.0

Sources: Bureau of Economic Analysis, U.S. Department of Commerce; Bureau of the Census, U.S. Department of Commerce; and Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor.

Notes: Except where otherwise noted, values in the table represent simple percent changes for monthly data and percent changes at annual rates for quarterly data. Core CPI-U inflation is the percentage change in the CPI-U excluding food and energy prices as reported by the Bureau of Labor Statistics. The Employment Cost Index covers all civilian workers and the quarterly change is measured from the last month of the previous quarter to the last month of the indicated quarter. 'n.a.' denotes that data are not yet available. '—' denotes that data are not available monthly.