FEDERAL RESERVE BANK OF MINNEAPOLIS

BANKING AND POLICY STUDIES

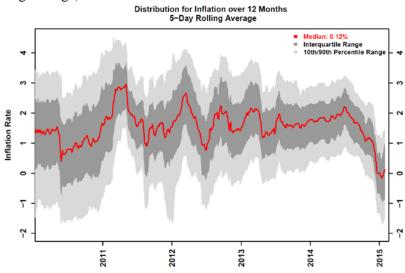
Minneapolis Options Report – January 30th

Please find a copy of a new paper on market-based probabilities on our website: https://www.minneapolisfed.org/banking/mpd/. The paper discusses the usefulness for policymakers of market-based probabilities imputed from option prices. Feel free to share the link and/or provide comments to: option-report-feedback@mpls.frb.org.

The recent themes from our reporting on the options markets have not changed substantially. The downward trajectory of median inflation rates from MPDs derived from puts and calls on the CPI has reversed modestly this week. Treasury rates are at long-term lows and MPDs derived from options on 10 year notes continue to indicate bias toward lower rates. The dollar continues to strengthen against other major currencies but tail risk protection against dollar weakening has increased, as measured by MPD standard deviation and skew. Physical commodity prices, led by oil and agricultural crops, remain low or falling. Investor desire for downside equity market protection has remained elevated but stable, given the MPD skew we measure from derived options on the S&P 500 index. A fairly negative earnings season for banks has just wrapped up, and downside protection on bank stocks was reduced for nearly all of the largest banks likely reflecting reduced investor uncertainty.

Inflation

• Median expectations for inflation from market-based probability distributions (MPDs) derived from caps and floors on the CPI, increased slightly over the past two weeks. However, the median expectations for CPI inflation over the next 1-year, 2-year, and 5-year horizons are still very close to the lowest recorded levels since late 2009 when the cap and floor data became available. The median expectation for CPI inflation over the next year crept back into positive territory at 12 bps (5-day rolling average).



- Uncertainty regarding market-based CPI inflation expectations, measured by MPD standard deviations, remains at levels that are low relative to those observed over the past five years.
 However, MPD standard deviations for inflation have been slowly rising since late summer of 2014, indicating declining conviction related to inflation rate expectations. This is especially pronounced in the 1- and 2-year tenors.
- As noted in the last report, measures of inflation MPD skew have been slowly rising over the past several months. They remain positive for all three of the inflation MPDs indicating an upward

inflation bias. However, over the last two weeks MPD skews have dropped sharply indicating that expectations about tail risk of higher inflation are moderating.

Interest Rates

• Short-term LIBOR rate expectations have continued lower despite slight reversals in inflation expectations. The skew on the 3-year MPD suggests that investors are demanding more protection on the upside in the medium-term. That this is not the case in the 5-year MPD may indicate expectations of "liftoff" as a result of future FOMC rate decisions.



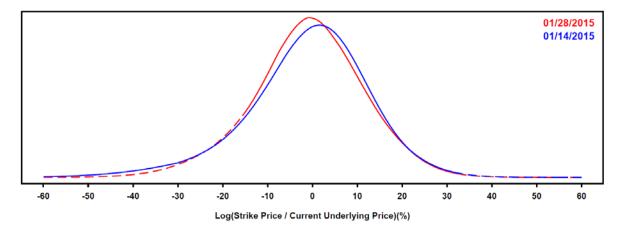
MPD skews derived from options on 5- and 10-year Treasury futures fell as spot bond prices
rose. This indicates that as rates have fallen, investor demand for upside rate protection in the
next few months has increased.

Banks and Insurance Companies

- For the banks, earnings surprises have been substantially negative on a per share basis for BAC,
 C, JPM, MS, RF, and to a lesser extent for COF and STT.
- Downside protection as measured by MPD standard deviation fell uniformly across the bank holding companies we follow. This is consistent with the completion of the bank earnings season.
- BAC and MS missed analyst EPS estimates by 20% and 32%, respectively. MPD skews for most banks have increased over the short term and are at high levels historically, suggesting a shift in the tails toward upside expectations for these firms.

MARKET PROBABILITY DENSITY FUNCTIONS -- BANK OF AMERICA

Market Probability Density Function of the Log Return Distribution



• Increased option trading activity due to earnings reports was evident for some of the smaller BHC equities, including COF, KEY, STI, and STT. Earnings results were mixed among these firms.

- The MPD skews for CS and BK are at the high end of their historical ranges and are in positive territory. Both firms suffered declines in their share prices and significantly underperformed the S&P 500 during the past two weeks, but positive skews suggest expectations of upside potential for these firms.
- Insurance companies are in the middle of their reporting season. Earnings have been more positive than the banks with the exception of PFG which missed analysts EPS expectations by 12%. MPD skew is at the high end of the range for the majority of insurance companies, implying that investor expectations are biased toward the upside.

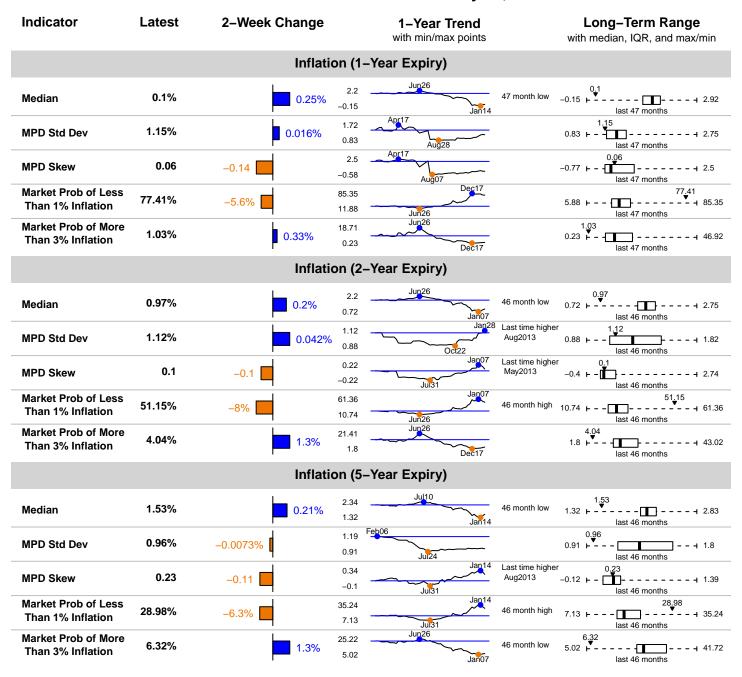
Other Markets

- The S&P 500 price has dropped from its all-time high. At the same time, the MPD skew derived
 from options on the index price has remained highly negative but retreated from its intermediate
 term low suggesting investors demand for downside protection has moderated somewhat. The
 VIX has dropped slightly over the past few weeks but remains above 20, signaling substantial
 equity volatility.
- The iShares U.S. Real Estate index reached a historic high in both spot and MPD skew suggesting very bullish investor expectations for this sector.



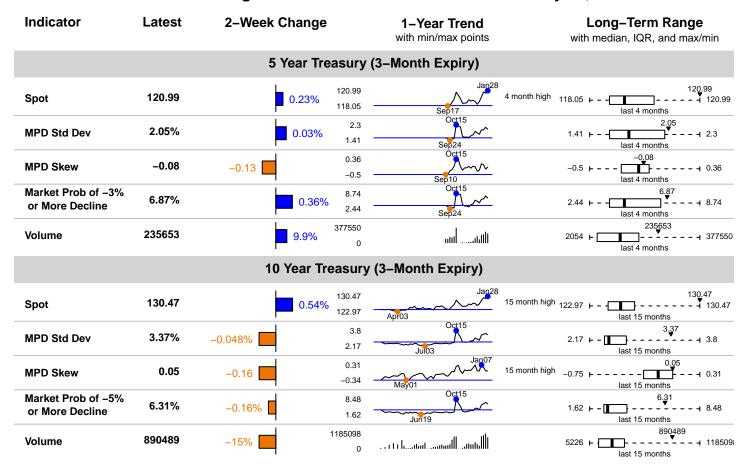
- Agricultural livestock has seen a recent deterioration in historically high prices. MPD Standard deviations are high in these markets, suggesting increased uncertainty about future prices.
- The dollar continues to strengthen against European currencies, in particular the Euro. Trading was active for options on all currency pairs, especially for the Euro. Volumes are likely impacted by continued fallout from the recent Swiss National Bank actions as well as the ECB's announcements of planned future sovereign bond purchases.
- Standard deviations increased substantially for MPDs derived from options on dollar-euro and, to a lesser extent, on dollar-pound futures indicating increased tail risk. As noted in previous reports, tail risks have been on the rise since summer.
- Trading in options on WTI crude oil was light again, consistent with the seasonal activity we see in the data. Spot prices fell another 6.1% over the past two weeks, the standard deviation of the MPD derived from options on oil futures increased. This indicates an increase in general price uncertainty and continued elevated tail risks.

Inflation MPD Statistics as of January 28, 2015

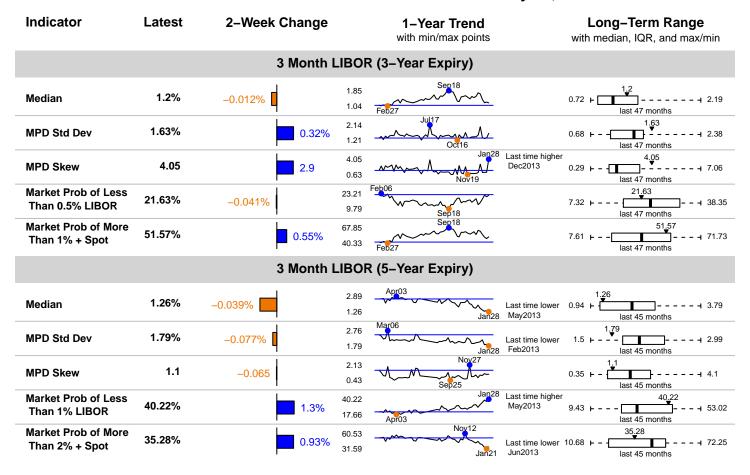


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Medium-to-Long Bond Price MPD Statistics as of January 28, 2015

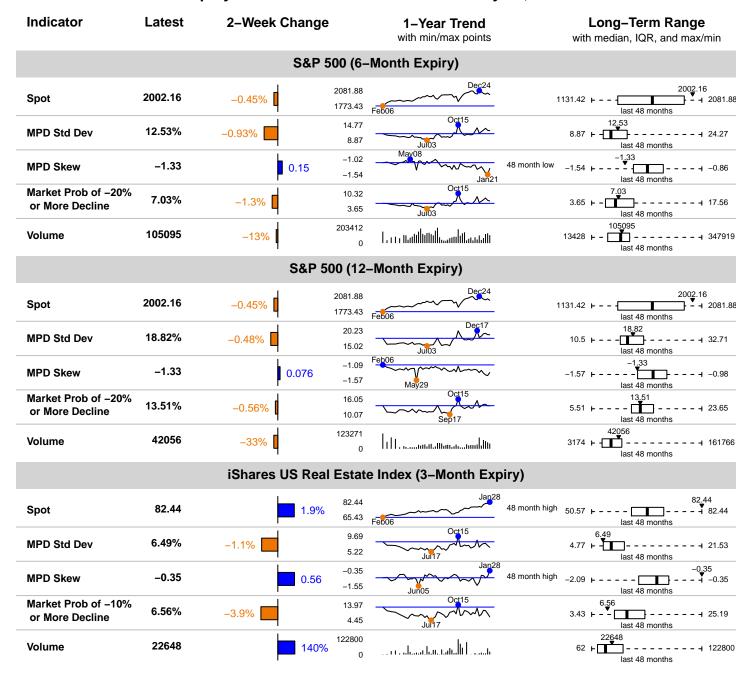


Short Interest Rates MPD Statistics as of January 28, 2015



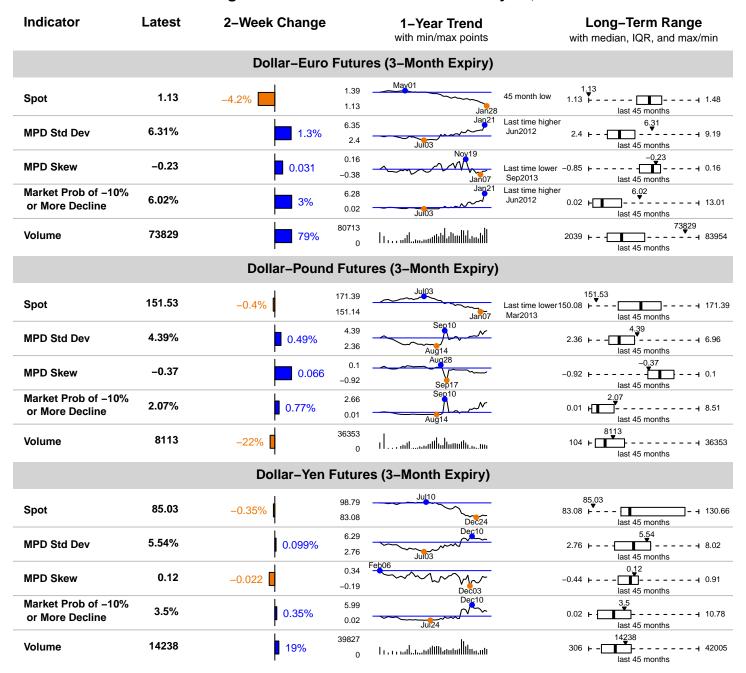
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Equity Index MPD Statistics as of January 28, 2015

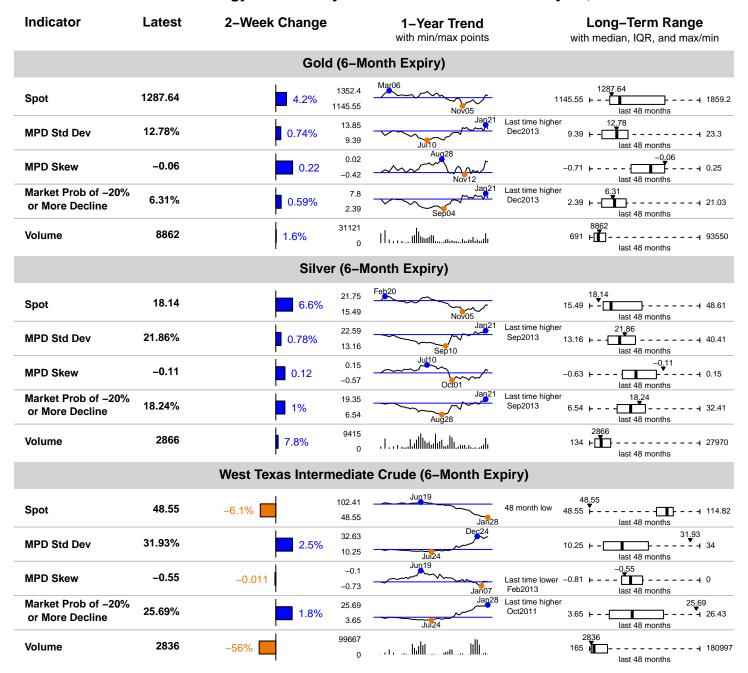


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Exchange Rate MPD Statistics as of January 28, 2015



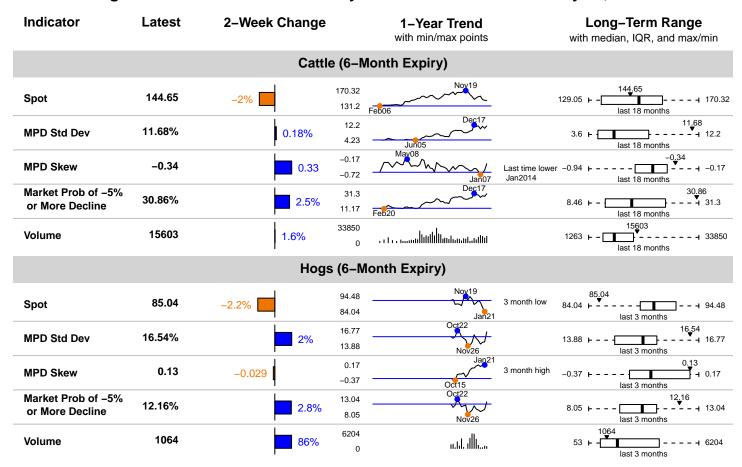
Metal and Energy Commodity MPD Statistics as of January 28, 2015

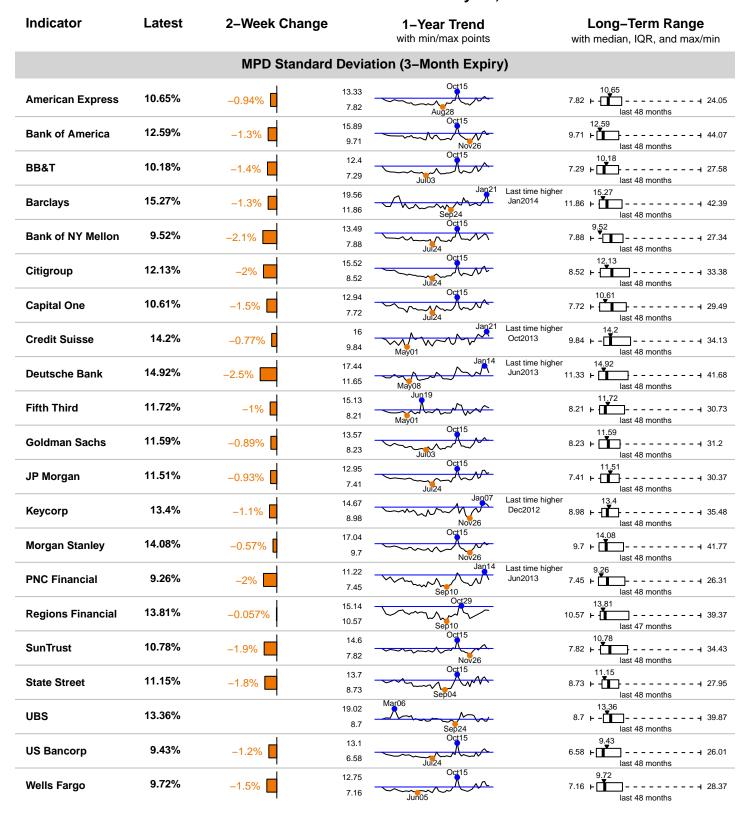


Agricultural Crop Commodity MPD Statistics as of January 28, 2015

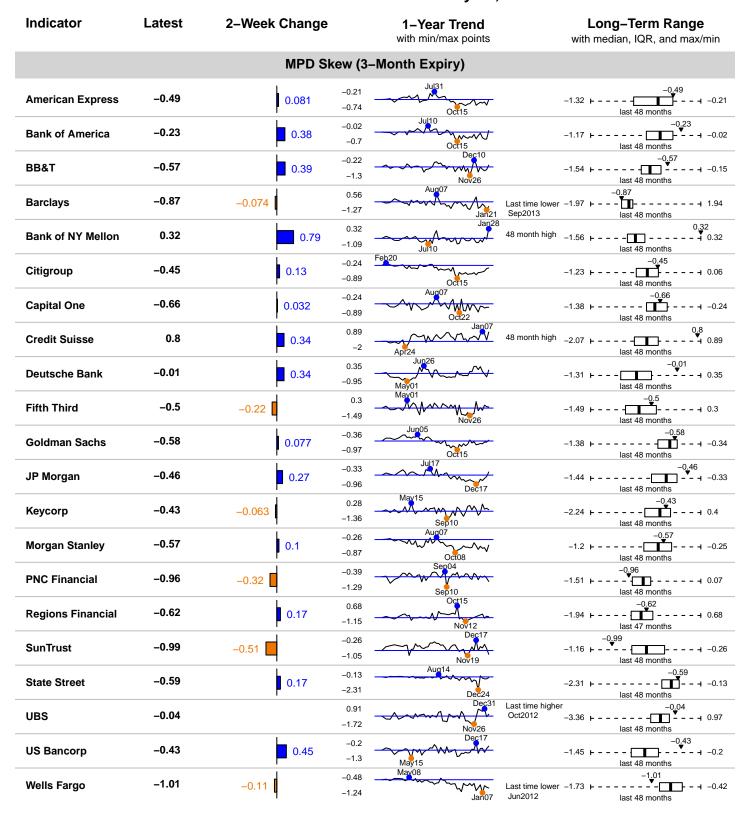


Agricultural Livestock Commodity MPD Statistics as of January 28, 2015

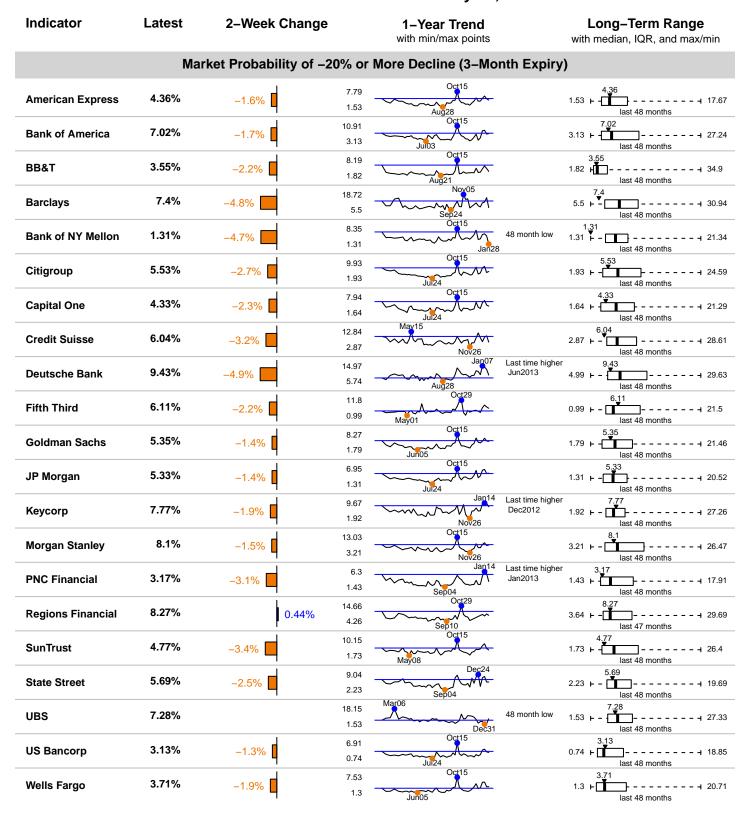




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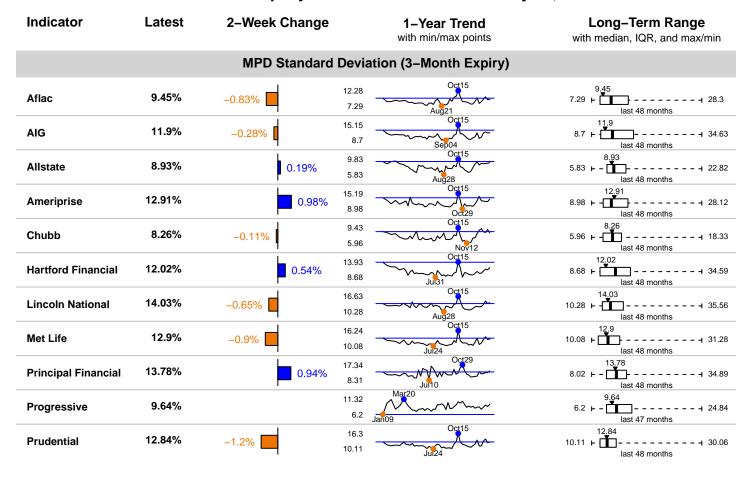
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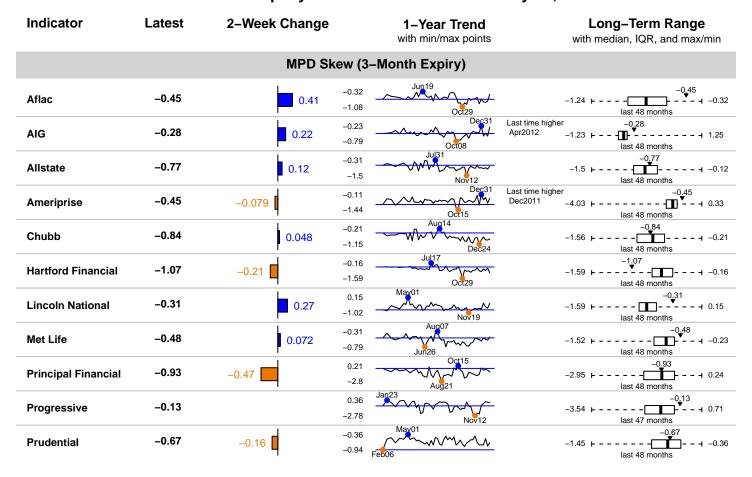
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Indicator	Latest	2-Week Change		1–Year Trend with min/max points	Long-Term Range with median, IQR, and max/min				
Volume (3-Month Expiry)									
American Express	9393	270%	10151 0	1.1	9393 623 F - 1 20941 last 48 months				
Bank of America	78823	20%	132589 0	tel renhandlasidadosaniult	78823 7419 ⊢ □ → 363160 last 48 months				
BB&T	1967	6%	6490 0	t e t e Hansanadd satainsialadd	1967 190 + 1967 last 48 months				
Barclays	337	-18%	11011	allandu	337 13 1 15208 last 48 months				
Bank of NY Mellon	2279	-83%	15678 0		2279 59 				
Citigroup	121101	82%	140439 0	Let et alamatallitaanaitaa alimb	121101 1104 ⊢ 				
Capital One	5309	140%	5543 0	l et ethaanahaaaaluahall	5309 164 ⊢				
Credit Suisse	5295	-26%	15145 0	lu	5295 0 □ 15145 last 48 months				
Deutsche Bank	2404	-30%	25112 0	r Itlmanna.allilatti.attina	2404 62 HT 1 29575 last 48 months				
Fifth Third	2293	170%	6299 0		2293 28 HTF 19127 last 48 months				
Goldman Sachs	3235	-18%	21840 0	r I Muuduamanahahaan.aa	3235 296 + 43413 last 48 months				
JP Morgan	38198	-28%	79587 0	r e r Chainnealthanaraith ann l	38198 943 ⊢ 				
Keycorp	3300	230%	3300 0	r el ellina antancanal ha altan	3300 44 ♣ 76270 last 48 months				
Morgan Stanley	4759	4%	48955 0	rrr. hartathonath lilla.a.ah	4759 327 + 1 + 84281 last 48 months				
PNC Financial	996	-22%	4810 0	r t e t e haitainal taransiitae.nblih	996 83 - 11				
Regions Financial	2540	63%	4635 0	t a la Billidan andh Aleta a — alt	2540 20 + 1				
SunTrust	3108	260%	4232 0	n. daa.adudadudhaa.aadl	3108 61 ⊢∏ 13788 last 48 months				
State Street	2086	1300%	5339 0	r. tr dilimbranantictustd	2086 42 ⊢				
UBS	124		2034	r I I I - timina lilituta ataunin maran	124 6 HTL 6502 last 48 months				
US Bancorp	2261	-75%	9006	11.11.la.la.la.la.la	2261 172 H 29201 last 48 months				
Wells Fargo	17143	12%	62697 0	ctuadrassassaddillibussetidi	17143 950 + 1 167820 last 48 months				

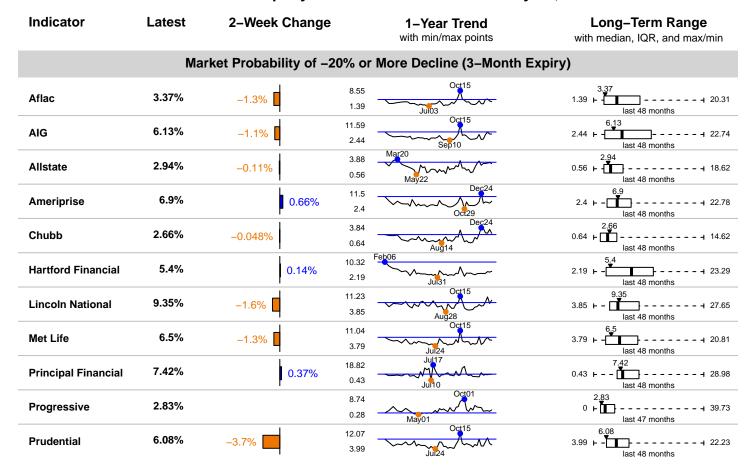
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Indicator	Latest	2-Week Change		1–Year Trend with min/max points	Long-Term Range with median, IQR, and max/min			
Volume (3-Month Expiry)								
Aflac	2071	-16%	13324	Lette mannentalalalli.m.ta.alalli	2071 405 + 1 22718 last 48 months			
AIG	9091	23%	38744 0	. H r	9091 432 H			
Allstate	351	-56%	5708 0	H.c. naluminalianimutatiinim	351 76 1 → 68926 last 48 months			
Ameriprise	183	44%	1071 0	daarahaanadaanada	183 5 ⊢ 111 11114 last 48 months			
Chubb	55	-88%	2541 0	· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·	55 11 1114 last 48 months			
Hartford Financial	9199	1200%	13441 0	1	9199 65 H∏ - ▼ 37285 last 48 months			
Lincoln National	301	-89%	8403 0		301 51			
Met Life	22374	0.31%	29248 0	1111	22374 319 ¶ 161416 last 48 months			
Principal Financial	20	-66%	310 0	المراجعة ا	20 2 🚹 3846 last 48 months			
Progressive	56		474 0	111.1.1	0			
Prudential	2137	-26%	13225 0	diadalahlumahariaan	2137 222 - 1 13225 last 48 months			

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