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Home-Builder Confidence Weakens

BY ED FRANKL

Confidence among America's home builders was dragged down this month by high mortgage rates, weak buyer traffic and continued supply-side challenges, the National Association of Home Builders said Monday.

The NAHB/Wells Fargo Housing Market Index, a gauge of builder confidence in the market for newly built singlefamily housing, crept down to 32 in August from 33 in July. That contrasts with expectations the index would rise a little to 34, according to economists polled by The Wall Street Journal.

The reading below 50, which equaled the lowest since December 2022, means builder sentiment has been negative for 16 consecutive months, NAHB said.

"Affordability continues to be the top challenge for the housing market and buyers are waiting for mortgage rates to drop to move forward," said NAHB Chairman Buddy Hughes. Supply-side issues, including regulatory policies connected to developing land and building homes, also were concerns for house builders, he said.