National Survey of Community Banks Has Begun

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CSBS has begun the annual process of surveying community banks on their economic condition, regulatory impacts and business plan. We encourage banks to participate in the survey, which can be accessed here.

This is the sixth year of the CSBS National Survey of Community Banks. It canvasses hundreds of community banks across the country, providing truly a unique opportunity for them to have their voices heard. The data from these surveys provides a rich tableau of the challenges and opportunities these institutions face and is useful information for both policymakers and researchers.

The survey also helps us monitor the constant change community banks experience year after year. Last year we reported that after years of increasing costs, compliance costs for community banks actually declined by 13%.

But the National Survey is more than accumulating quantitative data. It also provides us with qualitative insight on the outlook of community banks and the economy.

This year, CSBS is pleased to introduce the creation of an ongoing sentiment index of community bankers in partnership with Temple University economists Dr. William Dunkelberg and Dr. Jonathan Scott. The index is intended to shine light on specific market conditions and how they impact prospects for growth and participation by community banks in their communities.
Ten short questions have been included towards the end of the National Survey. The answers to these questions about regulations, competition, economic conditions and market prospects will be combined to form an overall sentiment index of community bankers. Going forward, these questions will be circulated on a quarterly basis to better reflect changing sentiments.

Our goal is to get a more accurate understanding of how bankers are feeling about the future and to help provide an important barometer of the state of the industry. We encourage bankers to complete the survey given its potential influence as an economic barometer.

The National Survey went live on April 15 and closes on June 30. We look forward to seeing where the community banking industry stands in 2019.