

PRIMARY CREDIT RATE CHANGE

February 3, 2005

The Federal Reserve Board approved action by the Board of Directors of the Federal Reserve Bank of Saint Louis, increasing the primary credit rate from 3.25 percent to 3.50 percent, effective February 3, 2005.

According to the Federal Reserve press release, the Federal Open Market Committee:

believes that, even after this action, the stance of monetary policy remains accommodative and, coupled with robust underlying growth in productivity, is providing ongoing support to economic activity. Output appears to be growing at a moderate pace despite the rise in energy prices, and labor market conditions continue to improve gradually. Inflation and longer-term inflation expectations remain well contained.

The Committee perceives the upside and downside risks to the attainment of both sustainable growth and price stability for the next few quarters to be roughly equal. With underlying inflation expected to be relatively low, the Committee believes that policy accommodation can be removed at a pace that is likely to be measured. Nonetheless, the Committee will respond to changes in economic prospects as needed to fulfill its obligation to maintain price stability.

If you have any questions, please call Hillary Debenport, Assistant Vice President, toll free at 1-866-666-8316, or locally at (314) 444-8488.