

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES

JOINT ECONOMIC COMMITTEE

VICE CHAIRMAN JIM SAXTON

PRESS RELEASE

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MANUFACTURING AND CONSTRUCTION DATA REFLECT ECONOMIC STRENGTH

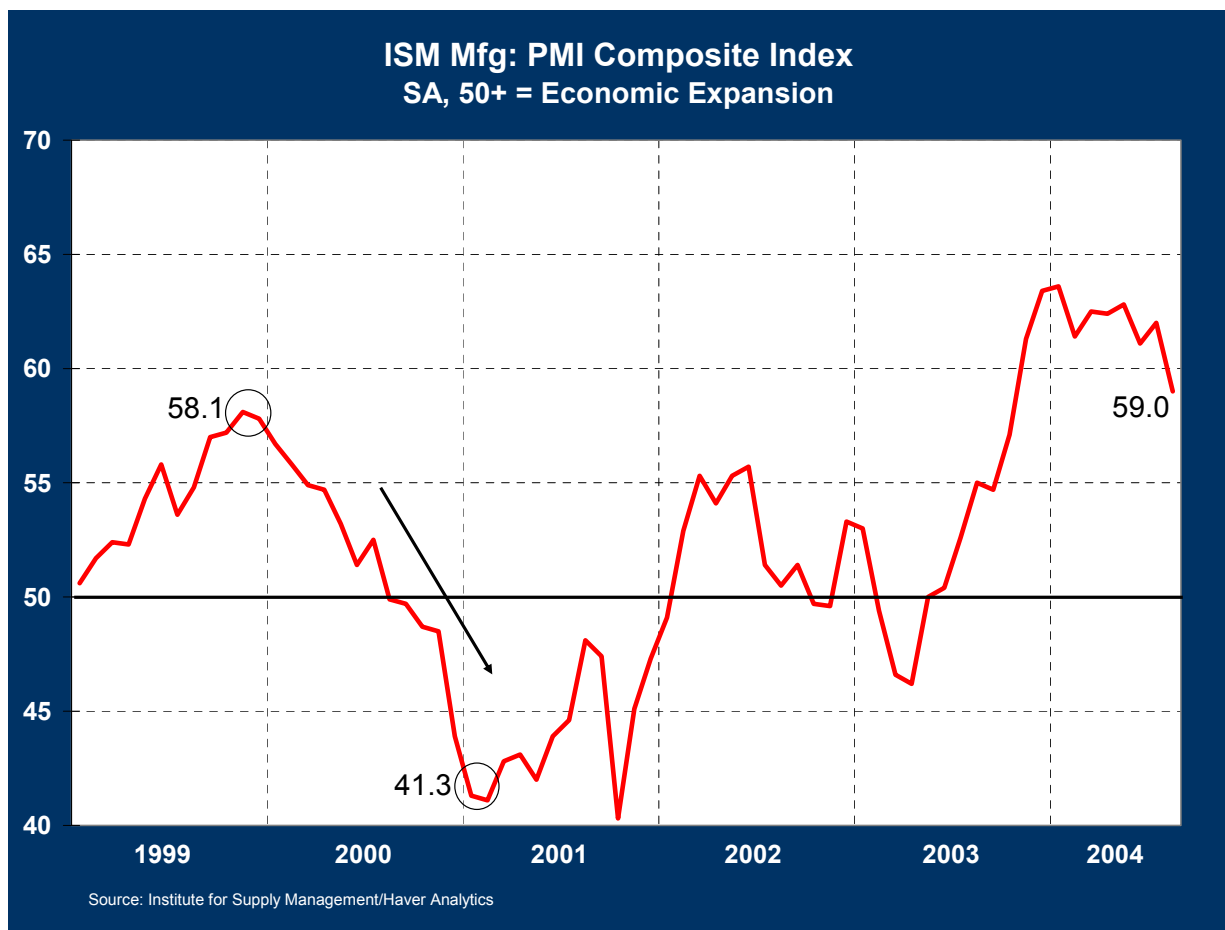
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WASHINGTON, D.C. – The latest data on manufacturing activity and construction continue to show solid economic growth, Vice Chairman Jim Saxton of the Joint Economic Committee said today.

According to the Institute for Supply Management (ISM), the 59 percent level of its index of manufacturing activity last month indicated that “August was another good month for the manufacturing sector.” In the last several months, this index of manufacturing activity has remained well above the 50 percent level denoting expansion, although at lower levels than the recent highs reached in this index.

Separately, the Commerce Department reported that construction spending remained robust in July. The 0.4 percent increase in construction spending pushed it to a new record level.

“The latest economic data are consistent with the Blue Chip consensus forecast of about 4 percent economic growth for the second half of 2004. This pace of economic growth would be somewhat higher than the average long-term growth rate of the U.S. economy,” Saxton concluded.



For more information on current economic conditions, please visit our website at www.house.gov/jec.

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