

U.S. regional bank stocks fall as investor fears persist

May 12 (Reuters) – Shares of major U.S. regional lenders were mostly lower on Friday, underscoring continued investor uncertainty about the financial stability of mid-sized banks.

Comerica Inc (CMA.N), Fifth Third Bancorp (FITB.O) and KeyCorp (KEY.N) fell 3.7%, 1.1% and nearly 2%, respectively. PacWest Bancorp (PACW.O), which lost 23% on Thursday after reporting a decline in deposits, dropped 2.7%. Zions Bancorp (ZION.O) shares were down 2.4%.

All three major Wall Street indexes, including the S&P 500 (.SPX), also traded lower after data showed U.S. consumer sentiment slumped to a six-month low.

“More U.S. banks have been in the market crosshairs ... despite many of the pressured banks having generally solid credit fundamentals,” DBRS Morningstar analysts said, adding that investor fears would likely persist until regulators extended deposit insurance or barred investors from betting against stocks, a practice known as short selling.

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