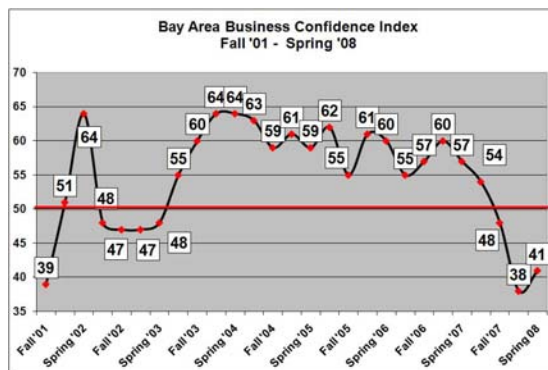


WEEKLY FLASH

Council Survey: Bay Area Economic Outlook Remains Dark

Today the Bay Area Council released its quarterly [Bay Area Business Confidence Survey](#) and the results show business confidence has improved slightly from its lowest point ever recorded last quarter. The business confidence index - the number that distills the survey findings - registered at 41 out of 100, up three points from the last evaluation. A reading over 50 points signals positive economic times and below 50 is negative. The six-month economic outlook of the Bay Area CEO's and top executives surveyed remains pessimistic, but a slightly more positive trend has emerged. Twenty-eight percent of Bay Area business leaders expect the regional economy to improve in the next six months while 35 percent expect it to worsen and 37 percent expect it to hold steady. While far from positive territory, these expectations are more optimistic than the last survey, which saw only 15 percent of respondents with a positive outlook. Email [Melanie Paulos](#) for a full copy of the results or read [this coverage](#) by the San Jose Mercury News.



Council Weighs In on Organized Retail Crime

Today Jim Wunderman testified before a State Senate panel in Redwood City convened by [Senator Leland Yee](#), D-San Francisco, [on organized retail crime](#). National figures estimate that organized theft and resale of merchandise is costing the U.S. economy \$30 billion, perhaps \$5 billion in California. Wunderman supported the efforts of Council members Safeway, Macys West and Gap Inc. in working with Senator Yee to tighten laws enabling swifter and more effective arrests and prosecutions. [Read here about a major bust](#) that took place in San Jose last week.



Healthcare Committee Talks Reform with Governor's Advisor

This week the Bay Area Council's Healthcare Committee conferred with Herb Schultz, Senior Advisor to Governor Schwarzenegger, about the state of health care reform in California. Schultz assured the committee that California's \$15.2 billion budget deficit would not necessarily prevent substantive healthcare reform from moving forward. Also on the agenda was Dr. Sharon Levine from The Permanente Group who [presented](#) on the coordinated approach Kaiser has taken to improve care and efficiency for cardiovascular treatment. Maneesh Arora, Jerry Lin and Cathy Gordon from Google presented on [Google Health](#), a practical new service which allows consumers to organize all of their medical information in one place.

Quote of the Week

"It is not uncommon for somebody to be pressing somebody else's button. It's darn near a daily occurrence," [said Jon Waldie](#), the chief administrative officer for the Assembly Rules Committee on the practice of "ghost voting" by lawmakers.

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