

# *National Week In Review*

## *Week Ending October 13, 2006*

**J**obless Claims Up . . . The number of Americans filing new claims for unemployment benefits increased after falling for two consecutive weeks. The Labor Department reports that 308,000 people filed unemployment claims the week ending October 7<sup>th</sup>, up 4,000 from the previous week's revised figure of 304,000. Twenty-three states had increases in initial claims over the week. Kentucky had the largest increase, up 3,010 due to layoffs in the automobile and manufacturing industries. Twenty-seven states had declines in initial claims over the week. Michigan had the biggest drop, down 12,540, due to fewer layoffs in the automobile industry. New York had 877 fewer claims, followed by Missouri (-843), Georgia (-772), and North Carolina (-674). Initial claims in **South Carolina** were down 311. The state data lags behind the national jobless claims data by one week.

**Retail Sales Down** . . . Retail sales fell 0.4% in September to 366.2 billion. Gasoline station sales plunged a record 13.0%. Excluding gasoline stations, retail sales rose a solid 0.6%. Department store sales climbed 1.1%. Sales at specialty apparel stores jumped 3.0%, the largest gain in 11 months. Economists closely monitor retail sales to track trends in overall consumer spending, which make up about two-thirds of U.S. economic activity.

**Source:**

- US Department of Labor
- *USA Today*