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# **Summary and Interpretation of the Federal Bureau of Investigation's Crime in the United States, 2010**

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**Summary and Interpretation of the  
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The Federal Bureau of Investigation has released its annual report regarding crime in the United States in 2010. The key findings, taken from there, are discussed and interpreted below.

### **CRIME VOLUME**

This section is on crime volume, as compared to crime rate. Crime volume is based on the total number of crimes. Crime rate is the number of offenses per 100,000 persons. Violent crime decreased by 5.5% from 2009 to 2010. In fact, violent crime decreased in all categories. Comparing 2010 violent crime to 2009 violent crime, the category of murder decreased 3.2%; rape decreased 3.8%; robbery decreased 9.9%; and aggravated assault decreased by 3.5%. The percentage change from 2008 to 2009 is shown in Table 1 below. Property crime also decreased in the same period by 2.6%. Larceny/theft decreased 2.2%, motor vehicle theft went down by 7.2%, and burglary decreased by 1.8%.

**TABLE 1: PERCENT CHANGE IN VIOLENT CRIME VOLUME**

<b>CRIME CATEGORY</b>	<b>2009-2010</b>
<b>Violent Crime</b>	<b>-5.5%</b>
<b>Murder</b>	<b>-3.2%</b>
<b>Rape</b>	<b>-3.8%</b>
<b>Robbery</b>	<b>-9.9%</b>
<b>Aggravated Assault</b>	<b>-3.5%</b>

For the five year period from 2006 to 2010, violent crime overall was down 13.2%. Murder, rape, robbery, and aggravated assault decreased over this five-year period. Murder decreased 14.8%, rape by 10.8%, aggravated assault by 18.1%, and robbery by 14.3%.

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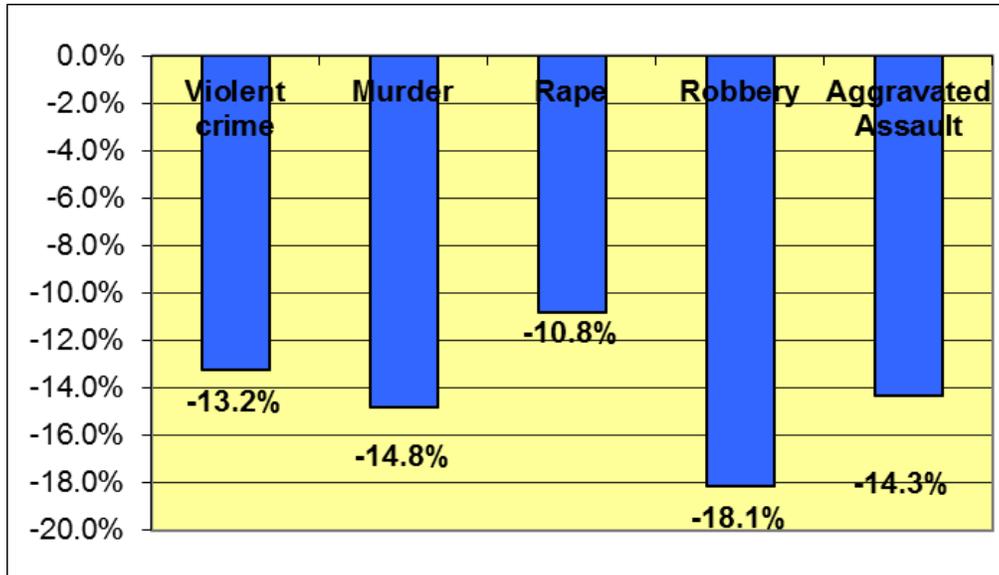
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**CHART 1: VIOLENT CRIME VOLUME COMPARED TO FIVE YEARS AGO – 2006 TO 2010**



In addition to percentage increases and decreases in crime, it is important to keep in mind the actual numbers. There were 1,246,248 violent crimes committed in the United States in 2010, down from 1,318,398 the previous year. Murders totaled 14,748 in 2010, down from 15,241 in 2009. There were 367,832 robberies reported in the United States in 2010, down from 408,217 in 2009. Rapes totaled 84,767 in 2010, down from 88,097 in 2009. In 2010, there were 778,901 aggravated assaults, down from 806,843 in 2009.

In the period of 2009-2010, all regions of the country experienced an overall decrease in violent crime volume. The Northeast saw a decrease of 0.6%, the Midwest a decrease of 6.5%, the South was down 7.9%, and the West was at a decrease of 5.6%. Murders were down in all regions but the Northeast, which experienced an increase. The number of murders was up by 8.8% in the Northeast. The number in the Midwest was down by 4.9%, the South was down 6.4, and the West decreased by 7.6%. Rape volume was down in all other regions. It was down by 1.1% in the Northeast, down by 6.0% in the Midwest, down by 6.4% in the South, and down by 3.8% in the West. Robberies were down the most in the South by 13.0%, followed by the, the Midwest at a 10.7% decrease, the West with a 10.0% decrease, and the Northeast at a 2.4% decrease. Firearms were used in 41.4% of all robberies in 2010 nationwide, down from 42.6% in 2009. The South experienced the highest percentage of firearm usage (49.5%) and the West the lowest (31.8%).

### **CRIME RATE**

This section is on rate, not volume. Rate is the number of offenses per 100,000 inhabitants. The violent crime rate decreased 6.6% from the 2009 rate. The property crime rate also decreased 3.3% in that same period. From 2009 to 2010, the murder rate decreased 4.0%, rape decreased 5.5%, robbery decreased 10.5%, and aggravated assault decreased 4.7%, as shown in Table 2 below.



**TABLE 2: PERCENT CHANGE IN VIOLENT CRIME RATE**

<b>CRIME CATEGORY</b>	<b>2009-2010</b>
<b>Violent Crime</b>	<b>-6.6%</b>
<b>Murder</b>	<b>-4.0%</b>
<b>Rape</b>	<b>-5.5%</b>
<b>Robbery</b>	<b>-10.5%</b>
<b>Aggravated Assault</b>	<b>-4.7%</b>

For the five year period from 2006 to 2010, the violent crime rate overall was down 15.8% as shown in Table 3 below, with all categories at a decrease. Murder was down 17.4%, rape was down 13.0%, robbery was down 20.6%, and aggravated assault was down 13.6%.

**TABLE 3: PERCENT CHANGE IN VIOLENT CRIME RATE – FIVE YEAR PERIOD**

<b>CRIME CATEGORY</b>	<b>2006-2010</b>
<b>Violent Crime</b>	<b>-15.8%</b>
<b>Murder</b>	<b>-17.4%</b>
<b>Rape</b>	<b>-13.0%</b>
<b>Robbery</b>	<b>-20.6%</b>
<b>Aggravated Assault</b>	<b>-13.6%</b>

### **CRIME DETAILS AND TRENDS**

Aggravated assault accounted for 62.5% of the violent crimes in 2010. Robbery accounted for 29.5%, forcible rape accounted for 6.8%, and murder accounted for 1.2% of the violent crimes in 2010, as shown in Chart 2. These percentages are consistent with previous years.



**CHART 2: VIOLENT CRIME BY OFFENSE**

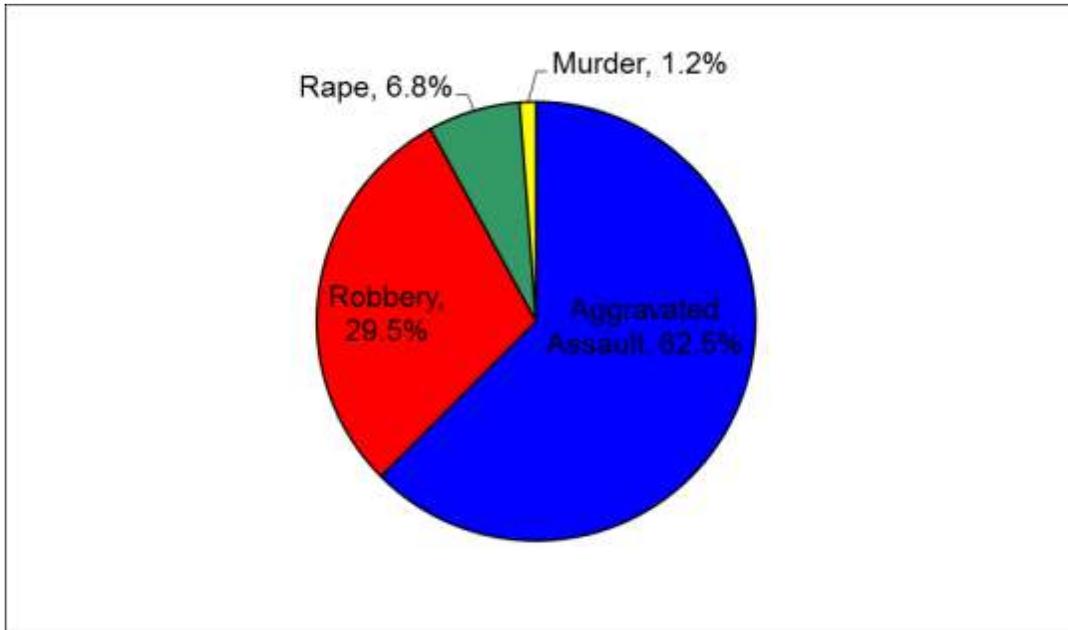
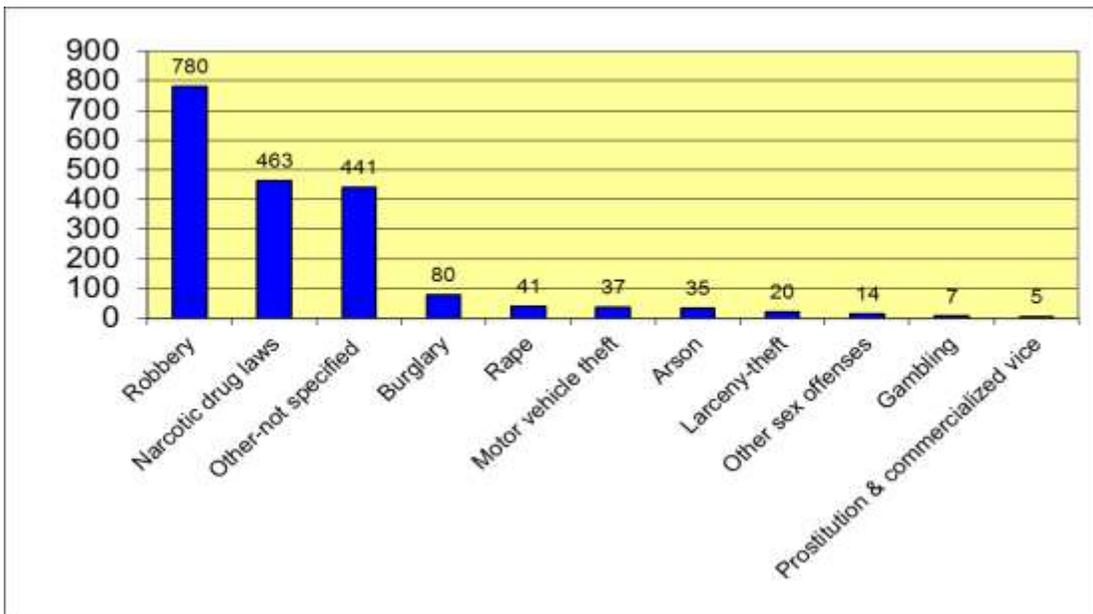


Chart 3 shows the breakdown of murders that occurred during the commission of other felonies. Of all felony murders, the most frequent (780) were robbery related. That number has been consistent over the years, but decreased slightly from 2009.

**CHART 3: FELONY MURDER CIRCUMSTANCES**

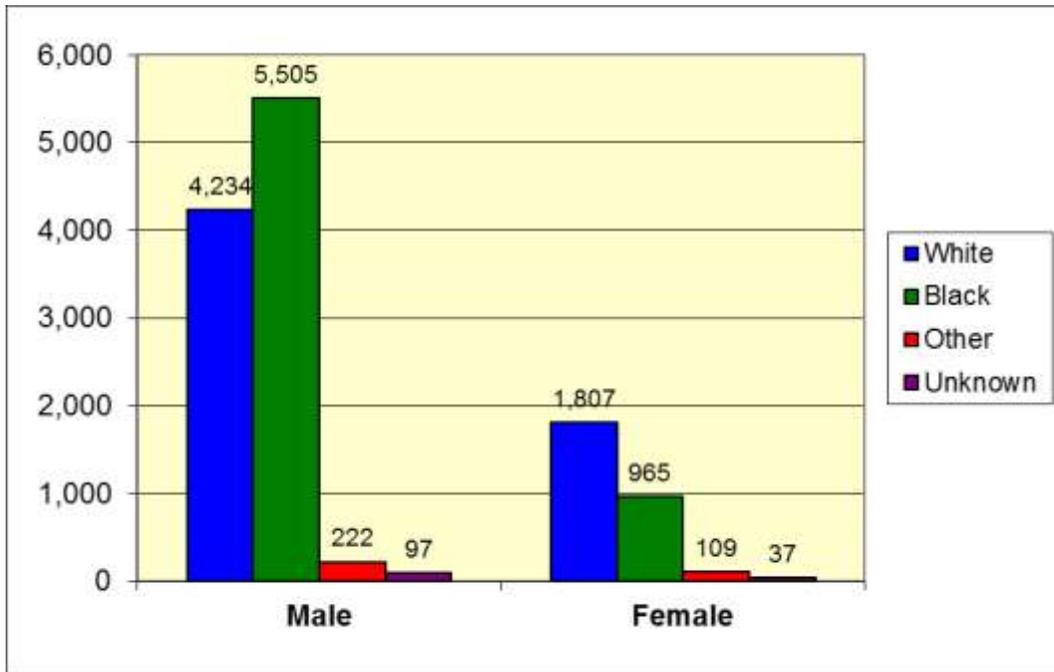


Murder victims were killed with firearms 67.5% of the time in 2009, a slight increase from 67.1% in 2009. Chart 4 shows murder victims by race and sex. In 2010, 77.4% of known



murder victims were male. Murder victims, for whom race was known, were 46.5% white, 49.8% black, and the remaining victims were from other or unknown races.

**CHART 4: MURDER VICTIMS BY RACE AND SEX**



In 2010, 44.0% of the perpetrators were unknown, down from 43.9% in 2009. When the relationships of murder victims and offenders were known, 21.0% were killed by an acquaintance, 13.9% of victims were slain by family members, and 12.4% were murdered by strangers. These numbers are consistent with the previous year.

Chart 5 depicts the 5-year trend in the number of murders. In 2010, the number of murders was down 14.8% from 2006.



**CHART 5: NUMBER OF MURDERS 2006-2010**

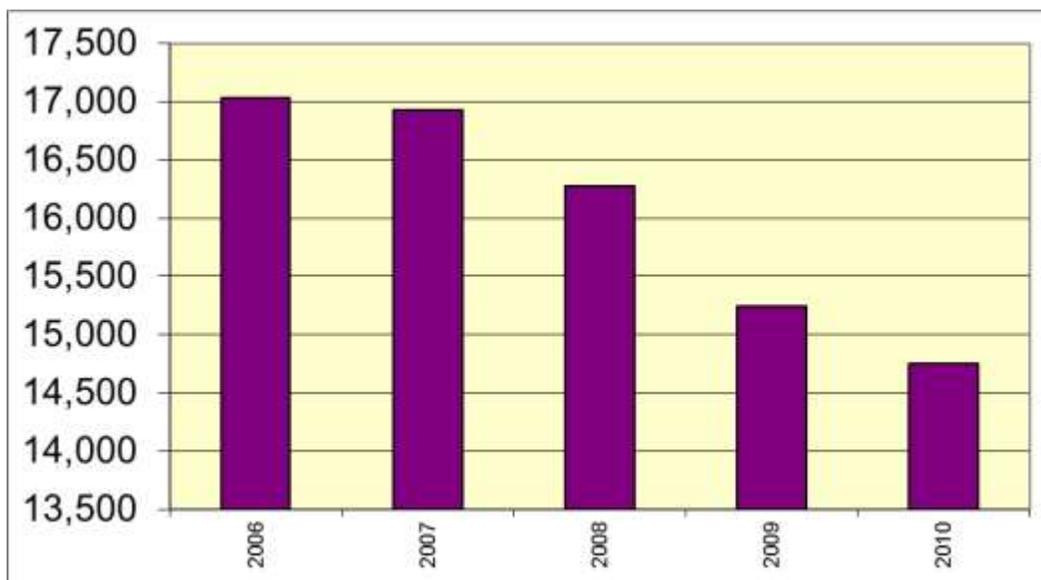
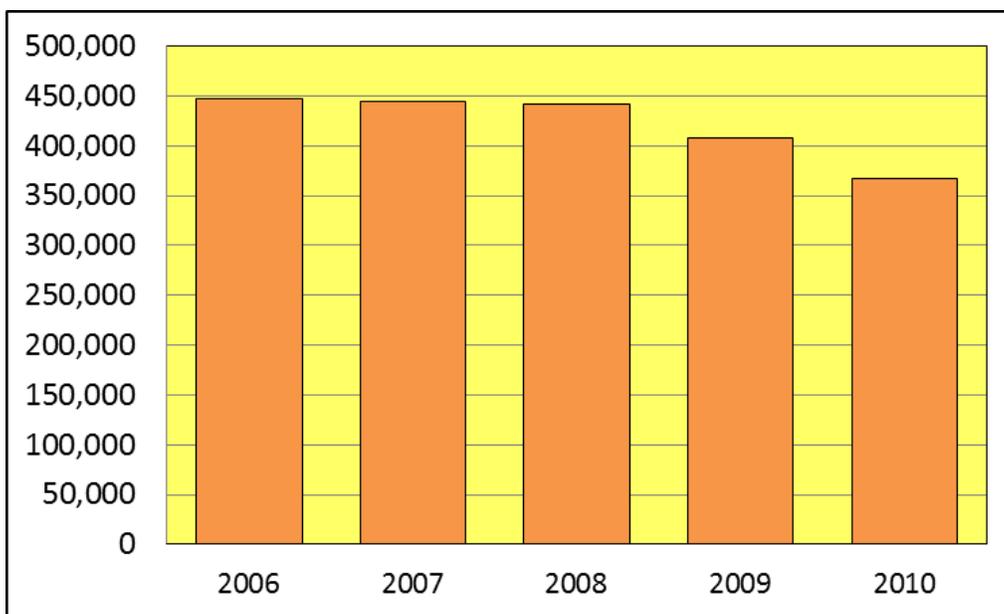


Chart 6 shows the 5-year trend for robbery. Robberies were 18.1% lower in 2010 than they were in 2006.

**CHART 6: NUMBER OF ROBBERIES 2006-2010**

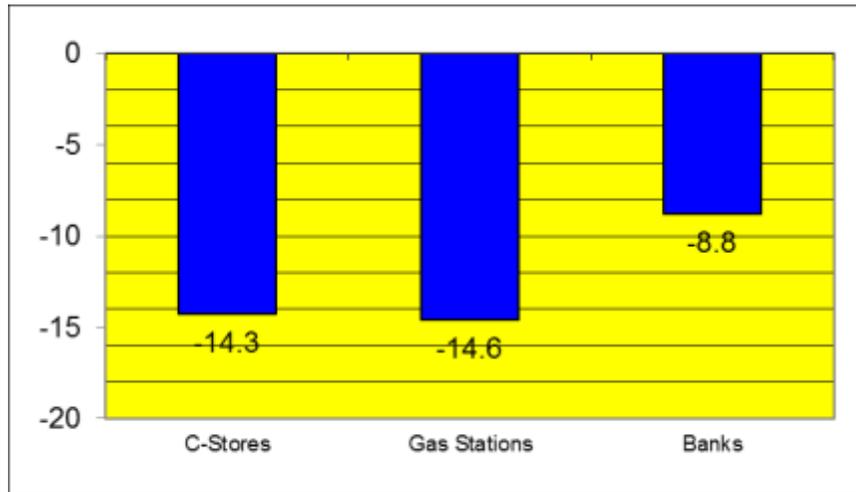


Charts 7, 8 and 9 present the robbery data for convenience stores, gas stations and banks. In evaluating the results, note that the distinction between gas stations and convenience stores is not always clear, and it is based on the law enforcement designation at the scene.



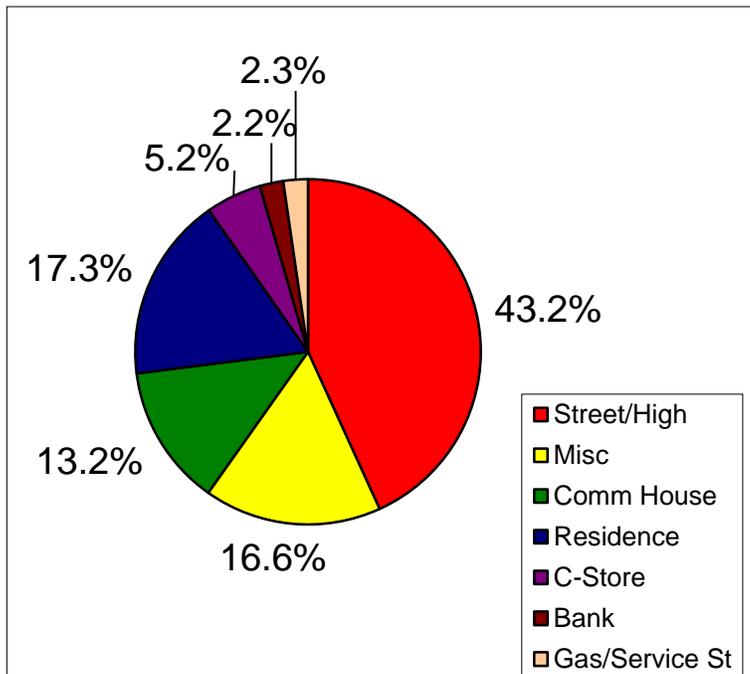
- Convenience store robbery volume was down 14.3% from 2009 to 2010.
- Gas station robbery volume was down 14.6% from 2009 to 2010.
- Bank robbery volume was down 8.8% from 2009 to 2010.

**CHART 7: PERCENT CHANGE IN ROBBERY VOLUME FROM PREVIOUS YEAR – 2009-2010**



- Convenience store robbery made up 5.2% of the total robberies in 2010, 0.2% less than the previous year.
- Gas station robbery made up 2.3% of the total robberies in 2010, 0.1% less than the previous year.
- Bank robberies made up 2.2%, same as the previous year.

**CHART 8: PERCENT DISTRIBUTION ROBBERY VOLUME – 2010**



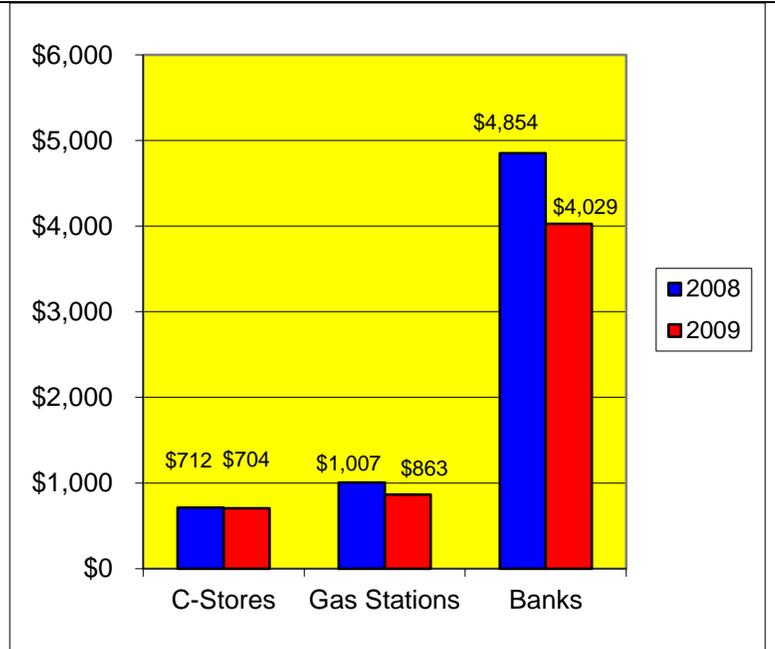
- ❖ In 2010, convenience stores had an average dollar loss of \$782, up from \$704 in the

**CHART 9: AVERAGE LOSS PER ROBBERY**



previous year.

- ❖ Gas station average dollar loss in 2009 was \$939, up from \$863 the year before.
- ❖ Banks had by far the highest average dollar loss at \$4,410, an increase from \$4,029 in 2009.



*Authors' Note: These are not just register losses, but include safe and merchandise losses.*

## HISTORICAL CRIME DATA

According to Table 1 of the 2009 UCR report, the *violent crime rate* in this country peaked in 1991 and then began to decrease every year until 2005 and 2006 when it increased two years in a row. The 2010 data show it at its lowest point since 1991. The violent crime rate was 758.2 in 1991 and was 403.6 in 2009.

The *murder rate* in the US peaked in 1991 at 9.8. The murder rate was substantially lower in 2000, at 5.5. In 2010, it reached its lowest rate since 1991. The 4.8 rate in 2010 was the lowest murder rate since the peak of 9.8 in 1991, when it was almost double what it is now.

The *rape rate* peaked a year later than murder or robbery. It peaked in 1992 at 42.8 and was at 27.8 in 2010, the lowest rape rate since 1992.<sup>4</sup>

The *robbery rate* peaked in 1991 and began decreasing each year until 2001, when it increased again. Then it reached a low again in 2004 at 136.7. It began increasing again for two years before beginning another decline. It was 122.7 in 2010.

The *aggravated assault rate* also peaked in 1992, (as rape did), at a rate of 441.9. In 2010, the aggravated assault rate was 255.5, the lowest of any year since 1992.

<sup>4</sup> This is based on Table 16 of Violent Crime



## **AUTHORS' CONCLUSIONS:**

All categories of violent crime were down slightly in volume in 2010. We had predicted that crime would increase in the mid-2000s and decrease by 2010, based on the demographics of the number of young people (18-24) declining as a percentage of the total population. We also caution against complacency, however, and recommend that employers stay focused on the crime prevention strategy that has been in place for nearly three decades in certain retail settings, particularly convenience stores. It incorporates the validated crime-reducing measures of good cash control; limiting escape routes; maintaining good visibility throughout the store; adequate lighting inside and outside stores; and training employees in safety and anti-violence measures.

