



Press Release

Release Date: November 1, 2005

For immediate release

The Federal Open Market Committee decided today to raise its target for the federal funds rate by 25 basis points to 4 percent.

Elevated energy prices and hurricane-related disruptions in economic activity have temporarily depressed output and employment. However, monetary policy accommodation, coupled with robust underlying growth in productivity, is providing ongoing support to economic activity that will likely be augmented by planned rebuilding in the hurricane-affected areas. The cumulative rise in energy and other costs has the potential to add to inflation pressures; however, core inflation has been relatively low in recent months and longer-term inflation expectations remain contained.

The Committee perceives that, with appropriate monetary policy action, the upside and downside risks to the attainment of both sustainable growth and price stability should be kept roughly equal. With underlying inflation expected to be contained, 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.

Voting for the FOMC monetary policy action were: Alan Greenspan, Chairman; Timothy F. Geithner, Vice Chairman; Susan S. Bies; Roger W. Ferguson, Jr.; Richard W. Fisher; Donald L. Kohn; Michael H. Moskow; Mark W. Olson; Anthony M. Santomero; and Gary H. Stern.

In a related action, the Board of Governors unanimously approved a 25-basis point increase in the discount rate to 5 percent. In taking this action, the Board approved the requests submitted by the Boards of Directors of the Federal Reserve Banks of Boston, New York, Philadelphia, Cleveland, Richmond, Atlanta, Chicago, St. Louis, Minneapolis, Kansas City, Dallas, and San Francisco.

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Last update: November 1, 2005