

Louisiana Economic Vitals

Friday, March 20, 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 Innovation Announces the Water Innovation Studio of Louisiana](#)

March 19th, 2026

[LA.IO Campaign Wins Best in Show, 11 Addy Awards](#)

March 15th, 2026

[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:

Dr. Christopher Coombs, Economist, Economic Competitiveness

E: Christopher.Coombs@la.gov T: 225.342.5410

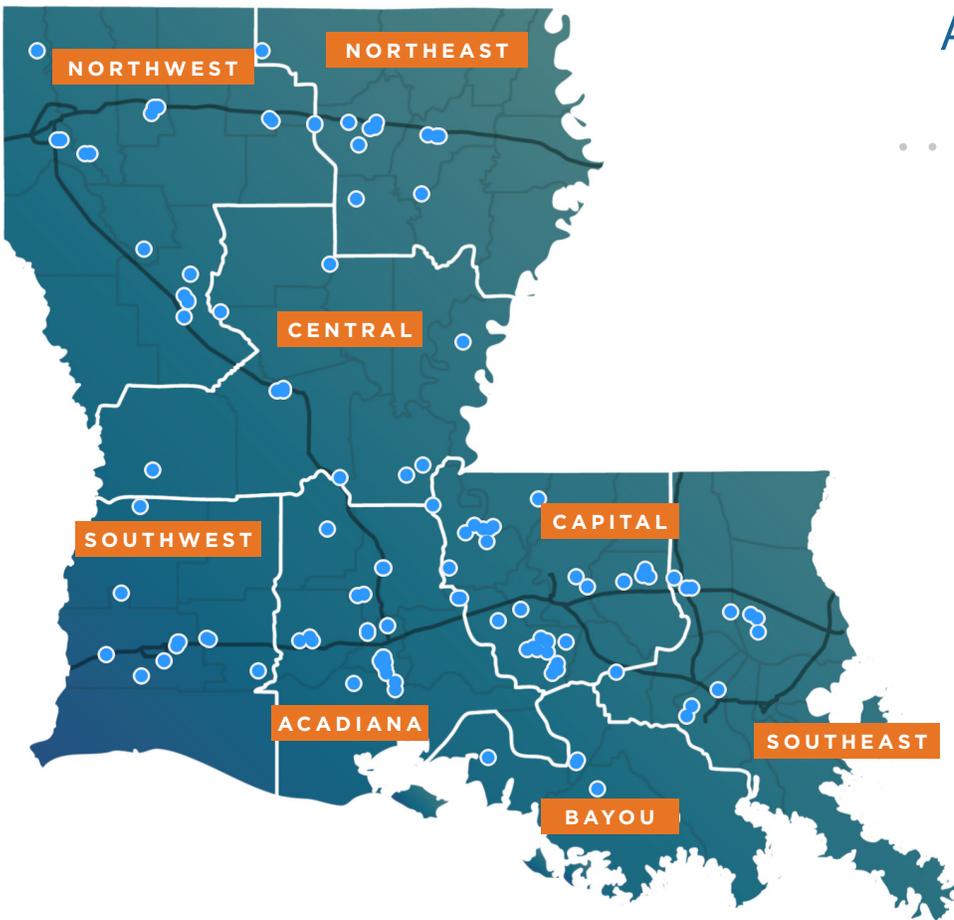
LED PROJECT PIPELINE

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 19, 2026, LED is actively tracking and involved in 189 distinct projects with a combined value exceeding \$282.4 billion and the potential to create more than 41,890 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

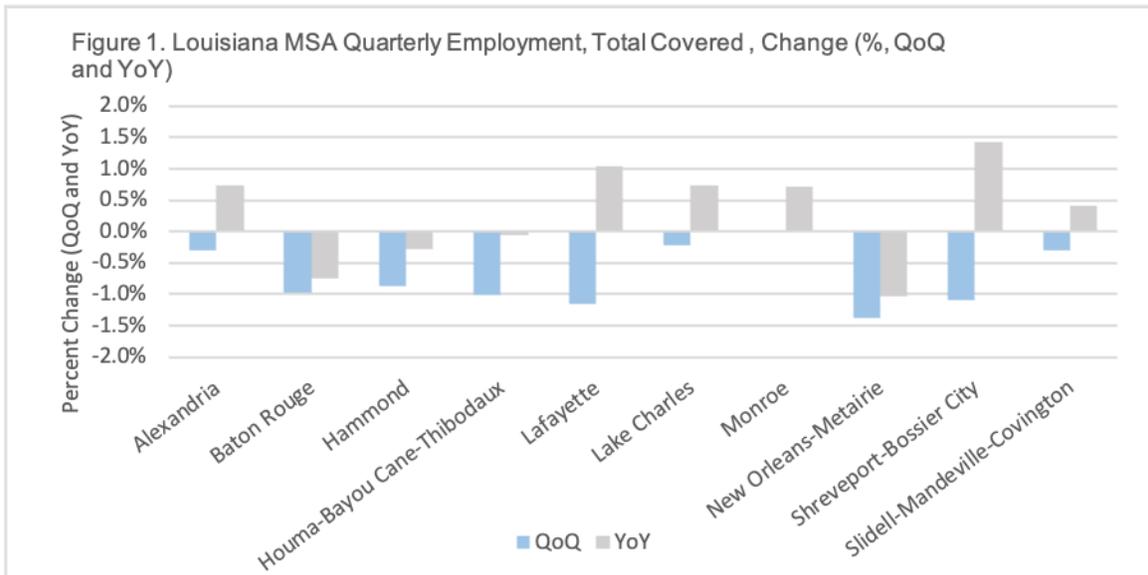
TOTAL **125**

1. LABOR MARKET ACTIVITY

The following table presents data on 3rd quarter 2025 MSA-level employment covered by Unemployment Insurance (QCEW). The changes (%) over the last year are relatively minimal on either side of zero, as illustrated in Figure 1, which implies a stable labor market over this period.

Source: [bls.gov](https://www.bls.gov) & [LAWorks.net](https://www.laworks.net)

Table 1. QCEW					
MSA	2025:Q3	2025:Q2	2024:Q3	Change	
				QoQ	YoY
Alexandria	60,323	60,507	59,884	-0.3%	0.7%
Baton Rouge	398,272	402,143	401,288	-1.0%	-0.8%
Hammond	46,798	47,212	46,930	-0.9%	-0.3%
Houma-Bayou Cane-Thibodaux	82,203	83,044	82,250	-1.0%	-0.1%
Lafayette	178,266	180,354	176,443	-1.2%	1.0%
Lake Charles	101,820	102,053	101,076	-0.2%	0.7%
Monroe	87,735	87,736	87,117	0.0%	0.7%
New Orleans-Metairie	438,018	444,107	442,570	-1.4%	-1.0%
Shreveport-Bossier City	163,293	165,111	160,987	-1.1%	1.4%
Slidell-Mandeville-Covington	97,537	97,834	97,135	-0.3%	0.4%



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 2 includes plots for the 4-Week Moving Averages of Initial- and Continued Claims for covered workers.

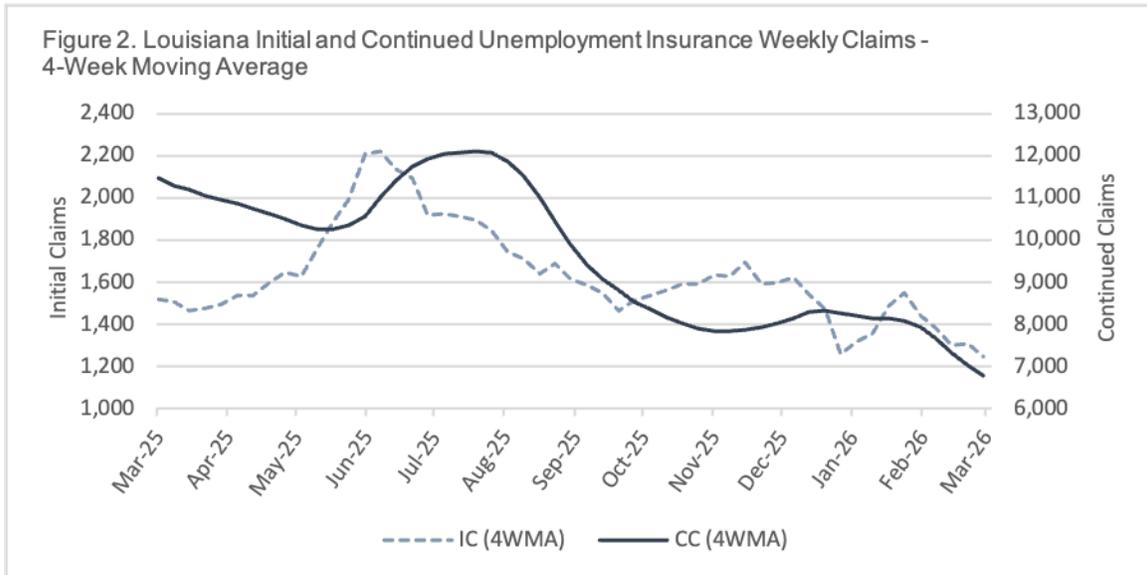
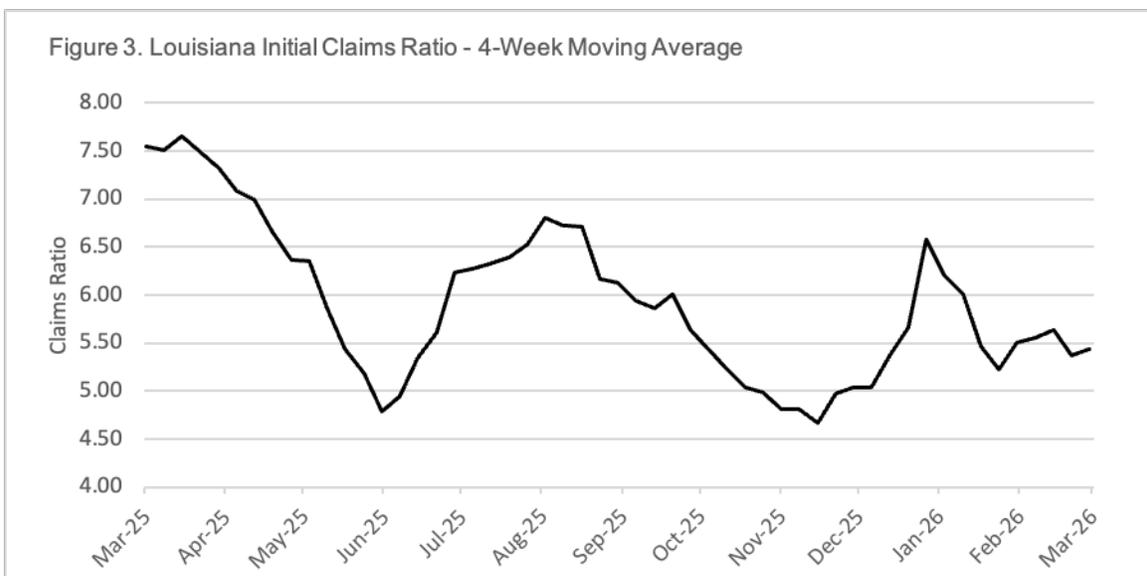
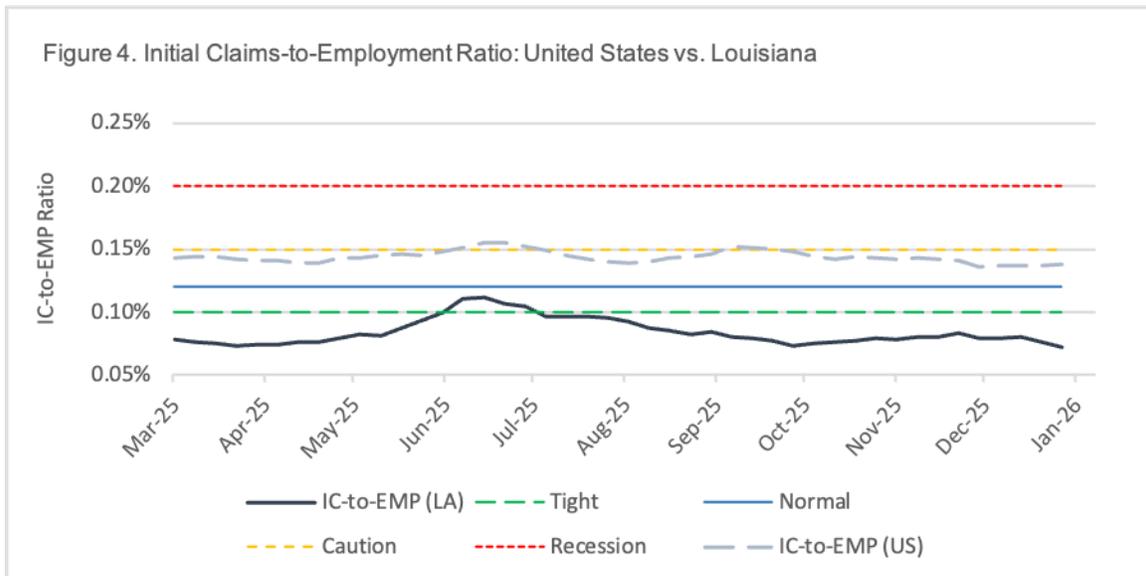


Figure 3 illustrates the ratio of continued claims to initial claims (Initial Claims ratio), an approximate for the average duration of employment spells among UI recipients. Because initial claims is an inflow into unemployment and continued claims is the stock of people still unemployed, this ratio 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.



In Figure 4, the ratio of initial claims to total non-farm employment (IC-to-EMP ratio) is plotted, which serves as a real-time proxy for layoff intensity, showing how widespread new job losses are relative to the size of the workforce. Rising values indicate increasing labor market stress, while low values reflect tight labor market conditions. By benchmarking the IC-to-EMP ratio against historical thresholds shown in Figure 4, the series can be interpreted as a regime-based indicator of labor market conditions, ranging from tight (low layoffs) to recessionary (elevated and broad-based job losses). Finally, comparing the IC-to-EMP ratio across the United States and Louisiana highlights any differences in the timing and intensity of labor market stress, with Louisiana often exhibiting a lagged response to national trends.

Source: LAWorks.net and bls.gov



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 2. Energy Commodities, Weekly							
Commodity	3/13/26	3/6/25	2/13/26	3/14/25	Change		
					WoW	MoM	YoY
Brent Crude Oil Price	\$96.16	\$85.28	\$70.70	\$71.54	12.8%	36.0%	34.4%
WTI Crude Oil Price	\$91.85	\$78.37	\$63.93	\$66.95	17.2%	43.7%	37.2%
Henry Hub Natural Gas Spot Price	\$3.19	\$2.99	\$3.27	\$4.15	6.7%	-2.4%	-23.1%
U.S. Regular Conventional Gas Price	\$3.57	\$3.36	\$2.79	\$2.94	6.3%	28.0%	21.4%

Table 3. Agricultural Commodities, Daily Period of March 19, 2026							
Commodity	Listed Price	Dollar (\$)	Unit of Measurement	Change			
				Daily	Weekly	Monthly	YoY
Soybeans	\$1,168.50	\$11.69	\$/Bu	0.6%	-4.8%	2.7%	15.4%
Wheat	\$610.25	\$6.10	\$/Bu	1.0%	2.0%	6.4%	9.5%
Lumber	\$611.00	\$6.11	\$/MBF	-0.2%	2.4%	5.7%	-8.7%
Palm Oil	\$4,564.00	\$45.64	\$/MT	1.4%	0.6%	11.4%	4.0%
Sugar (No. 11)	\$15.41	\$0.15	\$/Lb	4.1%	7.2%	11.1%	-22.8%
Coffee	\$302.06	\$3.02	\$/Lb	3.1%	3.5%	5.7%	-22.9%
Corn	\$470.00	\$4.70	\$/Bu	1.5%	1.6%	9.9%	0.2%
Rice	\$11.32	\$0.11	\$/CWT	-0.3%	0.04%	11.4%	-15.0%
Orange Juice	\$169.04	\$1.69	\$/Lb	-6.4%	-14.5%	-0.5%	-37.5%

3. LOUISIANA REAL ESTATE

Louisiana Realtors® produces monthly reports on local market updates for the state and its regions. The following figures illustrate state and regional pending sales mapped against the Pending Home Sales Index (PHSI) for the U.S. and the South, by month. For Louisiana Realtors®, pending home sales includes accepted contract offers, and for the National Association of Realtors®, pending homes sales is based on signed real estate contracts. An PHSI index of 100 is equal to the average level of contract activity during 2001, the first year to be analyzed. Moreover, 2001 was the first of four consecutive record years for existing home sales and NAR considers 2001 sales are fairly close to the higher level of home sales expected in the coming decade relative to the norms experienced in the mid-1990s. As such, an index of 100 coincides with a historically high level of home sales activity.

Included in the South is: Alabama, Arkansas, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Mississippi, Oklahoma, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, and West Virginia.

Source: louisiana.stats.showingtime.com & nar.realtor

- Bayou Board of REALTORS®** - Assumption, Lafourche, St. Mary, Terrebonne;
- Greater Central Louisiana Realtors® Association** - Allen, Avoyelles, Catahoula, Evangeline, Grant, LaSalle, Natchitoches, Rapides, Winn;
- Greater Baton Rouge Association of Realtors®** - Ascension, East Baton Rouge, East Feliciana, Iberville, Livingston, Pointe Coupee, St. Helena, West Baton Rouge, West Feliciana;
- Greater Fort Polk Area Realtors®** - Beauregard, Sabine, Vernon;
- New Orleans Metropolitan Association of Realtors®** - Jefferson, Orleans, Plaquemines, St. Bernard, St. Charles, St. James, St. John;
- Northeast Realtors® of Louisiana** -Caldwell, Concordia, East Carroll, Franklin, Jackson, Lincoln, Madison, Morehouse, Ouachita, Richland, Tensas, Union, West Carroll;
- Northwest Louisiana Association of Realtors®** - Bienville, Bossier, Caddo, Claiborne, DeSoto, Red River, Webster;
- Realtor® Association of Acadiana** - Acadia, Iberia, Lafayette, St. Landry, St. Martin, Vermilion;
- Southwest Louisiana Association of Realtors®** - Calcasieu, Cameron, Jefferson Davis;

and, although not included

Northshore Area Board of Realtors® - St. Tammany, Tangipahoa, Washington

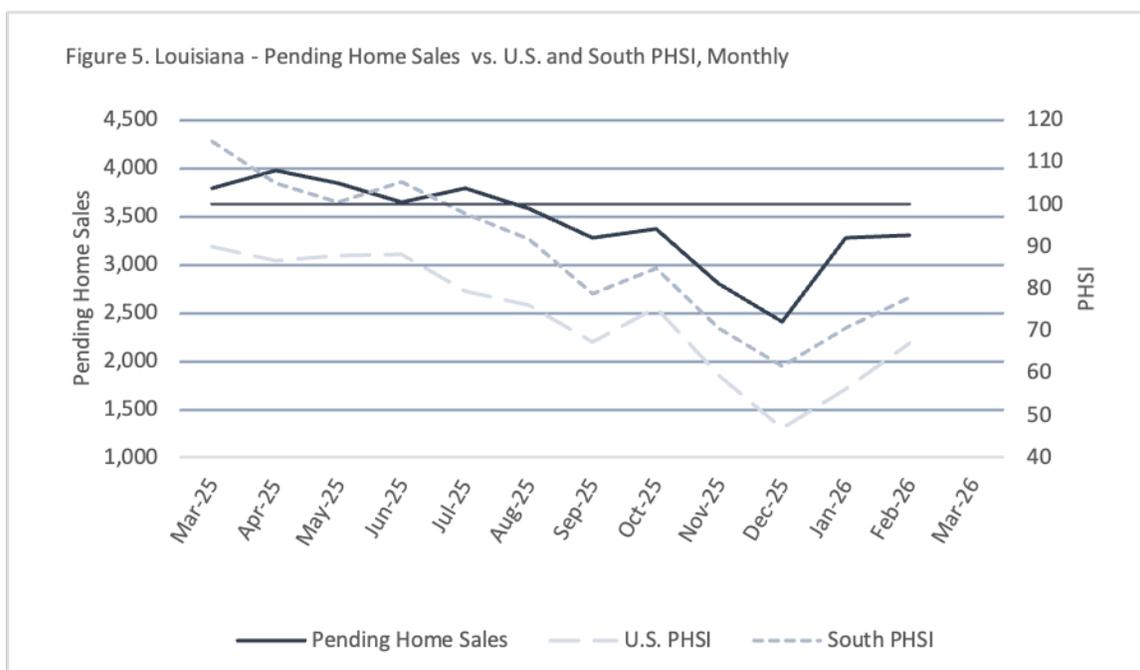


Figure 6. Bayou Board of REALTORS® - Pending Home Sales vs. U.S. and South PHSI, Monthly

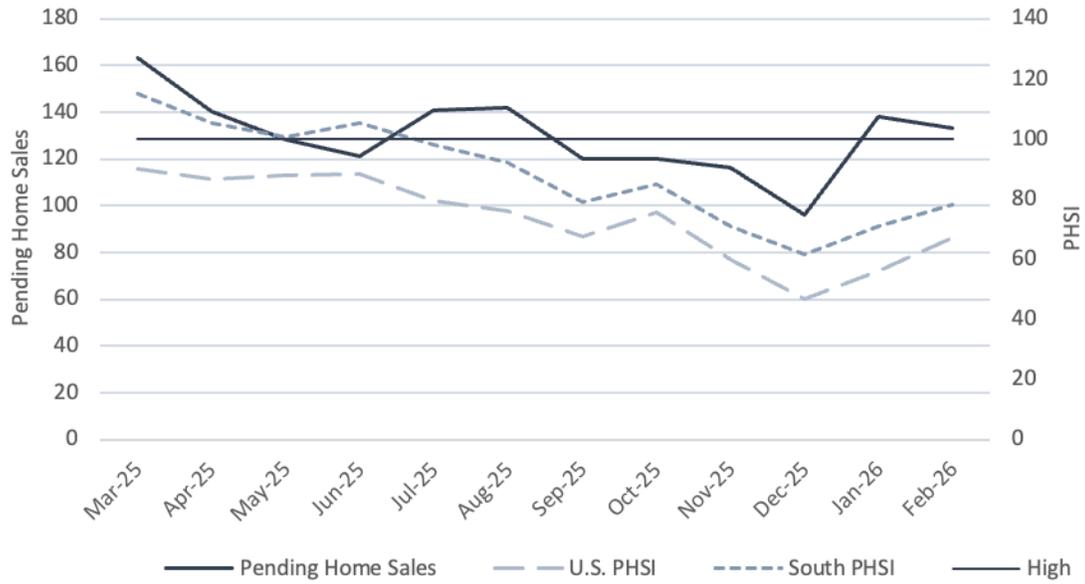


Figure 7. Greater Baton Rouge Association of REALTORS® - Pending Home Sales vs. U.S. and South PHSI, Monthly

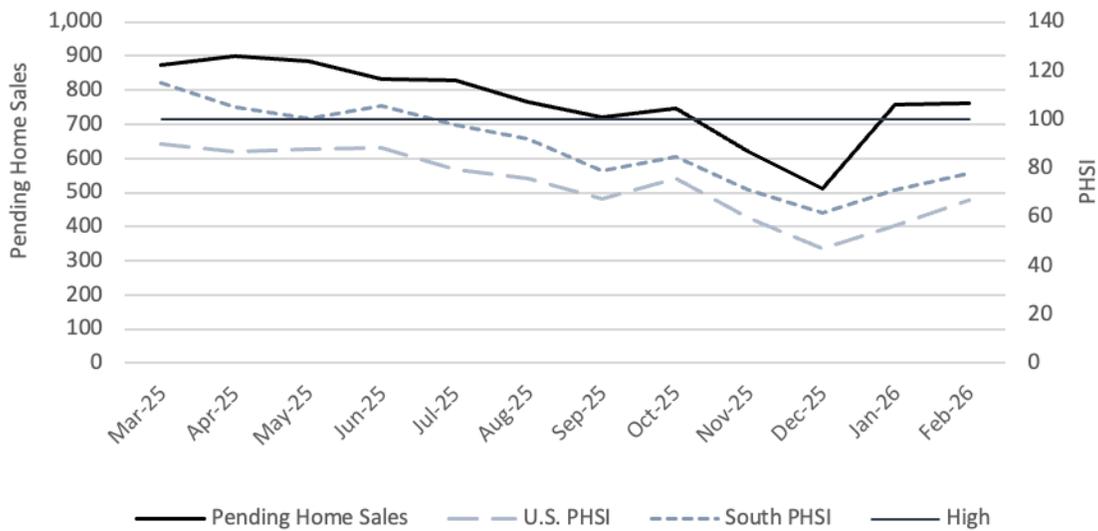


Figure 8. Greater Central Louisiana Realtors® Association - Pending Home Sales vs. U.S. and South PHSI, Monthly

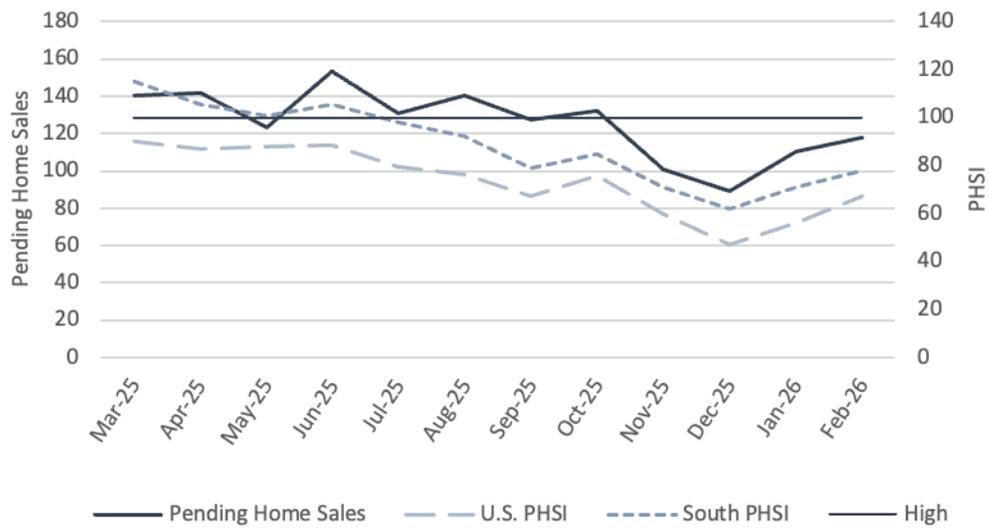


Figure 9. Greater Fort Polk Area Realtors® - Pending Home Sales vs. U.S. and South PHSI, Monthly

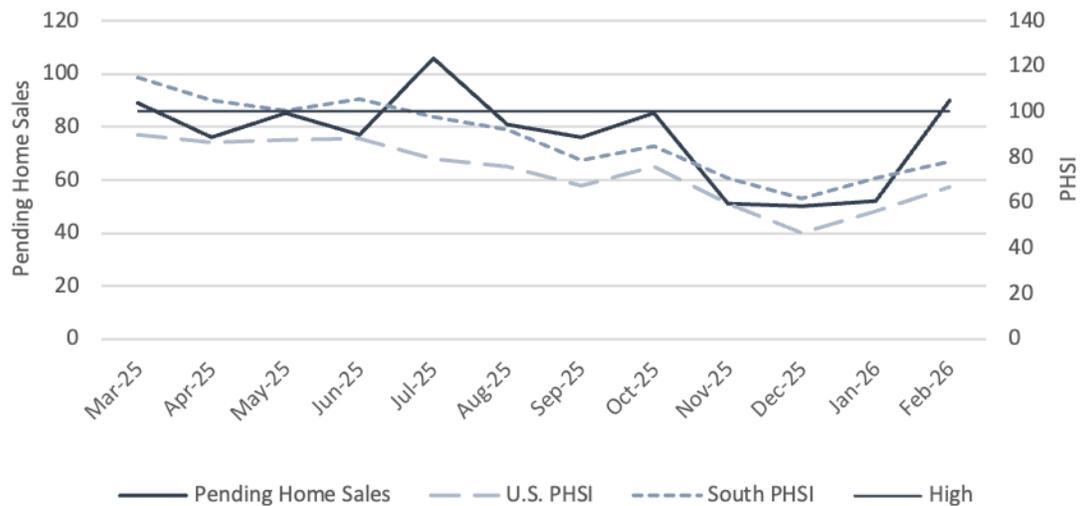


Figure 10. New Orleans Metropolitan Association of Realtors® - Pending Home Sales vs. U.S. and South PHSI, Monthly

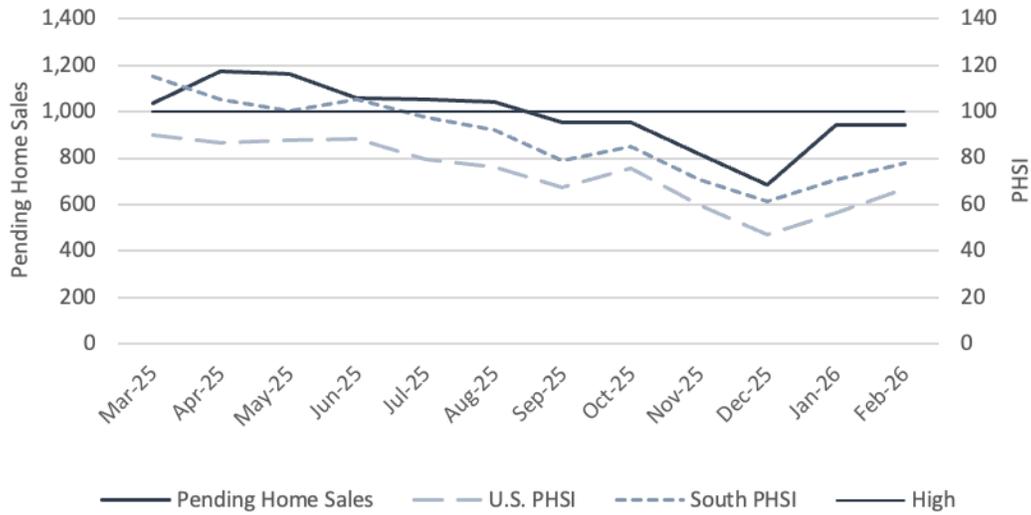


Figure 11. Northeast Realtors® of Louisiana - Pending Home Sales vs. U.S. and South PHSI, Monthly

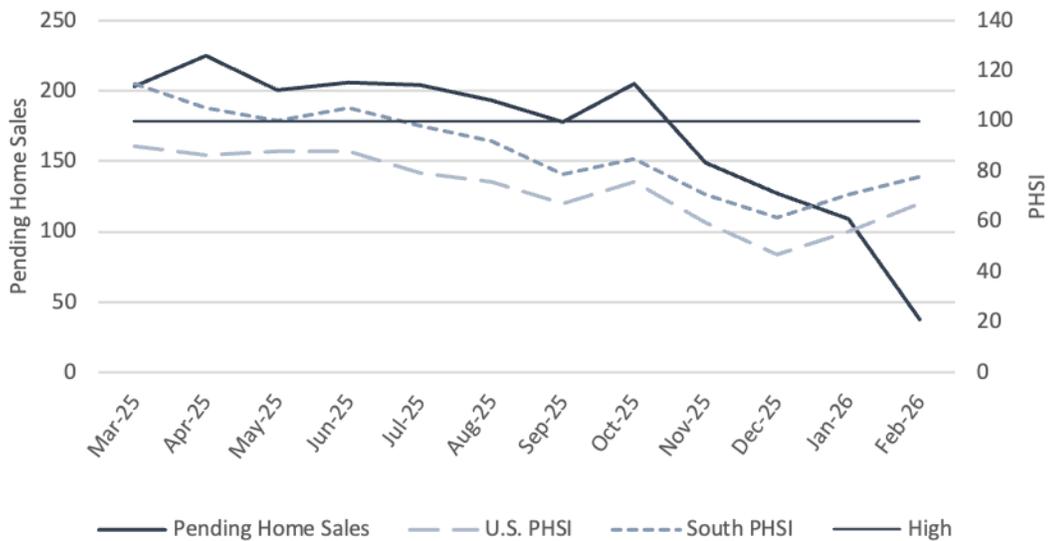


Figure 12. Northwest Louisiana Association of Realtors® - Pending Home Sales vs. U.S. and South PHSI, Monthly

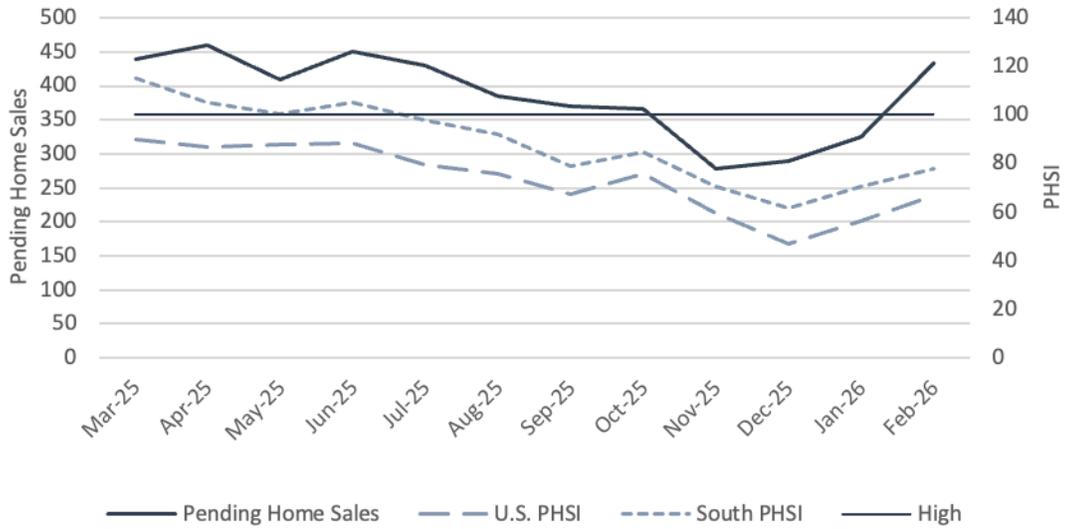


Figure 13. Realtor® Association of Acadiana - Pending Home Sales vs. U.S. and South PHSI, Monthly

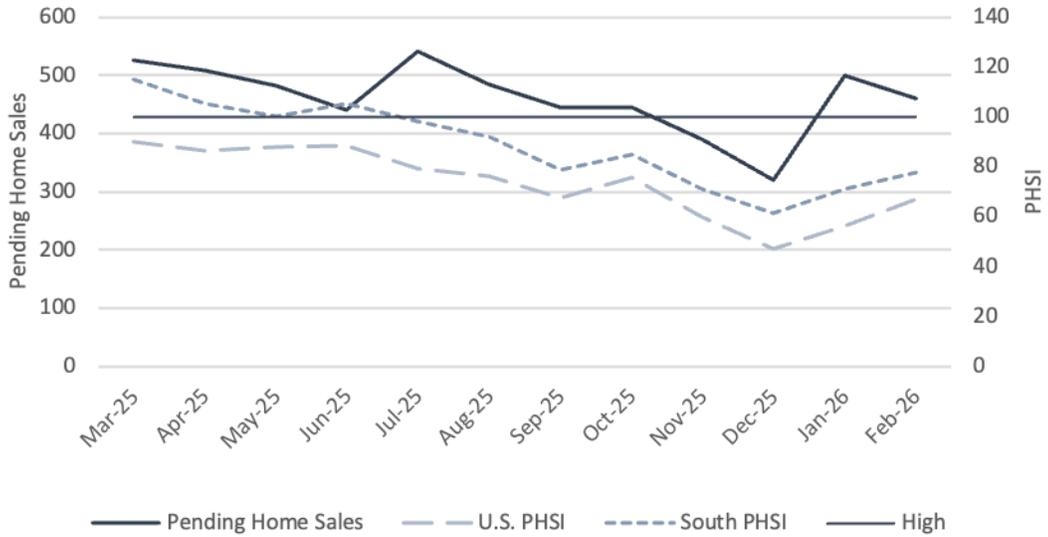
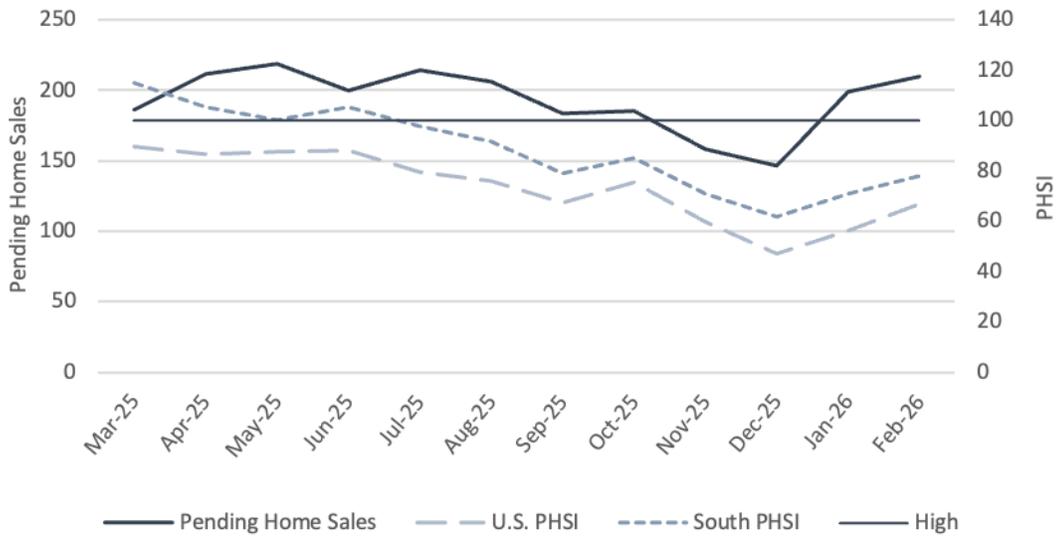


Figure 14. Southwest Louisiana Association of Realtors® - Pending Home Sales vs. U.S. and South PHSI, Monthly



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

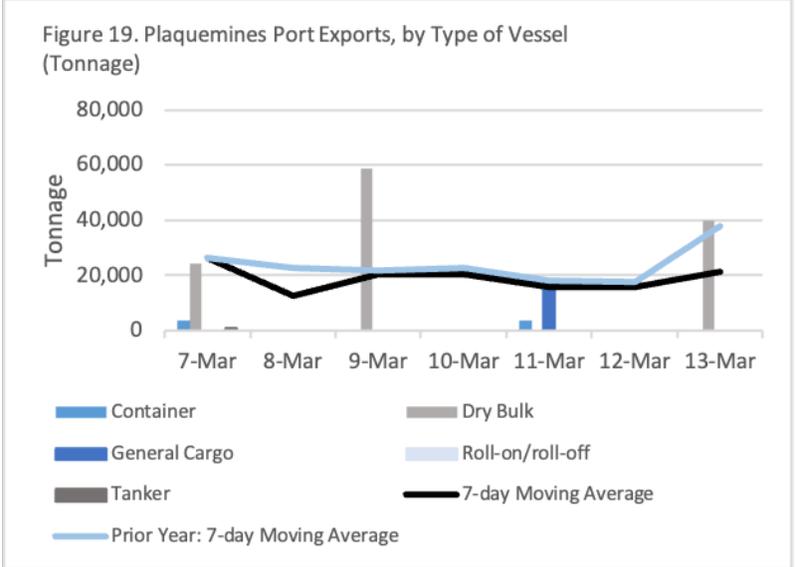
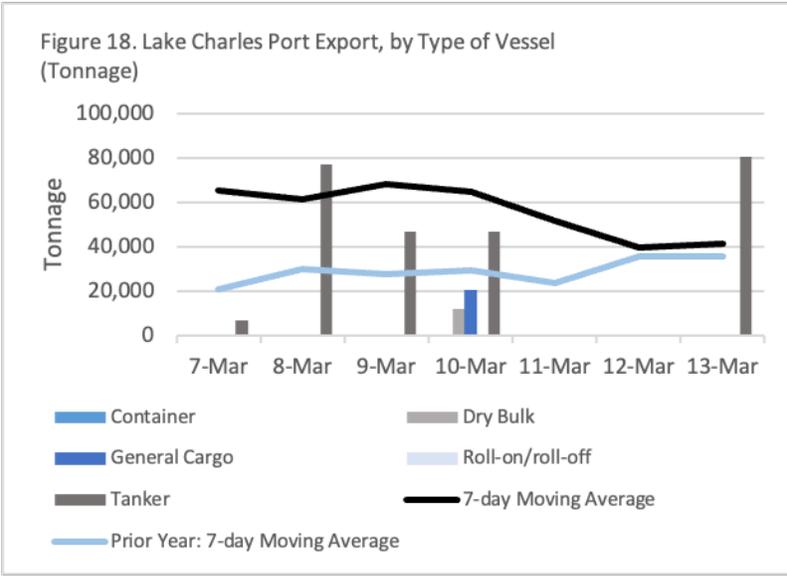
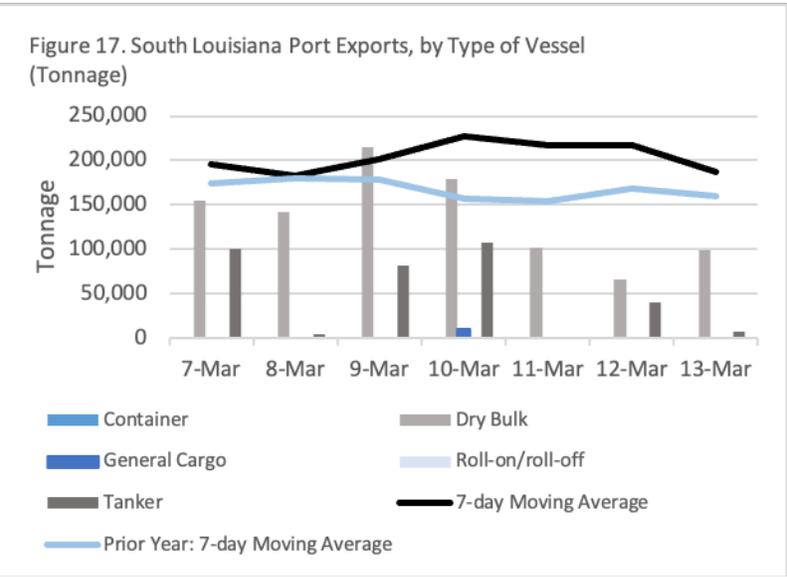
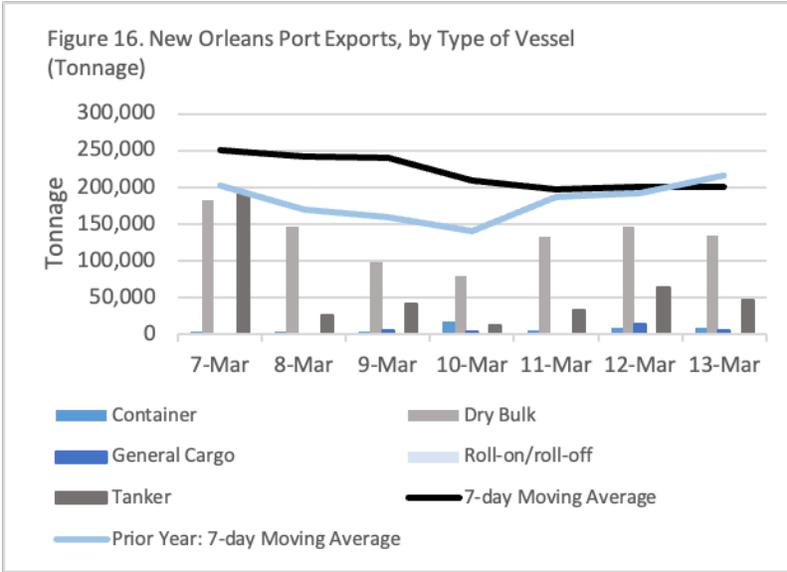
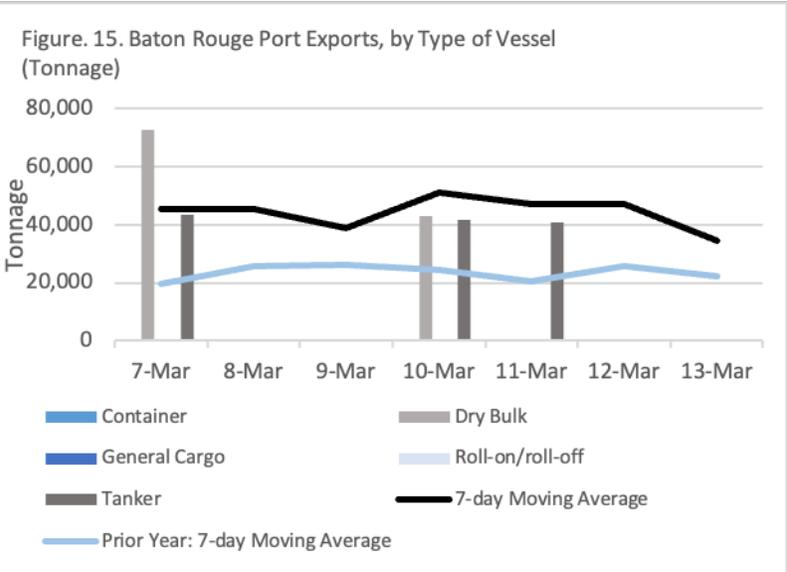


Figure 20. Baton Rouge Port Imports, by Type of Vessel (Tonnage)

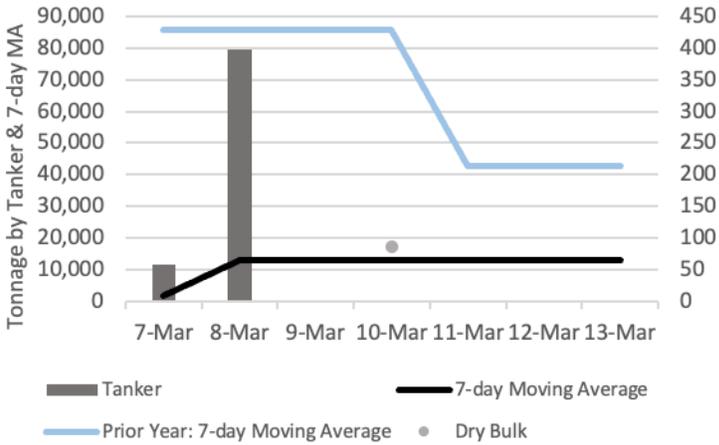


Figure 21. New Orleans Port Imports, by Type of Vessel (Tonnage)

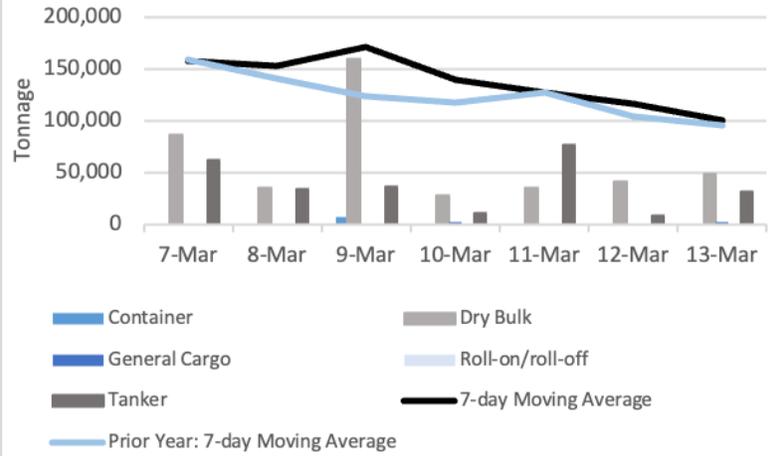


Figure 22. South Louisiana Port Imports, by Type of Vessel (Tonnage)

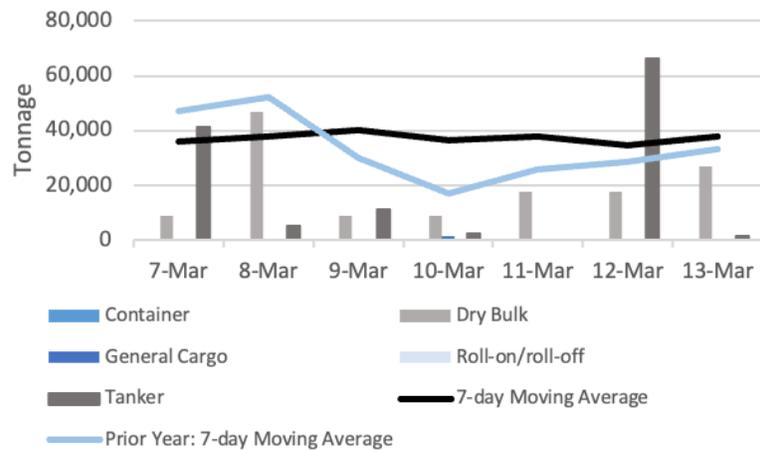


Figure 23. Lake Charles Port Imports, by Type of Vessel (Tonnage)

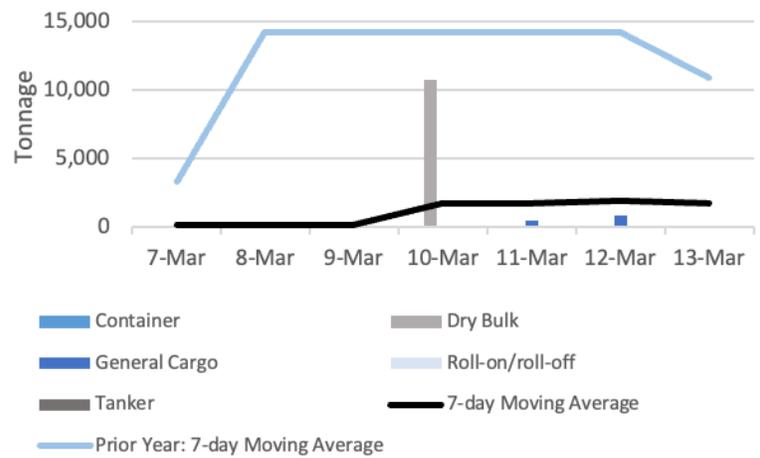


Figure 24. Plaquemines Port Imports, by Type of Vessel (Tonnage)

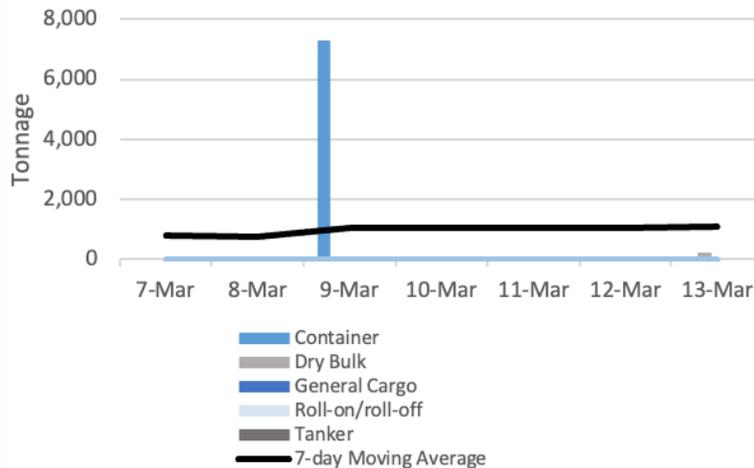


Figure 25. Baton Rouge Port Arrivals, by Type of Vessel

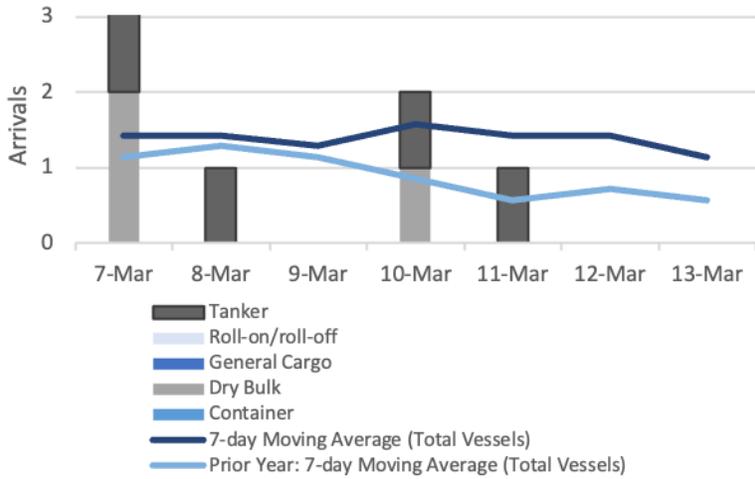


Figure 26. New Orleans Port Arrivals, by Type of Vessel

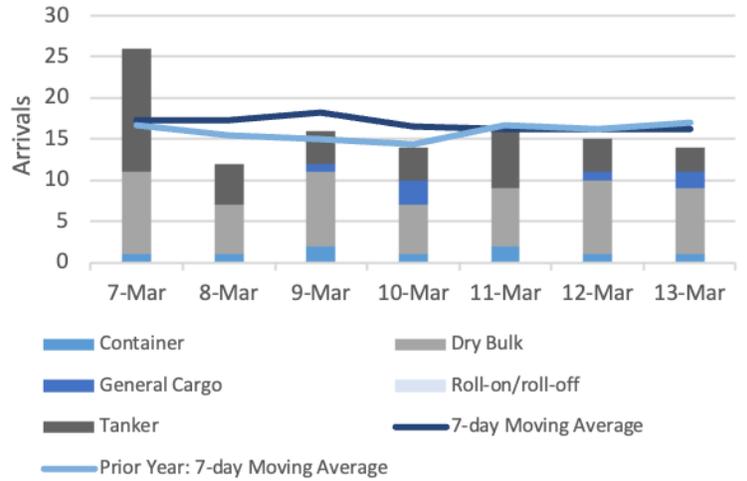


Figure 27. South Louisiana Port Arrivals, by Type of Vessel

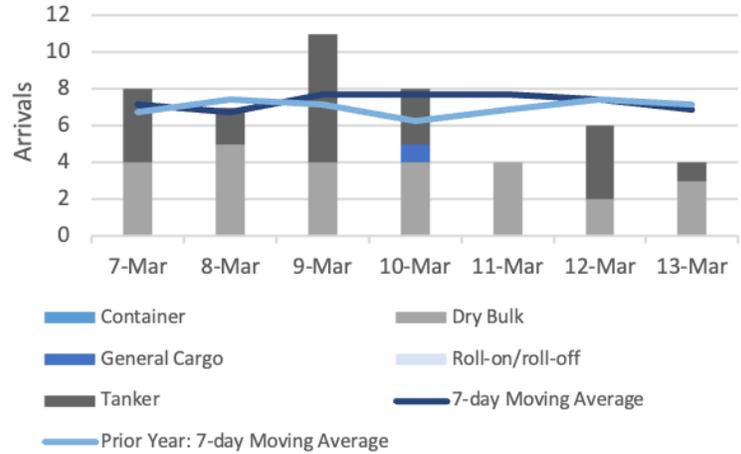


Figure 28. Lake Charles Port Arrivals, by Type of Vessel

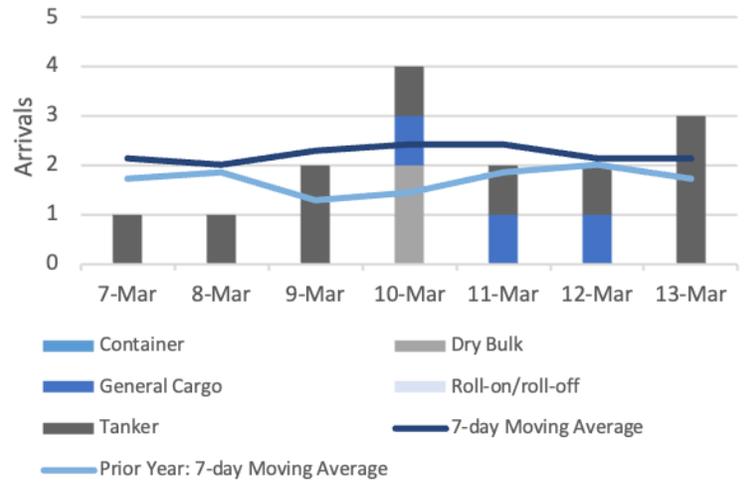
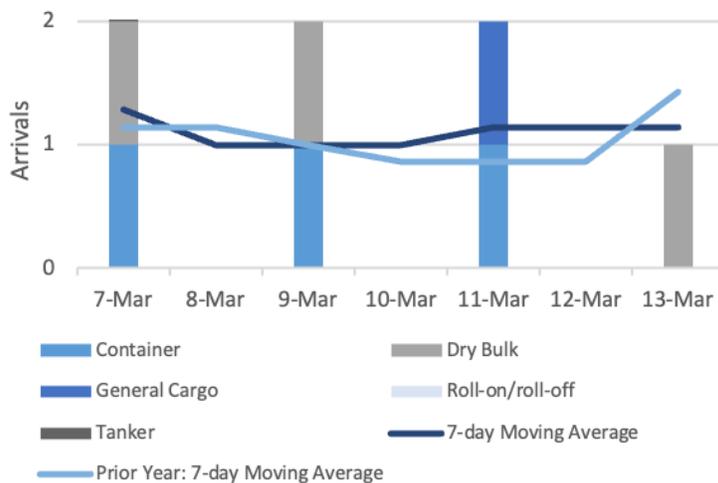


Figure 29. Plaquemines Port Arrivals, by Type of Vessel



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 Industrial Production [Feb]	16 NAHB HMI [Mar] Pending Home Sales [Feb]	17 PPI [Feb]	18 New Residential Sales [Jan]	19	20	21
22	23	24 U.S. Import & Export Price Indexes [Feb]	25	26 Total Vehicle Sales [Feb]	27	28
29	30 Consumer Confidence [Mar]	31				