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# Weekly Store Sales

Chain-store sales in the second of four April weeks extended the satisfactory and on-plan, but not blow-out, first-week trend, with both survey groups sticking with their initial forecasts for the full month.

Sales have ramped up on a year-on-year basis, because pre-Easter weeks this year are being compared with post-holiday weeks last year. Next week--the one immediately preceding Easter--should show the maximum effect from the calendar shift, with a very high-single-digit percentage increase generally expected.

Anecdotal color in the reports was positive, but neutral--pointing to continuing good activity across most, or all, merchandise categories, with no mention of notable consumer caution or exuberance. Given the big gasoline and food price increases in recent months--and the apparent sharp impact on sentiment--having consumer spending continue essentially on trend represents good news.

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