

PRESS RELEASE - For Immediate Release

August 30, 2016

COST OF LIVING INDEX QUARTERLY UPDATE

Among the 260 urban areas that participated in the second quarter 2016 *Cost of Living Index*, the after-tax cost for a professional/managerial **standard of living ranged from more than twice the national average in New York (Manhattan) NY to almost 25 percent below the national average in McAllen, TX.** The *Cost of Living Index* is published quarterly by C2ER – The Council for Community and Economic Research.

**The Ten Most and Least Expensive Urban Areas
in the Cost of Living Index (COLI)**

Second Quarter 2016

National Average for 260 Urban Areas = 100

Most Expensive			Least Expensive		
Ranking	Urban Areas	COL Index	Ranking	Urban Areas	COL Index
1	New York (Manhattan) NY	226.0	1	McAllen TX	75.9
2	Sunnyvale CA	224.2	2	Richmond IN	78.7
3	Honolulu HI	191.1	3	Kalamazoo MI	79.7
4	San Francisco CA	174.7	4	Harlingen TX	80.6
5	New York (Brooklyn) NY	172.8	5	Hattiesburg MS	81.1
6	Orange County CA	149.2	6	Ashland OH	82.0
7	Washington DC	148.4	7	Martinsville-Henry County VA	82.0
8	Oakland CA	147.2	8	Memphis TN	82.2
9	Boston MA	146.0	9	Sherman-Denison TX	82.6
10	Stamford CT	145.7	10	Tupelo MS	82.7

The *Cost of Living Index* measures regional differences in the cost of consumer goods and services, excluding taxes and non-consumer expenditures, for professional and managerial households in the top income quintile. It is based on more than 90,000 prices covering 60 different items for which prices are collected quarterly by chambers of commerce, economic development organizations, and university applied economic centers in each participating urban area. Small differences should not be interpreted as showing a measurable difference.

The composite index is based on six component categories – housing, utilities, grocery items, transportation, health care, and miscellaneous goods and services.

What Do Groceries Cost?

Each quarter, C2ER collects more than 90,000 prices from communities across the US for the Cost of Living Index. With food prices a big part of the national media attention, C2ER decided to once again feature those communities with the most and least expensive food costs as measured by the grocery item index number. C2ER collects data on twenty-six items from a variety of surrogate categories to represent the grocery item component of the index.

**The Five Most and Least Expensive Places for Grocery Items by Index Number
in the Cost of Living Index (COLI)
Second Quarter 2016
Average for 260 Urban Areas = 100**

Most Expensive			Least Expensive		
Ranking	Urban Areas	Index	Ranking	Urban Areas	Index
1	Honolulu HI	161.7	1	Jackson-Madison County TN	77.6
2	Kodiak AK	158.2	2	Temple TX	78.9
3	Hilo HI	146.9	3	San Antonio TX	80.0
4	Sunnyvale CA	142.4	4	Kalamazoo MI	81.5
5	Stamford CT	137.4	5	McAllen TX	81.7

The Most Expensive and Least Expensive Cities to Buy Gasoline

Over the past year we have watched gasoline prices drop significantly and gradually rise, remaining steady in recent months. Considering Quarter 2 prices were collected in the season of spring break and vacations, we decided to look at the most and least expensive cities to buy gas and hit the road.

**The Five Most and Least Expensive Places to Buy Gasoline
Second Quarter 2016
Average for 260 Urban Areas = \$1.993**

Most Expensive			Least Expensive		
Ranking	Urban Areas	Avg. Price	Ranking	Urban Areas	Avg. Price
1	Orange County CA	\$2.977	1	Edmond OK	\$1.552
2	Los Angeles-Long Beach CA	\$2.876	2	Nashville-Murfreesboro TN	\$1.557
3	San Francisco CA	\$2.841	3	Oklahoma City OK	\$1.561
4	Kodiak AK	\$2.790	4	Amarillo TX	\$1.601
5	Bakersfield CA	\$2.777	5	Tulsa OK	\$1.620

The quarterly Cost of Living Index is available by subscription for \$175 per year for the print version and \$165 per year for the PDF. The electronic version is available for \$275 per year. Be sure and ask about our new Expanded Excel version which covers more household and income types. Send check, payable to C2ER, P.O. Box 100127, Arlington VA 22210-0407, or subscribe on the Internet at www.coli.org.

If you need additional information on the Cost of Living Index or other COLI-related products such as the COLI Web Calculator and the COLI Historical Index, please contact Jennie Allison at jallison@crec.net or by phone at 703-522-4980.