



## Basis Points – October 22, 2019

---

 [westwoodgroup.com/weeklyblog/basis-points-october-22-2019/](https://westwoodgroup.com/weeklyblog/basis-points-october-22-2019/)

### Above the Fold

---

#### *Hyper-Awareness Better Than Complacency?*

It's safe to say that most of us have at least some concerns around geopolitical stability here and abroad, as well as just how healthy domestic and global economies really are. From a no-deal Brexit and trade war with China, to slowing industrial data and political in-fighting stateside all can ruin even the most optimistic of outlooks. And let's face it, we are in a 124-month record expansion that is, at least statistically, due for a reversion.

That said, the current climate feels much different than it did back in late 2006, just ahead of the Great Recession. The pronounced pricing bubbles in energy, commodities or housing (with maybe a few exceptions) are non-existent, and the euphoric, optimistic outlooks that were more common

back then, are today replaced by tempered perspectives, cautions and conservative guidance.

The point is that market pundits will often warn that consumers and market participants are often “too complacent,” but that’s hard to argue here as the media and corporate information flow seems to be far more cautious than anything. Anecdotally, current sentiment reflects a more proactive and vigilant consumer and investor, who both seem prepared for a coming recession; and that might just make the effects less detrimental when the time does come.

## Three Things

---

1. *Britain (Might Be) Leaving the EU Oct. 31* – Boris Johnson’s “no-deal Brexit” campaign march was halted in its tracks over the weekend as his government was forced to ask the EU (European Union) for another delay (which the EU supports). Johnson still has a chance of proceeding with his agenda, but his exit strategy will still likely have to pass through lawmakers’ hands before the transition would be completed.
2. *Drug Companies’ Drop in the Bucket* – Four of the country’s largest pharmaceutical distributors, McKesson Corp., Cardinal Health Inc., Teva Pharmaceutical Industries Ltd., and AmerisourceBergen Corp., reached a \$260 million last-minute settlement (Walgreens’ case was postponed) in the first of more than 2,300 opioid lawsuits brought by a myriad of hospitals, municipalities, Native American tribes and others. Some believe the total liability for the five companies named in the various suits could be as high as \$48 billion.
3. *China’s Banned Products Are Still Watching Us* – According to security-tech firm Forescout, more than 2,700 banned China-made cameras remain in use across many government installations (the number is reportedly much higher). Even though legislation prohibits the use of these cameras, removing and replacing them is proving to be an expensive and complicated challenge. In fact, a recent Wall Street Journal report revealed that banned cameras are still being purchased.

## Did You Know?

---

### *ATM Factoids*

Even though many of us are going at least partially cashless with credit, debit and digital forms of payment, there are still more than 3.5 million ATMs across the globe. And even though cash machines offer convenience for many, their future may be a little less rosy as, for the first time in history, the number of ATMs declined 1% year over year.

Barclays Bank of London was the first company to install an ATM back in June of 1967, but it took over 20 years for the first ATM to reach cash-heavy India. The early cards were scanned by the number embossed on the card, as the magnetic stripe wasn’t created until 1969 by Britain’s Midland Bank (today HSBC).

The average withdrawal amount (2018 data) is \$60, and the average person visits an ATM nearly 7.5 times per month. And if you're wondering about Personal Identification Numbers (PINs), there are 10,000 possible and valid combinations (0-9 digit choice). The most common PINs are 1234, 1111 and 0000. The least commonly used PIN password is 8068.

The information contained herein represents the views of Westwood Wealth Management at a specific point in time and is based on information believed to be reliable. No representation or warranty is made concerning the accuracy or completeness of any data compiled herein. Any statements non-factual in nature constitute only current opinion, which is subject to change. Any statements concerning financial market trends are based on current market conditions, which will fluctuate. Past performance is not indicative of future results. All information provided herein is for informational purposes only and is not intended to be, and should not be interpreted as, an offer, solicitation, or recommendation to buy or sell or otherwise invest in any of the securities/sectors/countries that may be mentioned.