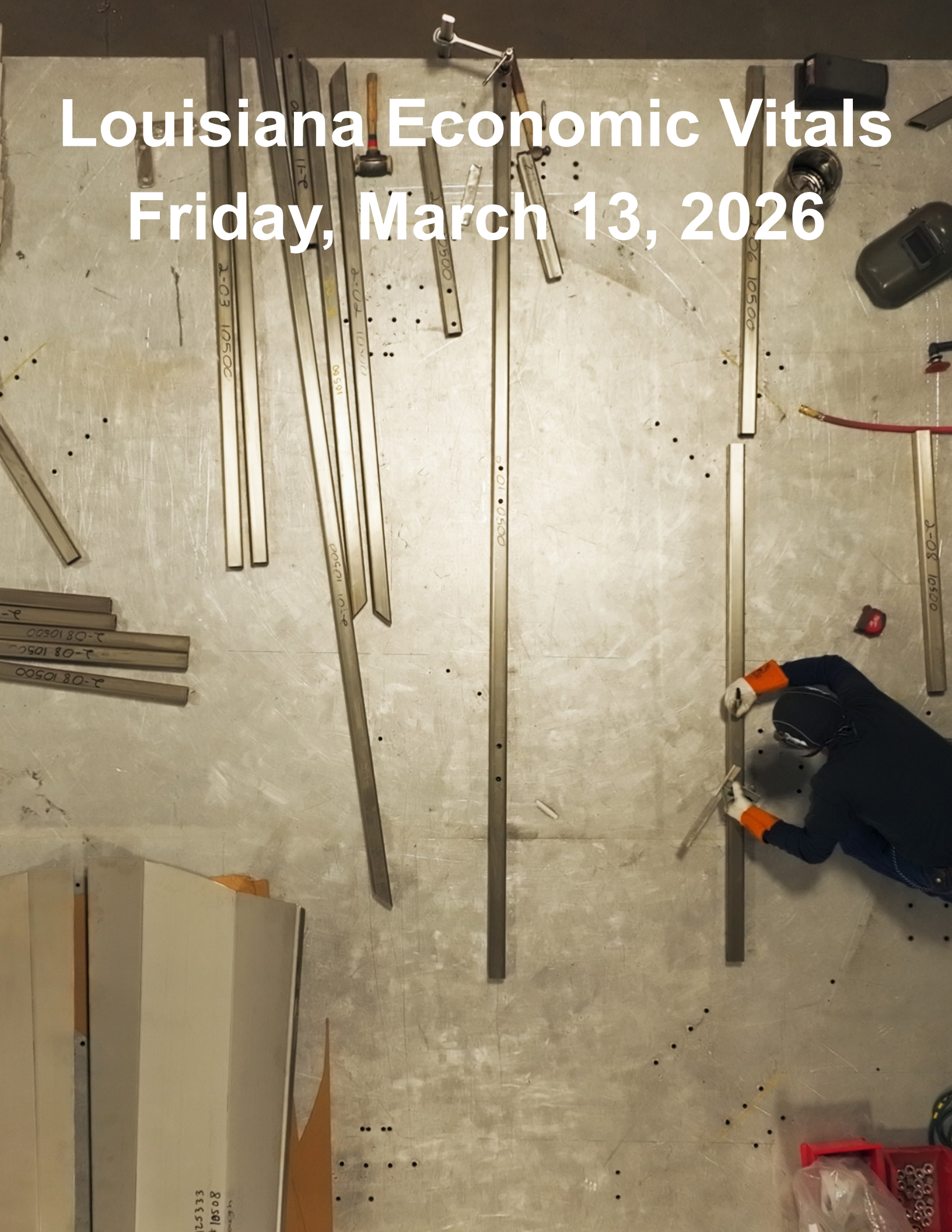
Louisiana Economic Vitals
Friday, March 13, 2026



PREFACE

Louisiana Economic Vitals is a weekly report prepared by LED's State Economic Competitiveness (SEC) team. This report provides readers with data from federal and state governmental entities, as well as other credible third-party sources. All data has been independently analyzed and summarized to ensure clarity, brevity, and practical utilization.

Louisiana Economic Development March 2026 Announcements:

Louisiana's economic development is (r)evolving well
March 12th, 2026

Southern Energy Renewables Announce $1.4 Billion Methanol and Sustainable Aviation Fuel Facility in St. Charles Parish
March 11th, 2026

Louisiana Launches Accelerator Program to Strengthen Local Supplier Competitiveness Statewide
March 10th, 2026

Studyville Enterprises Expands in Baton Rouge to Advance Locally-Developed EdTech Platforms
March 5th, 2026

La. builds on momentum with data center boom
March 5th, 2026

Why the Global Energy Future Runs Through Louisiana
March 5th, 2026

Shintech Louisiana Announces $3.4 Billion Expansion, Building on 25 Years of Growth and Commitment
March 4th, 2026

Louisiana Selects 19 FastSites in Historic State Investment
March 3rd, 2026

Direct questions and comments to:

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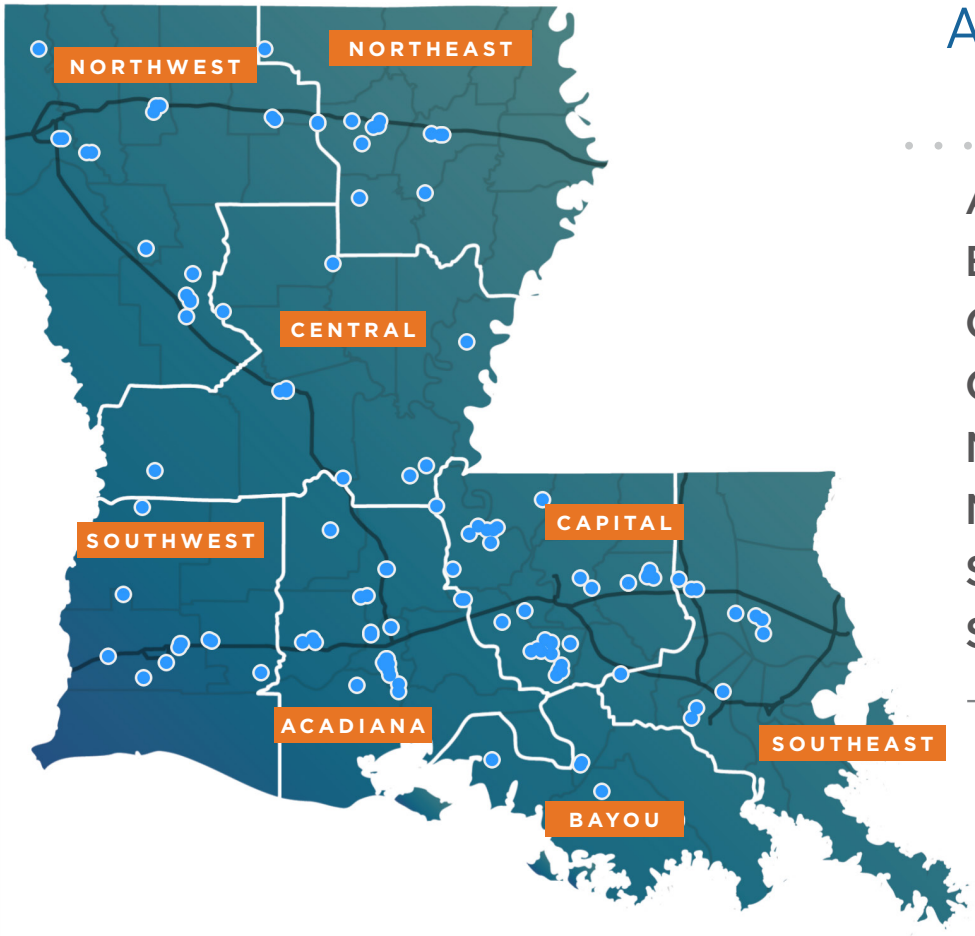
LED PROJECT PIPELINE

Since Governor Landry took office in January 2024, LED has announced 83 projects representing over $92.6 billion USD in new investment and more than 12,800 direct new jobs across Louisiana.

As of March 12, 2026, LED is actively tracking and involved in 188 distinct projects with a combined value exceeding $279.9 billion and the potential to create more than 41,765 direct new jobs.

CERTIFIED SITE PROGRAM

Since the launch of its Certified Sites Program, LED has certified 165 industrial sites, with all or portions of 36 sites advancing into active commerce. At full build-out, these projects represent more than $34.5 billion in capital investment, over 6,350 direct new jobs, and more than $407 million in total annual wages statewide. Currently, there are 125 actively marketed certified sites across every region of Louisiana.



Active Certified Sites by Region

Acadiana	23
Bayou	6
Capital	25
Central	9
Northeast	13
Northwest	17
Southeast	18
Southwest	14

TOTAL 125

1. LABOR MARKET ACTIVITY

The following table presents data on various labor force statistics for the U.S. (February 2026). The next two tables include preliminary third quarter 2025 employment and wage data for Louisiana and the rest of the southern states.

Source: bls.gov & LAWorks.net

Table 1. U.S. Labor Force Statistics from the Current Population Survey

Series	Feb-26	Jan-26	Feb-25	Change	
				MoM	YoY
Total Employment (in Thousands)	162,912	163,097	163,338	-0.1%	-0.3%
Labor Force Participation Rate	62.0%	62.1%	62.5%	-0.1	-0.5
Unemployment Rate	4.4%	4.3%	4.2%	0.1	0.2

Note: January 2026 estimates were revised to incorporate updated population controls.
For more information, see bls.gov.

Table 2. All Employees in Total Covered, all industries for ALL establishment sizes, by State

State	2025:Q3			Change	
	Sep-25	Aug-25	Jul-25	Aug - Sep	Jul - Aug
Alabama	2,114,931	2,118,081	2,118,953	-0.1%	-0.04%
Arkansas	1,267,219	1,299,458	1,310,451	-2.5%	-0.8%
Florida	9,687,225	9,827,045	9,818,106	-1.4%	0.1%
Georgia	4,874,930	4,893,691	4,874,460	-0.4%	0.4%
Kentucky	1,919,112	1,986,680	1,995,427	-3.4%	-0.4%
Louisiana	**1,904,973**	**1,919,452**	**1,913,132**	**-0.8%**	**0.3%**
Mississippi	1,160,759	1,174,880	1,172,573	-1.2%	0.2%
Missouri	2,844,161	2,870,965	2,903,680	-0.9%	-1.1%
North Carolina	4,863,149	4,943,442	4,939,364	-1.6%	0.1%
Oklahoma	1,654,382	1,678,627	1,697,877	-1.4%	-1.1%
South Carolina	2,299,604	2,319,827	2,312,324	-0.9%	0.3%
Tennessee	3,202,489	3,250,042	3,255,492	-1.5%	-0.2%
Texas	14,005,742	14,057,920	14,062,349	-0.4%	-0.03%

Note: 2025:Q3 data are preliminary. Data are not seasonally adjusted.

Table 3. Average Weekly Wage in Total Covered, all industries for ALL establishment sizes, by State					
	2025:Q3			Change	
State	Sep-25	Aug-25	Jul-25	Aug - Sep	Jul - Aug
Alabama	$1,212	$1,198	$1,246	1.2%	-3.9%
Arkansas	$1,135	$1,118	$1,235	1.5%	-9.5%
Florida	$1,342	$1,329	$1,456	1.0%	-8.7%
Georgia	$1,349	$1,339	$1,490	0.7%	-10.1%
Kentucky	$1,176	$1,187	$1,213	-0.9%	-2.1%
Louisiana	**$1,187**	**$1,175**	**$1,225**	**1.0%**	**-4.1%**
Mississippi	$1,005	$1,000	$1,016	0.5%	-1.6%
Missouri	$1,249	$1,231	$1,310	1.5%	-6.0%
North Carolina	$1,328	$1,299	$1,465	2.2%	-11.3%
Oklahoma	$1,143	$1,141	$1,192	0.2%	-4.3%
South Carolina	$1,198	$1,185	$1,247	1.1%	-5.0%
Tennessee	$1,327	$1,295	$1,365	2.5%	-5.1%
Texas	$1,444	$1,420	$1,586	1.7%	-10.5%
Note: 2025:Q3 data are preliminary. Data are not seasonally adjusted.					

Initial claims represent people in Louisiana who are newly filing for unemployment benefits and are a leading indicator of labor market weakness. Continued claims represent people in the state who are still receiving benefits and they reflect the persistence of unemployment. If both initial and continued claims are rising together, it suggests new layoffs and difficulty finding new employment. If initial claims rise but continued claims remain stable or fall, it might indicate a short-term shock rather than a potential recession. Declining continued claims, even if initial claims stay elevated, could signal that people are getting back to work quickly, and if continued claims rise while initial claims fall, that could signal a slowing rate of new layoffs, but ongoing unemployment problems. If both the initial claims and continued claims are generally falling over a sustained period, that generally signals sustained labor-market strengthening, holding all other economic signals unchanged. Figure 1 includes plots for the 4-Week Moving Averages of Initial- and Continued Claims for covered workers.

The ratio of continued claims to initial claims (Claims Ratio) approximates the average duration of employment spells among UI recipients. Because initial claims is an inflow into unemployment and continued claims is the stock of people still unemployed, this ratio tells us how large the stock is relative to the inflow. A falling ratio signals that people are finding jobs faster, unemployment duration is shortening, and the labor market is tightening. An increasing ratio signals that workers are staying unemployed longer, hiring is slowing, and the labor market is weakening. Figure 2 includes the plot for the the 4-Week Moving Average Claims Ratio.

Source: laworks.net

Figure 1. Louisiana Initial and Continued Unemployment Insurance Weekly Claims - 4-Week Moving Average

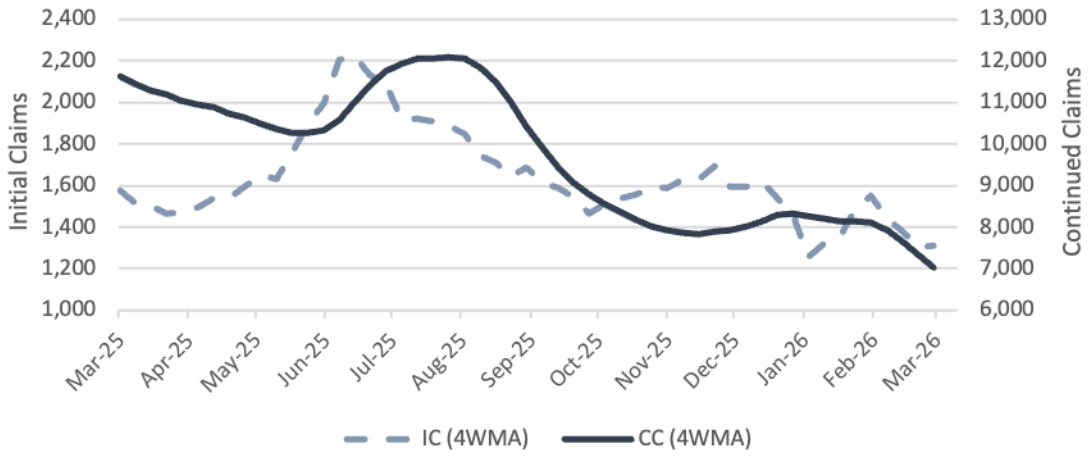
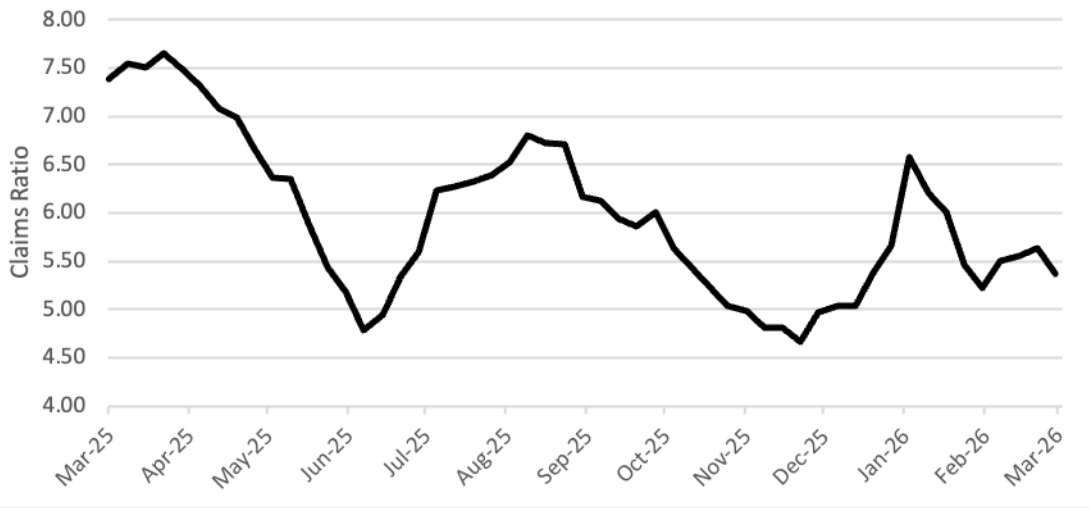


Figure 2. Louisiana Claims Ratio - 4-Week Moving Average



2. COMMODITIES

The following tables provide data on the weekly prices of energy and agricultural commodities, reflecting the broader economic performance of these sectors.

Source: eia.gov

Table 4. Energy Commodities, Weekly

Commodity	3/6/25	2/27/26	2/6/26	3/7/25	Change		
					WoW	MoM	YoY
Brent Crude Oil Price	$85.28	$71.36	$69.84	$71.93	19.5%	22.1%	18.6%
WTI Crude Oil Price	$78.37	$65.87	$63.09	$67.52	19.0%	24.2%	16.1%
Henry Hub Natural Gas Spot Price	$2.99	$3.01	$5.01	$4.27	-0.7%	-40.3%	-30.0%
U.S. Regular Conventional Gas Price	$3.36	$2.88	$2.77	$2.95	16.7%	21.3%	13.9%

Table 5. Agricultural Commodities, Daily Period of March 12, 2026

Commodity	Listed Price	Dollar ($)	Unit of Measurement	Change			
				Daily	Weekly	Monthly	YoY
Soybeans	$1,218.91	$12.19	$/Bu	1.6%	4.7%	7.5%	20.5%
Wheat	$597.81	$5.98	$/Bu	1.7%	2.6%	8.9%	6.3%
Lumber	$557.03	$5.57	$/MBF	-0.5%	-1.7%	-6.9%	-11.9%
Palm Oil	$4,522.00	$45.22	$/MT	0.7%	7.2%	11.8%	0.7%
Sugar (No. 11)	$14.39	$0.14	$/Lb	0.9%	4.9%	6.7%	-25.1%
Coffee	$293.10	$2.93	$/Lb	2.1%	1.4%	-1.8%	-24.7%
Corn	$449.61	$4.50	$/Bu	1.2%	1.9%	4.2%	-3.3%
Rice	$11.08	$0.11	$/CWT	0.9%	2.7%	0.6%	-19.8%
Orange Juice	$196.82	$1.97	$/Lb	-1.1%	4.0%	12.7%	-25.3%

3. LOUISIANA REAL ESTATE

The following tables present annual building permit data for privately owned residential structures in selected core based statistical areas (CBSAs) within the state, covering 2024 and 2025 and the changes between those years. Data are broken down by structure type (number of units) and value per unit (in thousands of $US). Total units include 1-, 2-, 3 & 4-, and 5-or-more unit structures. In each table, MSAs appear in bold, with the number of outlying parishes in the MSA shown in parentheses where applicable.

Source: census.gov

Table 6. Building Permits by CBSA - 2025

CBSA (Metro- and Micro-MSAs)	Total		Single-Unit	
	Units	Value-per-Unit	Units	Value-per-Unit
Alexandria (1)	279	$246	253	$264
Baton Rouge (5)	4,454	$198	2,872	$271
Bogalusa	-	-	-	-
DeRidder	84	$228	84	$228
Hammond	1,166	$168	699	$216
Houma-Bayou Cane-Thibodaux	588	$241	556	$250
Lafayette (3)	2,077	$233	2,075	$233
Lake Charles (2)	601	$219	589	$223
Minden	61	$234	35	$250
Monroe (3)	472	$223	462	$225
Morgan City	68	$213	33	$294
Natchitoches	41	$253	41	$253
New Iberia	102	$216	102	$216
New Orleans-Metairie	1,580	$283	866	$342
Opelousas	150	$213	150	$213
Ruston	183	$210	181	$210
Shreveport-Bossier City (1)	1,075	$225	993	$230
Slidell-Mandeville-Covington	1,102	$319	1,096	$320

Table 7. Building Permits by CBSA - 2024				
	Total		Single-Unit	
CBSA (Metro- and Micro-MSAs)	Units	Value-per-Unit	Units	Value-per-Unit
Alexandria (1)	241	$241	219	$258
Baton Rouge (5)	3,806	$234	3,250	$269
Bogalusa	6	$58	-	-
DeRidder	64	$265	64	$265
Hammond	1,085	$164	699	$202
Houma-Bayou Cane-Thibodaux	623	$207	615	$208
Lafayette (3)	2,019	$234	2,001	$234
Lake Charles (2)	1,457	$199	925	$191
Minden	35	$245	35	$245
Monroe (3)	416	$247	409	$249
Morgan City	47	$189	27	$227
Natchitoches	40	$256	40	$256
New Iberia	103	$198	99	$203
New Orleans-Metairie	1,611	$307	1,007	$313
Opelousas	139	$198	139	$198
Ruston	171	$220	152	$229
Shreveport-Bossier City (1)	1,118	$210	1,118	$210
Slidell-Mandeville-Covington	1,066	$339	1,062	$340

Table 8. Building Permits by CBSA - Change, 2024 to 2025				
	Total		Single-Unit	
CBSA (Metro- and Micro-MSAs)	Units	Value-per-Unit	Units	Value-per-Unit
Alexandria (1)	15.8%	2.1%	15.5%	2.2%
Baton Rouge (5)	17.0%	-15.1%	-11.6%	0.8%
Bogalusa	-	-	-	-
DeRidder	31.3%	-13.8%	31.3%	-13.8%
Hammond	7.5%	2.4%	0.0%	7.1%
Houma-Bayou Cane-Thibodaux	-5.6%	16.6%	-9.6%	20.1%
Lafayette (3)	2.9%	-0.2%	3.7%	-0.4%
Lake Charles (2)	-58.8%	10.0%	-36.3%	16.6%
Minden	74.3%	-4.6%	0.0%	2.0%
Monroe (3)	13.5%	-9.8%	13.0%	-9.7%
Morgan City	44.7%	12.9%	22.2%	29.4%
Natchitoches	2.5%	-0.9%	2.5%	-0.9%
New Iberia	-1.0%	9.0%	3.0%	6.4%
New Orleans-Metairie	-1.9%	-7.8%	-14.0%	9.4%
Opelousas	7.9%	7.5%	7.9%	7.5%
Ruston	7.0%	-4.4%	19.1%	-8.2%
Shreveport-Bossier City (1)	-3.8%	7.3%	-11.2%	9.6%
Slidell-Mandeville-Covington	3.4%	-6.0%	3.2%	-5.9%

4. PORTS

The following figures provide a snapshot of short-term export, import, and vessel arrival activity across Louisiana's five deep-water ports, reflecting the region's current economic conditions, trade patterns, industrial strengths, and supply chain dynamics.

Source: portwatch.imf.org

Figure 3. Baton Rouge Port Export Volume, by Tonnage

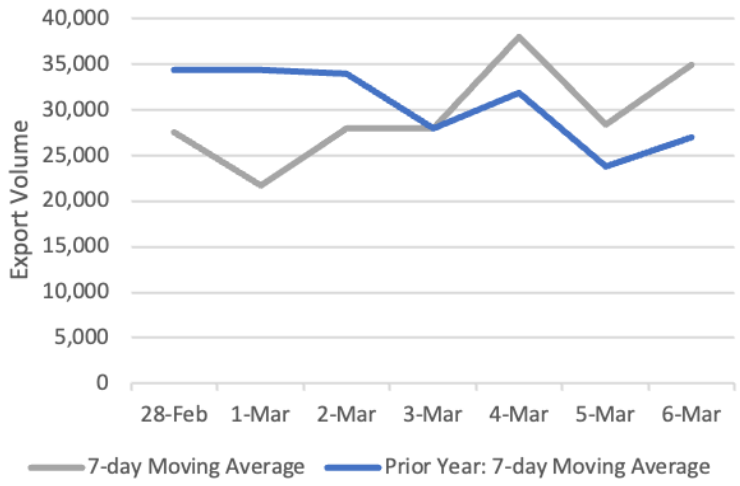


Figure 4. New Orleans Port Export Volume, by Tonnage

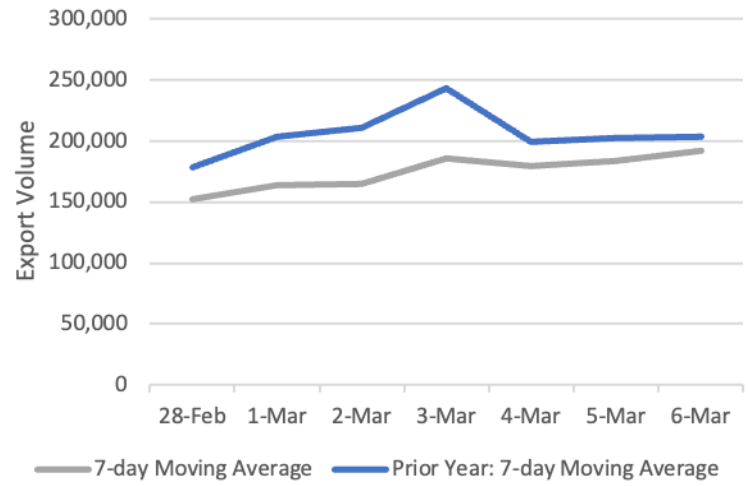


Figure 5. South Louisiana Port Export Volume, by Tonnage

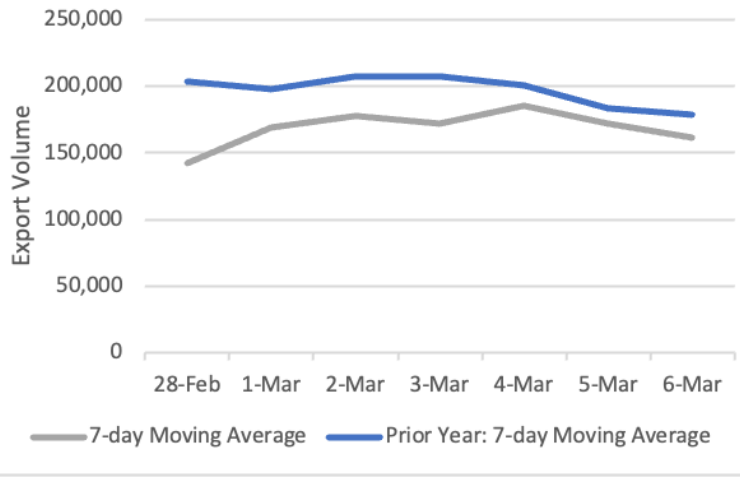


Figure 6. Lake Charles Port Export Volume, by Tonnage

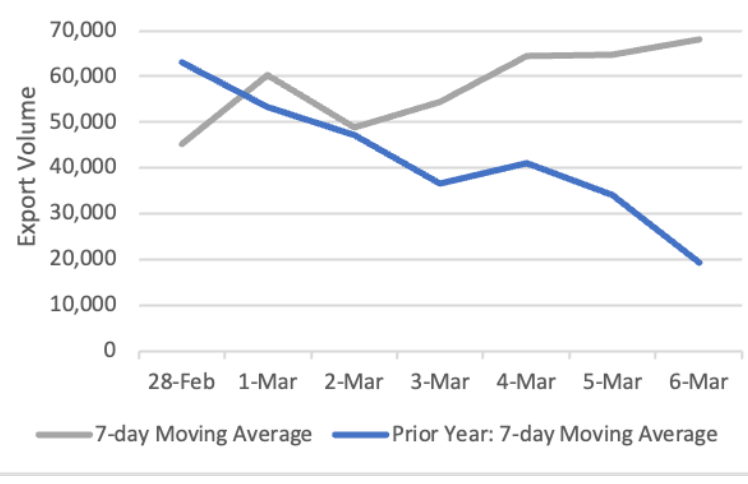


Figure 7. Plaquemines Port Export Volume, by Tonnage

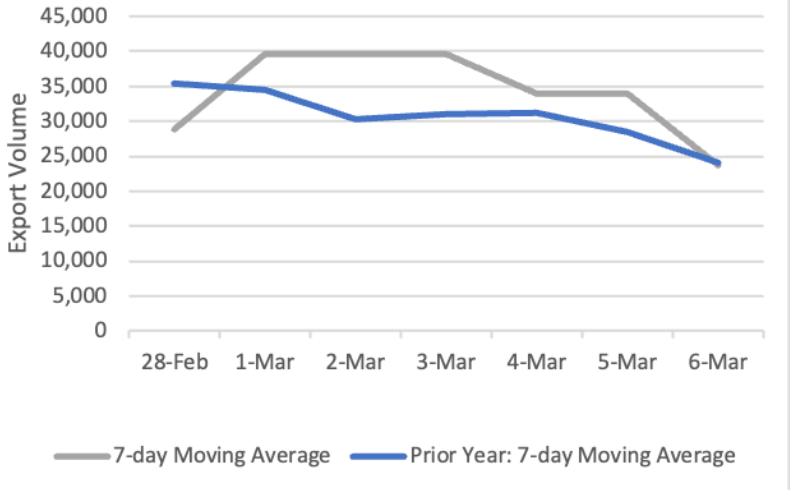


Figure 8. Baton Rouge Port Import Volume, by Tonnage

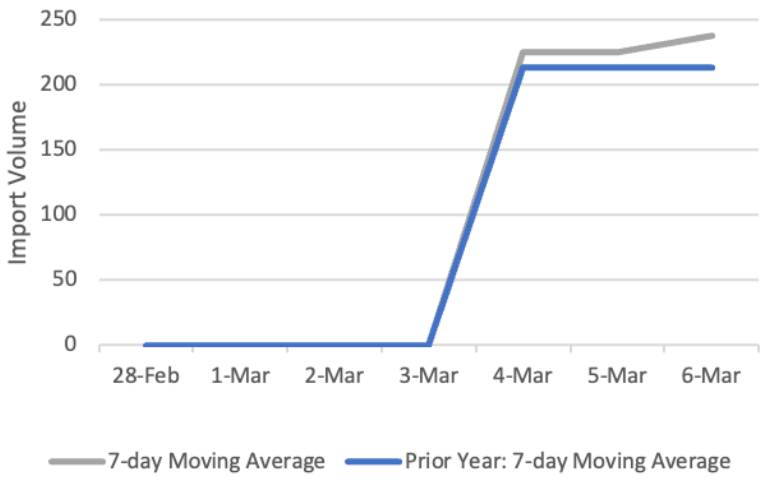


Figure 9. New Orleans Port Import Volume, by Tonnage

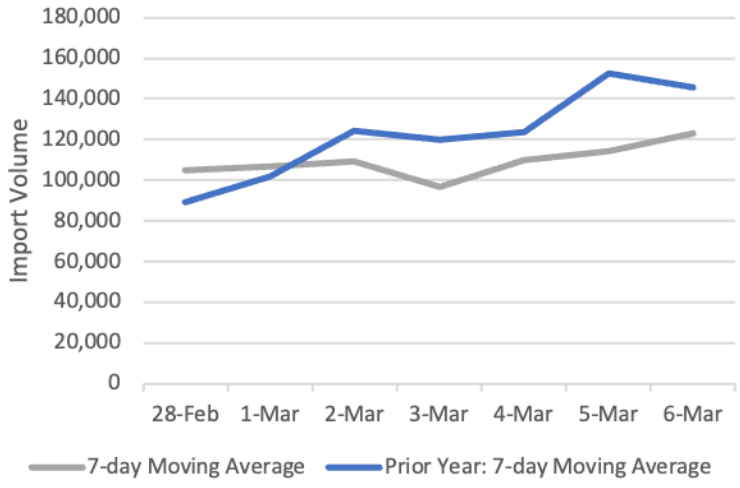


Figure 10. South Louisiana Port Import Volume, by Tonnage

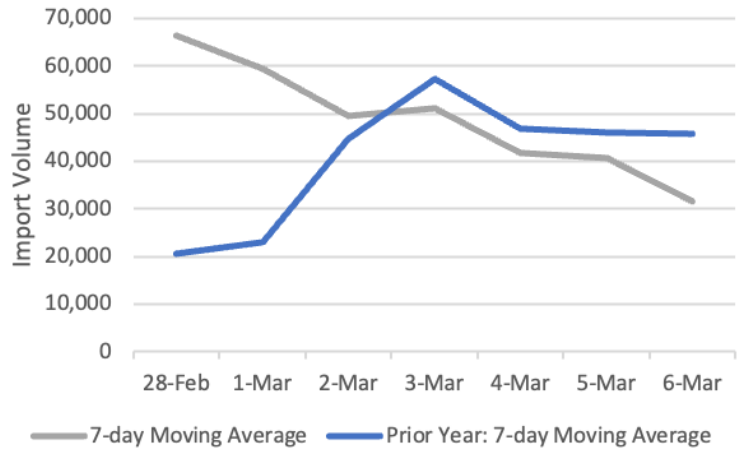


Figure 11. Lake Charles Port Import Volume, by Tonnage

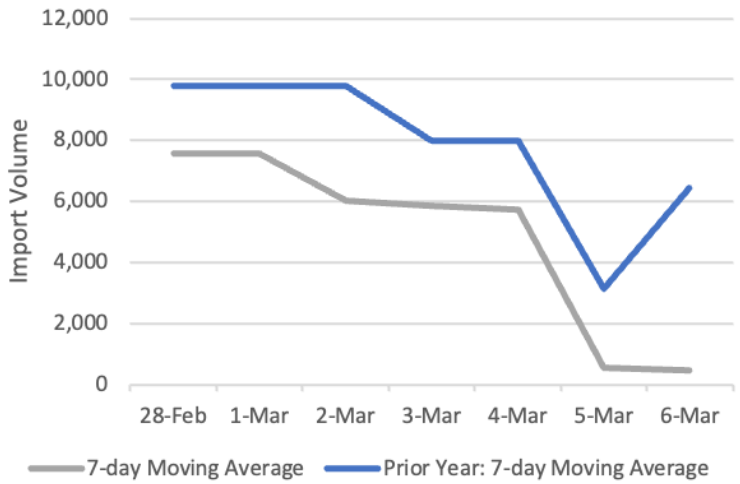


Figure 12. Plaquemines Port Import Volume, by Tonnage

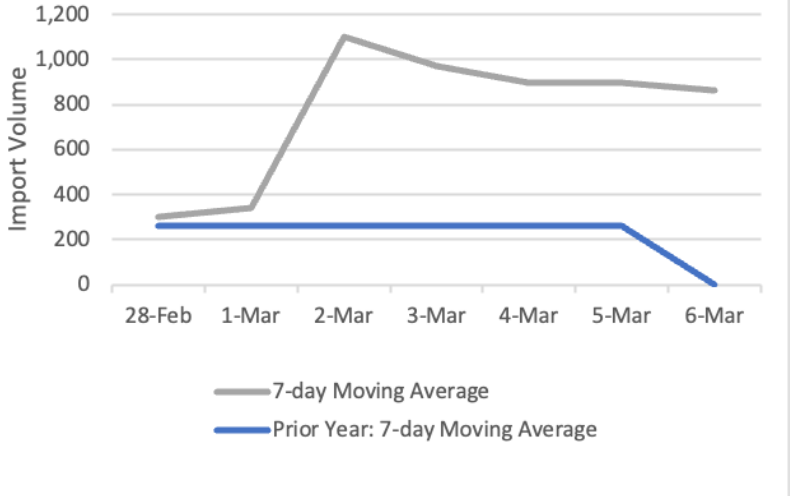


Figure 13. Baton Rouge Port Arrivals, by Type of Vessel

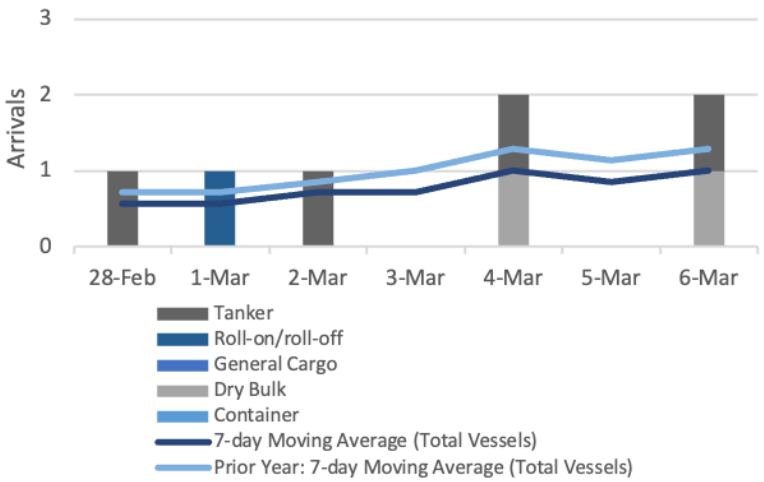


Figure 14. New Orleans Port Arrivals, by Type of Vessel

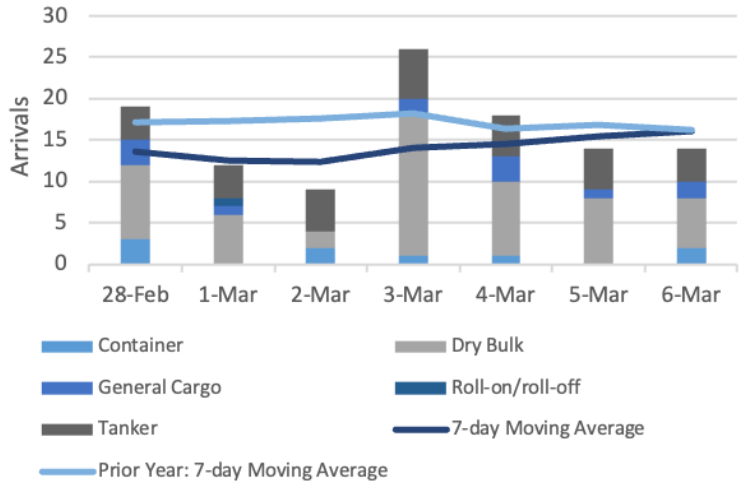


Figure 15. South Louisiana Port Arrivals, by Type of Vessel

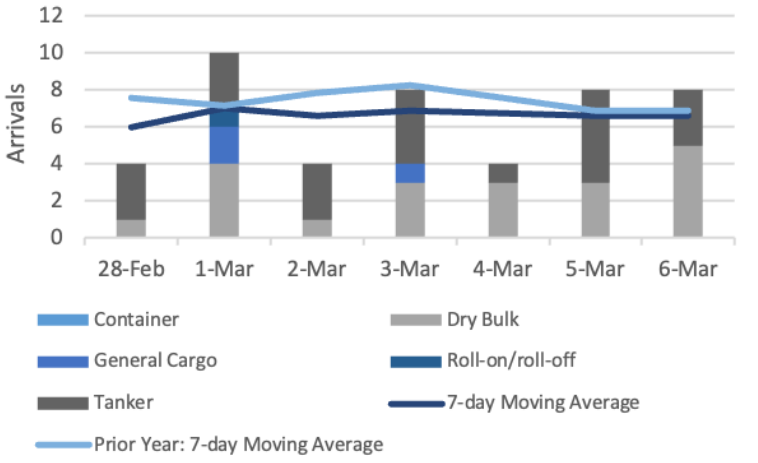


Figure 16. Lake Charles Port Arrivals, by Type of Vessel

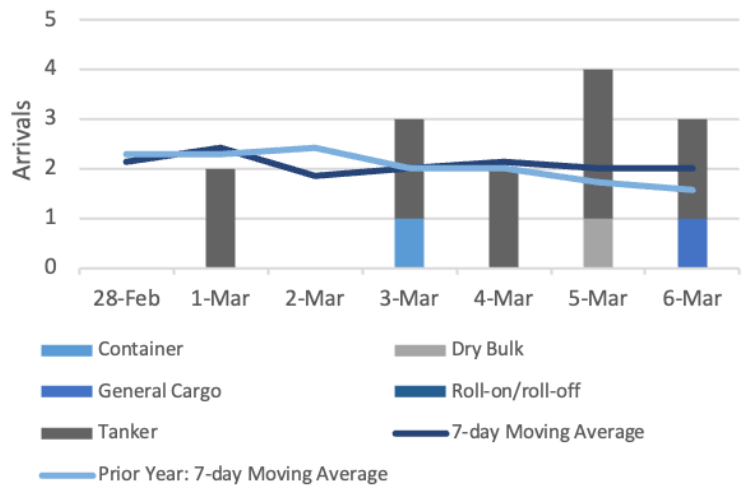
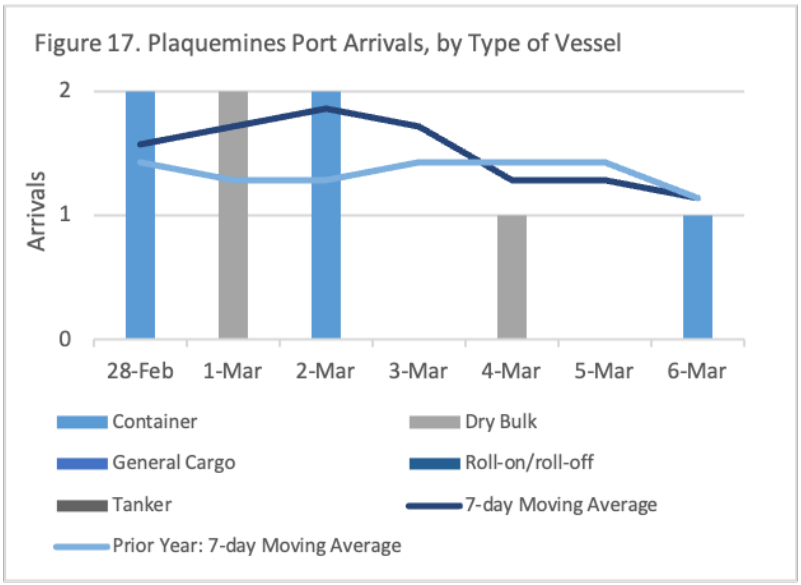


Figure 17. Plaquemines Port Arrivals, by Type of Vessel



5. CPI & INFLATION

The Consumer Price Index (CPI-U) tracks the average change over time in the prices paid by urban consumers for a basket of goods and services. It's one of the most widely used indicators of inflation in the United States. The following table presents the urban consumer price index for February and January, in addition to the annual percentage-change in the basket price, for selected categories.

Source: https://www.bls.gov/cpi/

Table 9. Change in CPI-U, U.S. City Average by Month, Seasonally Adjusted

Category	Feb-26	Jan-26	Change	
			MoM	Since Feb-25[1]
All Items (Headline)	0.3	0.2	0.1	2.4%
All Items Less Food and Energy (Core CPI)	0.2	0.3	-0.1	2.5%
Medical Care Services	0.6	0.3	0.3	4.1%

Note: [1]Not Seasonally Adjusted. October 2025 not available due to the 2025 lapse in appropriations.
Base Period: 1982-84=100.

Figure 18 illustrates monthly **Seasonally Adjusted (SA) Core Inflation**, which tracks price changes after removing two things: the predictable seasonal swings that happen every year on a regular calendar schedule, and the costs of food and energy. Food and energy prices are excluded because they tend to be volatile — a drought, a hurricane, or a conflict halfway around the world can cause sharp short-term price spikes that have nothing to do with the broader direction of the economy. Seasonal adjustment then removes expected calendar-driven patterns, like higher gas prices in summer or airfare spikes around the holidays, so that month-to-month comparisons reflect genuine economic movement rather than the time of year. This figure is intended as the signal — it shows where inflation is actually trending - and is illustrated as the monthly percentage change against a monthly target of 0.16-percent.

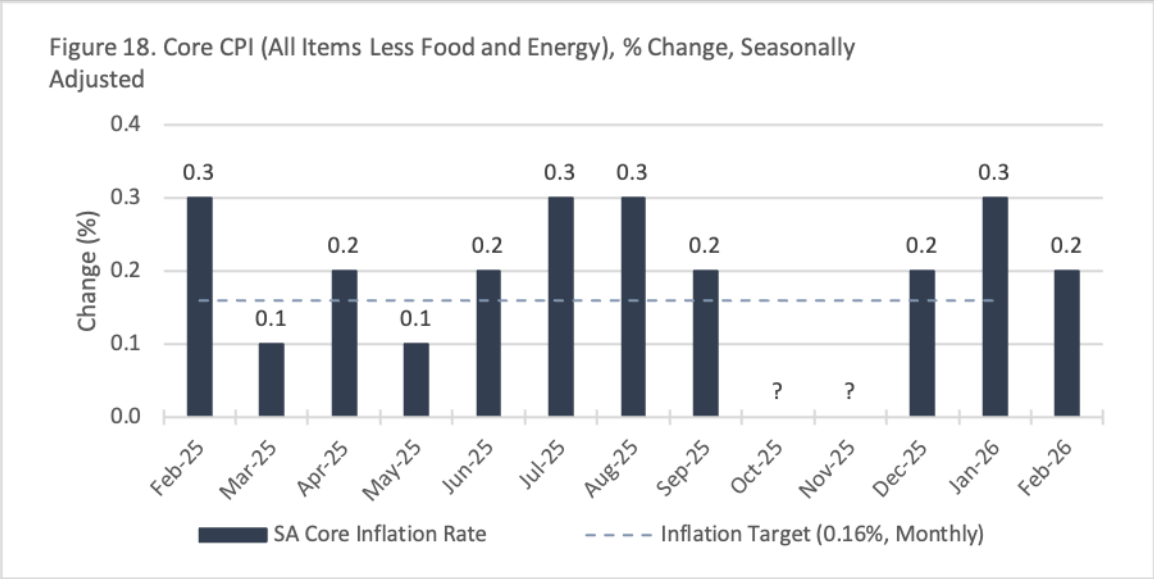


Figure 19 illustrates monthly **Non-Seasonally Adjusted (NSA) Headline Inflation**, a reflection of what consumers actually paid for a broad basket of goods and services, including food and energy, without any adjustments. This is the number closest to lived experience — if gas and groceries were more expensive this month, that shows up here. This figure is intended as the reality check.

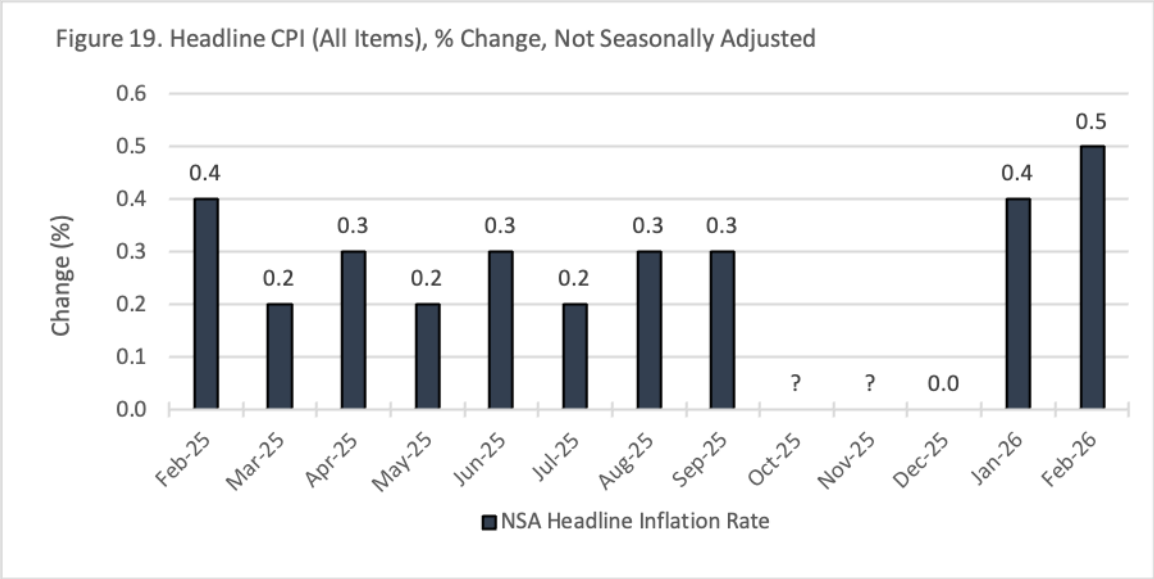
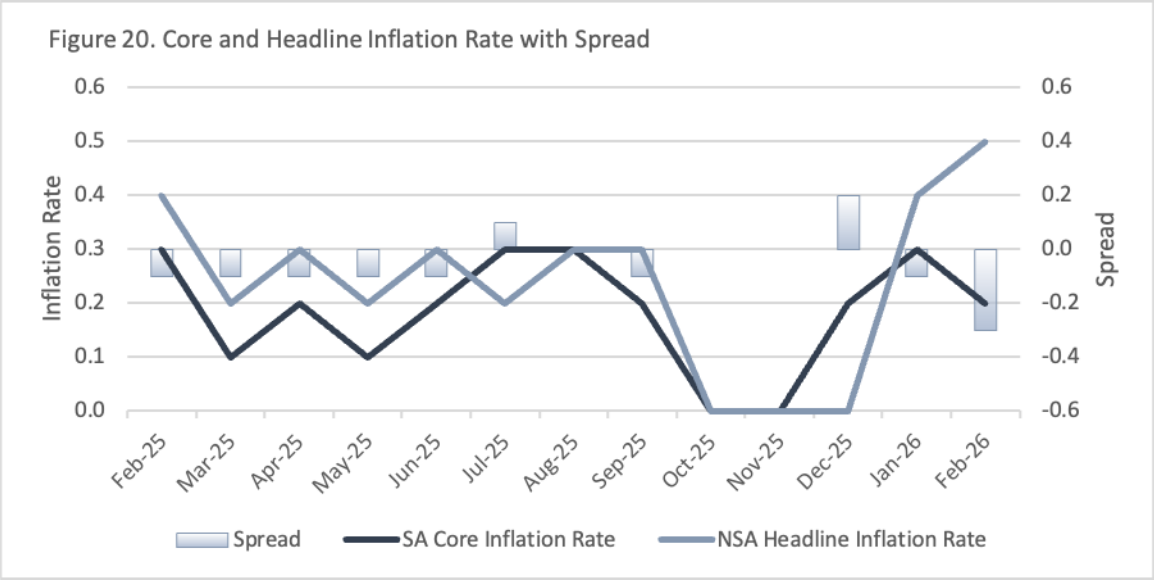


Figure 20 puts these complementary figures together to address the signals and what households and businesses may experience. When the two figures diverge, the **Spread** (SA Core minus NSA Headline) is usually explained by one or both of the following — seasonal price patterns typical for that time of year, or unusual movement in food and energy costs. If SA core inflation is moderating while NSA headline remains elevated, that is generally a sign that the underlying trend is improving even if consumers are still feeling pressure at the pump or grocery store. If both are moving in the same direction, that suggests broader, more persistent price pressure across the economy.



March 2026

Economic Calendar

The *Louisiana Economic Vitals* economic calendar provides insights into upcoming events and data releases. It includes information on national economic indicators, such as GDP, employment figures, inflation rates, and central bank meetings.
Links to source are included.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1	2	3	4	5 U.S. Import & Export Price Indexes [Jan]	6 Employment [Feb] Manufacturing & Trade Inventory & Sales [Dec]	7
8	9	10 Parish Employment & Wages [QCEW] [2025:Q3] NFIB Small Business Optimism Index [Feb]	11 CPI [Feb] Real Earnings [Feb] Federal Budget [Feb]	12 New Residential Construction [Jan]	13 U. of Michigan Sentiment [Mar] Durable Goods [Jan]	14
15	16 Industrial Production [Feb]	17 NAHB HMI [Mar] Pending Home Sales [Feb]	18 PPI [Feb]	19 New Residential Sales [Jan]	20	21
22	23	24	25 U.S. Import & Export Price Indexes [Feb]	26	27 Total Vehicle Sales [Feb]	28
29	30	31 Consumer Confidence [Mar]				