# Spending by state residents has risen

## Report tracks consumer activity since recession

The Associated Press

COLUMBIA — The federal government's newly released estimate of consumer spending in South Carolina shows residents are spending a bit more since the Great Recession officially ended five years ago.

The figures come from a new report by the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis released Thursday. The figures are not adjusted for inflation.

According to the report, per capita personal spending by South Carolina residents rose almost 9 percent between 2007 and 2012, the last year figures were available. Economists say the recession began in late 2007 and ended in mid-2009.

South Carolina's per-person spending increased by 2.5 percent between 2011 and 2012, tied for fifth-lowest increase in the country.

The return of consumer spending from the fall it took in the recession was pronounced for motor vehicles and parts, with South Carolina residents spending $5.8 billion in 2012.

Health care spending stayed well above the inflation rate, rising by 27 percent between 2008 when the recession started to bite and 2012.

Florida's consumers were the biggest spenders in the southeast at $33,755 per capita in 2012. The lowest was Mississippi with $27,406.

The report showed that in 2012, South Carolina residents spent $2,486 per capita on food and beverages, $1,551 on gasoline and other energy goods, and $5,435 on health care.