

Opening Remarks by Jack VanDerhei
Temple University and EBRI Fellow
2008 Retirement Confidence Survey
April 9, 2008

Good morning, ladies and gentlemen, and thank you for joining us for the presentation of the 2008 Retirement Confidence Survey Results.

My name is Jack VanDerhei. I am a professor at Temple University, research director of the fellows program here at the Employee Benefit Research Institute (EBRI), and the host for today's event. I am joined today by Mathew Greenwald, president of Greenwald & Associates, co-sponsors of the Retirement Confidence Survey.

We have reporters with us today on a conference call and here at EBRI. I will make a few brief remarks. Then Matt Greenwald will present the detailed survey results. Then we will be happy to take your questions. Please hold your questions until the speakers have completed their remarks.

Very briefly, as many of you know the RCS is the country's longest-running and most comprehensive study of the attitudes and behavior of American workers and retirees toward all aspects of saving, retirement planning, and long-term financial security. This is the 18th annual RCS. This year's survey included interviews with more than 1,300 individuals. Thus, one point to highlight is that this survey has a long history and involves a large sample size.

Another point is that in recent years, RCS results have been relatively stable. This year is different.

The headline finding is that, reflecting the growing concern over health care costs and economic issues, American workers' confidence in being able to *afford a comfortable retirement decreased over the past year by a rate unmatched in the 18 years of the survey's existence*. Here are some backup points:

Overall retirement confidence drops sharply—The percentage of workers *very* confident about having enough money for a comfortable retirement decreased sharply, from 27 percent in 2007 to 18 percent in 2008, a decline of 9 percentage points and the biggest one-year drop in the 18-year history of the survey. Retiree confidence in having a financially secure retirement has also decreased sharply, from 41 percent to 29 percent, down 12 percentage points.

Health care costs a big and growing issue for retirees—Among retirees who left the work force earlier than planned, more than half (54 percent) say they did so because of health problems or disability. Health costs appear to be a growing concern among retirees, as almost half of retirees (44 percent) say they have spent more than expected on health care expenses. More than half (54 percent) say they are now more concerned about their

financial future than they were right after they retired, a 14 percentage-point increase from a year ago (40 percent in 2007).

Workers may be waking up to the lack of health insurance in retirement—The RCS finds that 34 percent of all workers now expect to have access to employer-paid health insurance in retirement, down 8 percentage points from last year (42 percent in 2007). Although 41 percent of retirees say they currently have access to health insurance through a former employer, many employers are eliminating health care coverage for future retirees.

Now, let's turn the program over to Matt Greenwald. Then we take your questions.
Thanks.

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