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ADVANCE REPORT ON RETAIL TRADE, FEBRUARY 1954

Total sales of retail stores in February were \$11.9 billion, the U. S. Department of Commerce announced today. February 1954 sales, adjusted for seasonal factors and trading day differences, were about 1 percent above January and about 5 percent below February a year ago.

The February sales figures are based on the Advance Report on Retail Trade, a monthly Bureau of the Census survey conducted in cooperation with a representative cross-section of about 1,400 retail firms which, in total, operate some 35,000 stores in the United States. The firms which are cooperating in the early reporting of sales are part of a larger group which furnishes figures at a later date. Therefore, the advance estimates are preliminary and subject to revision.

The unadjusted preliminary Census figures are shown in table 1; these figures, adjusted by the Office of Business Economics for seasonal factors and trading day differences, are shown in table 2.

Sales by the durable goods stores on a seasonally adjusted basis were up about 5 percent from January, reflecting, in large part, increased sales of automobiles. For the nondurable goods area, seasonally adjusted sales declined slightly, with small offsetting changes reported by the major lines of trade.

ADVANCE RETAIL SALES REPORT--PRELIMINARY ESTIMATES FOR FEBRUARY 1954

Table 1.--SALES OF RETAIL STORES IN THE UNITED STATES, BY KIND-OF-BUSINESS GROUP
(NOT ADJUSTED for seasonal factors and trading day differences)

Kind-of-business group	Sales (Millions of dollars)			
	1954		1953	
	February (Advance estimate)	January ¹	December ²	February
Retail stores, total ³	11,949	12,387	16,445	12,328
Food group.....	3,078	3,346	3,618	3,095
Grocery stores.....	2,598	2,818	3,018	2,526
Eating and drinking places.....	951	994	1,096	940
General merchandise group.....	1,192	1,192	2,748	1,171
Department stores ⁴	629	635	1,476	624
Apparel group.....	573	665	1,364	616
Furniture and appliance group....	646	663	1,000	656
Lumber, building, hardware group ⁵	848	784	1,040	901
Automotive group.....	2,278	2,205	2,279	2,501
Gasoline service stations.....	764	847	914	752
Drug and proprietary stores.....	390	400	516	387

See footnotes below table 2.

Source: Bureau of the Census

Table 2.--SALES OF RETAIL STORES IN THE UNITED STATES, BY KIND-OF-BUSINESS GROUP
(ADJUSTED for seasonal factors and trading day differences)

Kind-of-business group	Sales (Millions of dollars)				Percent change, Feb. 1954 from--	
	1954		1953		January 1954	February 1953
	February (Advance estimate)	January ¹	December ²	February		
Retail stores, total ³	13,820	13,674	13,932	14,514	+1	-5
Durable goods stores, total ³ ...	4,715	4,492	4,626	5,304	+5	-11
Nondurable goods stores, total ³	9,105	9,182	9,306	9,211	-1	-1
Food group.....	3,360	3,367	3,432	3,393	0	-1
Eating and drinking places.....	1,085	1,072	1,064	1,075	+1	+1
General merchandise group.....	1,585	1,535	1,629	1,560	+3	+2
Apparel group.....	835	829	868	883	+1	-5
Furniture and appliance group....	770	774	738	811	-1	-5
Lumber, building, hardware group ⁵	1,070	1,020	1,045	1,156	+5	-7
Automotive group.....	2,520	2,372	2,509	2,951	+6	-15
Gasoline service stations.....	875	927	933	869	-6	+1
Drug and proprietary stores.....	410	422	408	412	-3	0

¹ Preliminary revision.

Source: Office of Business Economics

² Final revision.

³ Totals include data for kinds of business not shown separately.

⁴ Based on preliminary estimate supplied by Federal Reserve Board.

⁵ Includes farm equipment dealers.