

## Consumers Drive Economic Growth, Not Government - Consumer Expenditures

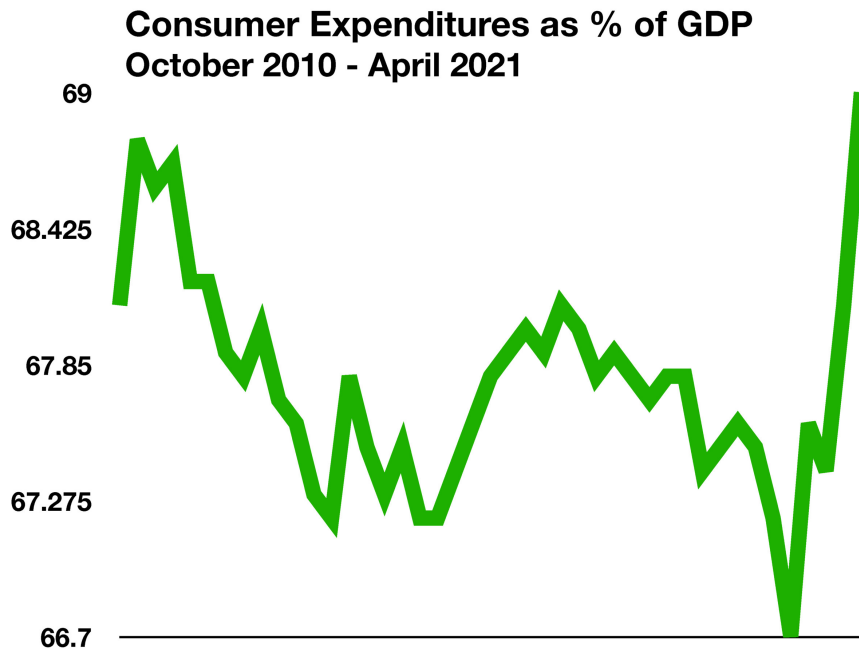
Each month the Department of Commerce releases its Gross Domestic Product (GDP) report. This report is the single most recognized indicator of how the economy is performing.

GDP is made up of private consumption, gross investment, government spending, and net exports. The single largest contributor of these components is consumer consumption, making nearly 70% of GDP.

Historical data provided by the Bureau of Labor Statistics shows that U.S. economic growth has steadily become more reliant on consumer expenditures. Consumer expenditures as a percentage of GDP have risen to their highest levels over the past three years since the end of World War II. The importance of how much we consume as consumers each and every day has become that much more significant.

Additional data from the Fed shows that consumers have also adjusted their spending behaviors, relying less on credit and more on government stimulus payments to spend, vastly different from the peak of easy credit seen in 2004-2006.

Sources: Commerce Department, BLS, Federal Reserve



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