



Press Release

Release Date: November 16, 1999

For immediate release

The Federal Open Market Committee today voted to raise its target for the federal funds rate by 25 basis points to 5-1/2 percent. In a related action, the Board of Governors approved a 25 basis point increase in the discount rate to 5 percent.

Although cost pressures appear generally contained, risks to sustainable growth persist. Despite tentative evidence of a slowing in certain interest-sensitive sectors of the economy and of accelerating productivity, the expansion of activity continues in excess of the economy's growth potential. As a consequence, the pool of available workers willing to take jobs has been drawn down further in recent months, a trend that must eventually be contained if inflationary imbalances are to remain in check and economic expansion continue.

Today's increase in the federal funds rate, together with the policy actions in June and August and the firming of conditions more generally in U.S. financial markets over the course of the year, should markedly diminish the risk of inflation going forward. As a consequence, the directive the Federal Open Market Committee adopted is symmetrical with regard to the outlook for policy over the near term.

In taking the discount rate action, the Federal Reserve Board approved requests submitted by the Boards of Directors of the Federal Reserve Banks of Boston, Cleveland, Richmond and Kansas City. The discount rate is the rate charged depository institutions when they borrow short-term adjustment credit from their district Federal Reserve Banks.

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Last update: November 16, 1999