

WEEK IN REVIEW | REINHART FIXED INCOME BY MADISON INVESTMENTS

March 1, 2024

INFLATION

The Personal Consumption Expenditure deflator (PCE), the Fed's preferred inflation gauge, rose 0.3% in January. The PCE is up 2.4% from a year ago. Core PCE, excluding food and energy, rose 0.4% and 2.8% respectively over the same periods. The supercore PCE, which also excludes shelter, rose 0.6% in January.

Our Take: The PCE report came in as expected, confirming earlier CPI and PPI reports of stronger inflation in January. Year-end seasonal adjustments are difficult so there is some reason to discount the reports, but the path to 2% inflation was always going to be bumpy. For now, the disinflation story remains intact despite the January reports, but a repeat of strong numbers in February would be cause for concern.

PERSONAL INCOME AND SPENDING

Personal Income rose 1.0% in January while spending rose 0.2%.

Our Take: Bad weather may have affected spending in January, but the better-than-expected rise in incomes is welcomed and should help support the continued strength of the consumer.

MUNICIPALS

The Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) will hold public hearings in New York City beginning this week to discuss its congestion pricing plan. Under the new tolling plan, which is expected to begin in June, commuters driving into the central business district in Manhattan will pay an additional toll during peak hours.

Our Take: The MTA Board voted to approve the various prices for cars, trucks, motorcycles, taxis, and ride-share vehicles late last year. However, many drivers remain opposed to the tolls. Taxi drivers and ride-share drivers have expressed concern that the additional surcharge will reduce demand for their services. The upcoming public hearings may provide additional clarity surrounding the rates and possible exemptions.



CONTACT

	Institutional Investors	
Financial Advisors	and Consultants	Visit us online
888.971.7135	888.971.7135	madisoninvestments.com

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