Louisiana Economic Vitals

Friday, August 28, 2026

Pictured: A conceptual rendering of Starbase Louisiana, a recently announced $100 billion launch facility that will be developed in Vermilion Parish. Expected to become the world's largest spaceport, the campus will feature five launch complexes with two launch pads each and the capacity to support thousands of launches annually. Construction is expected to begin by the end of 2027, with the first launch targeted for as early as 2029. Over the next decade, the project is projected to create at least 3,000 direct jobs with an average annual salary of $92,600, along with approximately 8,100 indirect jobs.

LOUISIANA
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

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 August 2026 Announcements:

Momentum in Action: Hyundai Steel Opportunity Takes Shape
August 28th, 2026

Washington Parish Set to Expand Its Industrial Hub with FastSites Investment
August 27th, 2026

ICYMI: CF Industries, JERA Co., and Mitsui & Co., Ltd., Break Ground on Blue Point One, the World's Largest Low-Carbon Ammonia Plant in Louisiana
August 26th, 2026

SpaceX in Louisiana: Facts at a Glance
August 26th, 2026

SpaceX Launches New Era of Commercial Spaceflight with $100 Billion Louisiana Campus
August 25th, 2026

GDIT Extends Partnership in State of Louisiana, Investing to Support Technology Jobs and Strengthen Economy
August 19th, 2026

Amazon Grows Northwest Louisiana Planned Investment to $18 Billion With New Shreveport Campus
August 18th, 2026

Building on 120 Years in Central Louisiana, Coca-Cola UNITED Expands Alexandria Operations
August 11th, 2026

From Farmland to Future Business Hub: McLeod Business Park Receives FastSites Investment
August 5th, 2026

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LOUISIANA ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

LED PROJECT PIPELINE

Since Governor Landry took office in January 2024, LED has announced 110 projects representing over $256.6 billion USD in new investment and more than 19,440 direct new jobs across Louisiana.

As of August 27, 2026, LED is actively tracking and involved in 228 distinct projects with a combined value exceeding $221.1 billion and the potential to create more than 44,290 direct new jobs.

CERTIFIED SITE PROGRAM

Since the launch of its Certified Sites Program, LED has certified 172 industrial sites, with all or portions of 43 sites advancing into active commerce. At full build-out, these projects represent more than $40.2 billion in capital investment, over 7,140 direct new jobs, and more than $468 million in total annual wages statewide. Currently, there are 132 actively marketed certified sites across every region of Louisiana.

Active Certified Sites by Region

Acadiana	30
Bayou	6
Capital	23
Central	9
Northeast	14
Northwest	18
Southeast	18
Southwest	14
TOTAL	132

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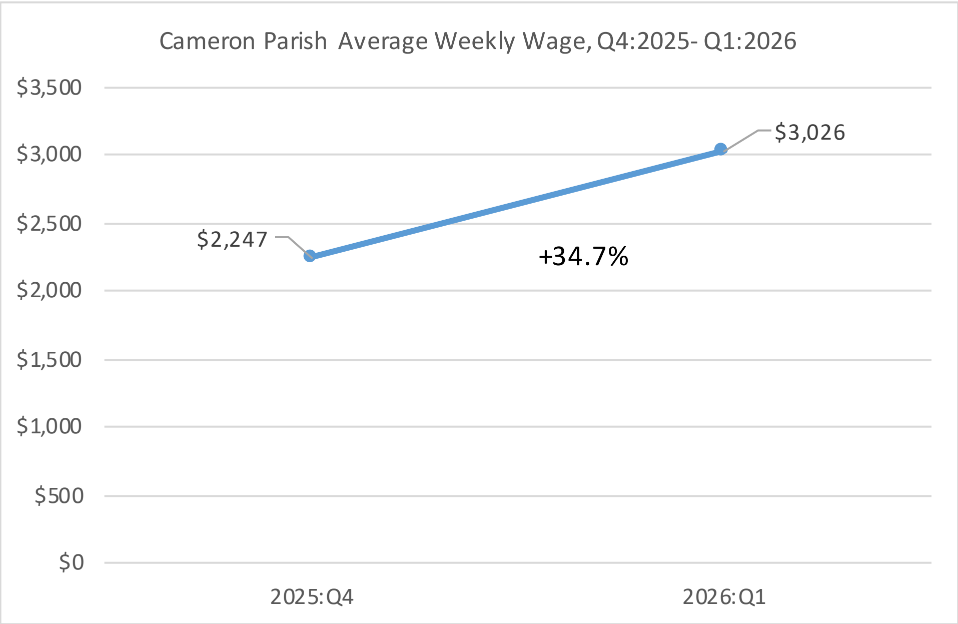
1. LABOR MARKET ACTIVITY

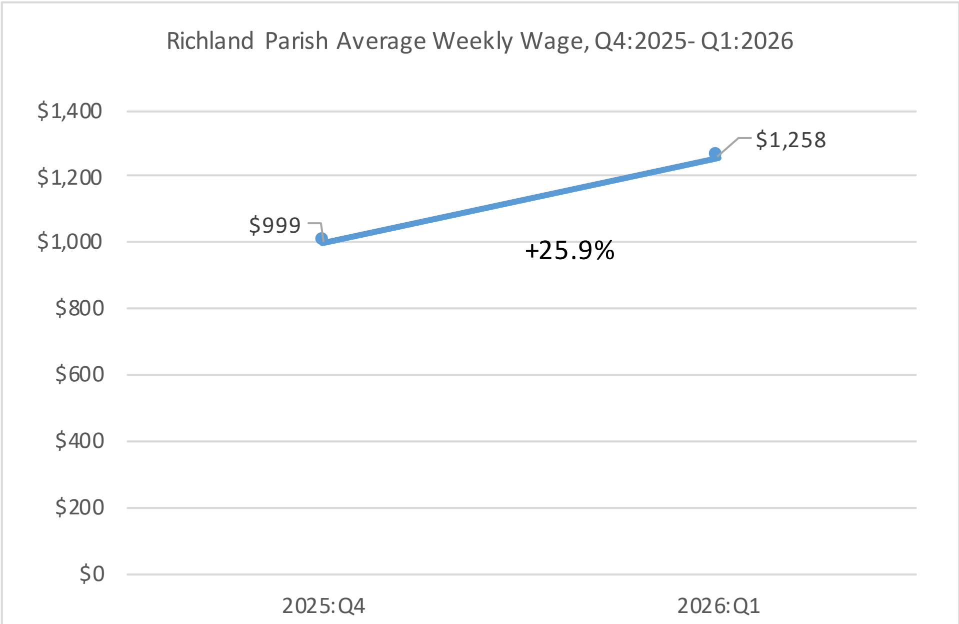
The following figures provide an overview of recent wage trends in Louisiana, comparing average weekly pay in selected parishes between the fourth quarter of 2025 through the first quarter of 2026, illustrating the magnitude of wage growth in areas experiencing significant economic activity.
Note: Q1:2026 is preliminary.

Source: bls.gov

Key Takeaways

- Richland Parish's average weekly wage increased 25.9%, second only to Cameron Parish, rising from $999 to $1,258.
- Richland recorded the second-largest dollar increase among the parishes shown, signaling the growing influence of Meta's construction phase on local earnings.
- Initial and continued unemployment claims have risen from their spring lows but remain below earlier peaks, indicating some recent softening without a major deterioration in statewide labor-market conditions.





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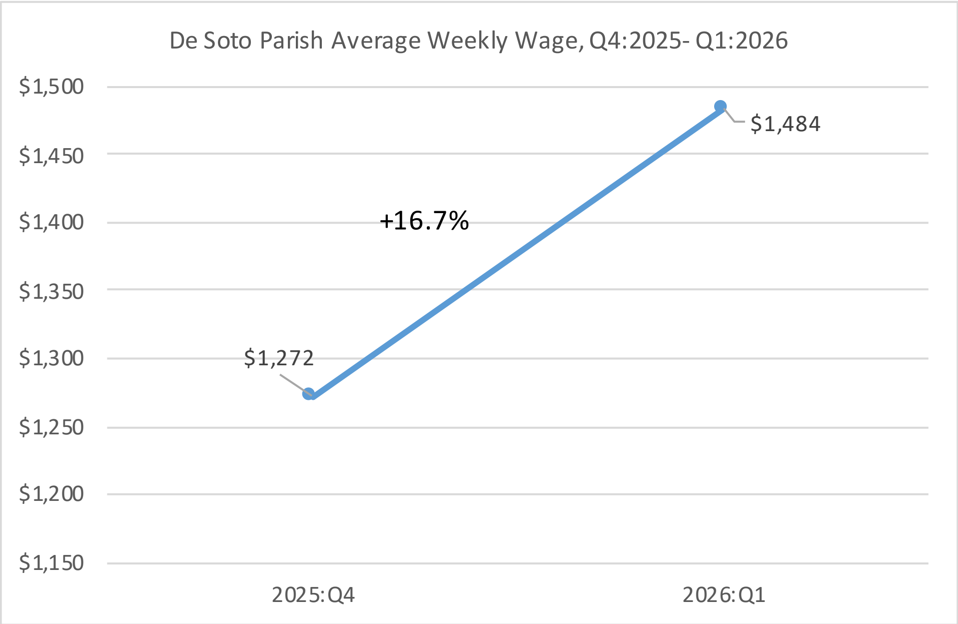

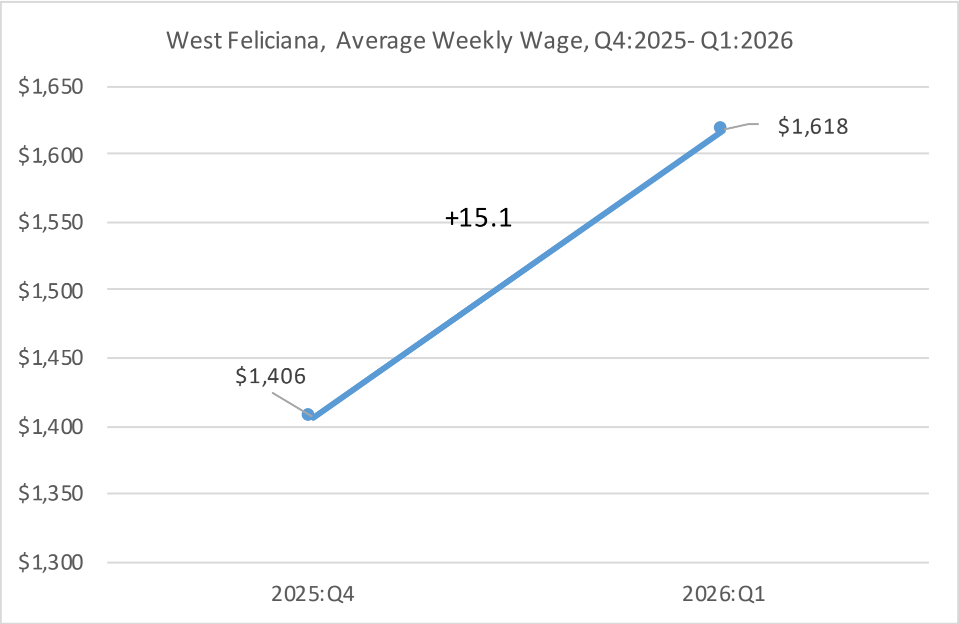

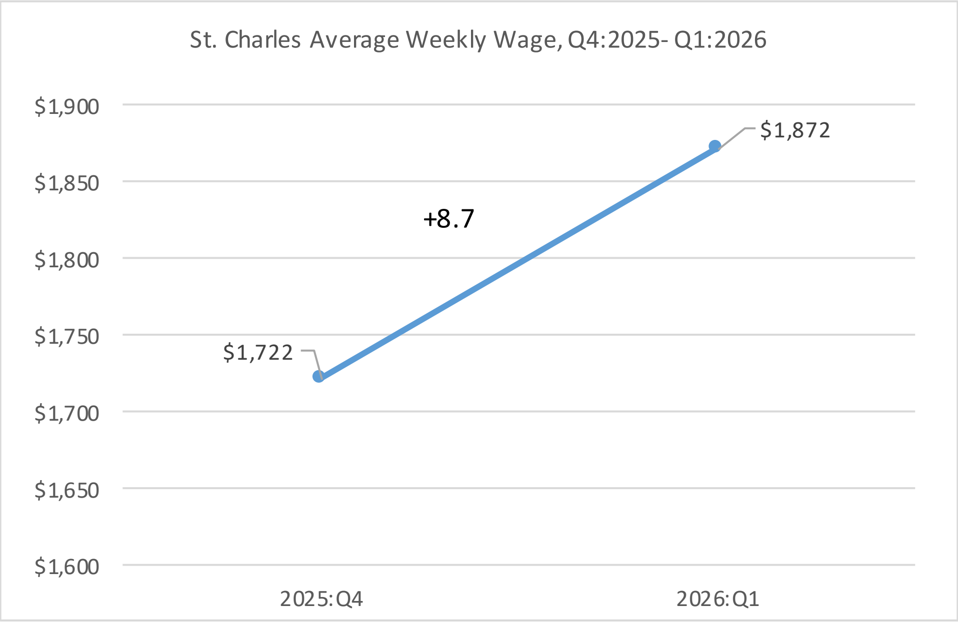

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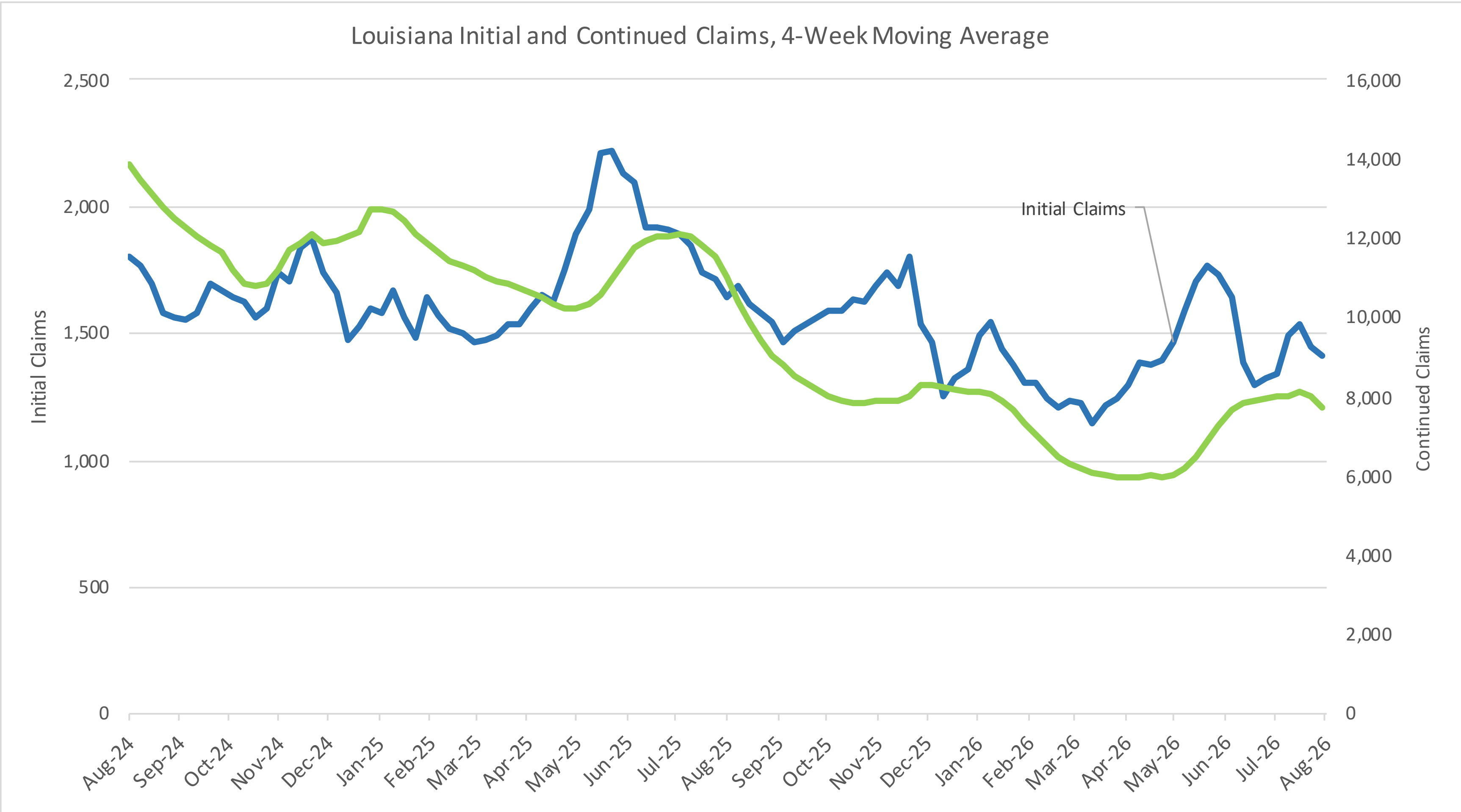
The following chart shows four-week moving averages for initial and continued claims, smoothing weekly fluctuations to illustrate changes over time.



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2. COMMODITIES

The following tables (1 & 2) provide data on the weekly prices of energy and agricultural commodities, reflecting the broader economic performance of these sectors.

The spot price is the price for immediate delivery, as agreed right now in the market. West Texas Intermediate (WTI) crude spot price is for delivery at Cushing, Oklahoma, a pipeline hub. WTI is a light, sweet (low sulfur) crude and is the primary U.S. benchmark. It is landlocked at Cushing. The Brent Crude spot price refers to crude loaded onto tankers at offshore terminals in the North Sea (originally from the Brent oilfield, a blend of several North Sea crudes). Because it is seaborne, it more directly reflects the global market price. The Henry Hub Natural Gas spot price is for natural gas delivered at the Henry Hub pipeline interchange in Louisiana, the largest natural gas trading hub in North America. The U.S. regular conventional gasoline price is the retail price paid at the pump, including taxes, based on a weekly survey of retail stations across the country. It covers regular grade - lowest octane - and does not include reformulated gasoline areas.

Sources: eia.gov & tradingeconomics.com

Key Takeaways

- Crude oil and gasoline prices increased over the past week but remain slightly below their levels four weeks ago.
- Energy prices remain substantially higher than a year ago, although Henry Hub natural gas prices have been comparatively stable.
- Since the Iran conflict began, oil prices have retreated from their spring peaks and rebounded, while Gulf Coast gasoline has recorded the largest cumulative increase.
- Agricultural strength remains concentrated in grains, with soybean, wheat, corn, and rice prices all higher over weekly, monthly, and annual comparisons.
- Coffee and orange juice remain the weakest agricultural commodities year over year, while lumber prices have also declined over the shorter comparison periods.

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Table 1. Energy Commodities, Weekly							
					Change		
Commodity	8/21/26	8/14/26	7/24/26	8/22/26		MoM	YoY
Brent Crude Oil Price	$94.20	$92.51	$96.12	$67.82	1.8%	-2.0%	38.9%
WTI Crude Oil Price	$87.35	$84.05	$88.58	$64.14	3.9%	-1.4%	36.2%
Henry Hub Natural Gas Spot Price	$2.86	$2.79	$2.86	$2.85	2.5%	0.0%	0.4%
U.S. Regular Conventional Gas Price	$3.95	$3.92	$3.95	$3.04	0.7%	-0.1%	30.0%

Table 2. Agricultural Commodities, Daily Period of August 27, 2026							
				Change			
Commodity	Listed Price	Dollar ($)	Unit of Measurement	Daily	Weekly	Monthly	YoY
Soybeans	$1,252.50	$12.53	$/Bu	-0.1%	2.6%	3.3%	21.8%
Wheat	$740.00	$7.40	$/Bu	1.3%	8.4%	11.7%	45.0%
Lumber	$558.04	$5.58	$/MBF	-1.5%	-3.5%	-12.5%	-0.7%
Palm Oil	$4,816.00	$48.16	$/MT	-0.7%	-2.9%	3.8%	8.3%
Sugar (No. 11)	$18.21	$0.18	$/Lb	3.6%	4.0%	25.2%	10.5%
Coffee	$311.40	$3.11	$/Lb	-3.3%	-5.4%	-8.3%	-19.7%
Corn	$508.00	$5.08	$/Bu	-1.2%	6.1%	10.8%	31.8%
Rice	$14.82	$0.15	$/CWT	-0.1%	4.8%	8.5%	28.6%
Orange Juice	$147.65	$1.48	$/Lb	0.9%	-4.7%	7.9%	-38.6%

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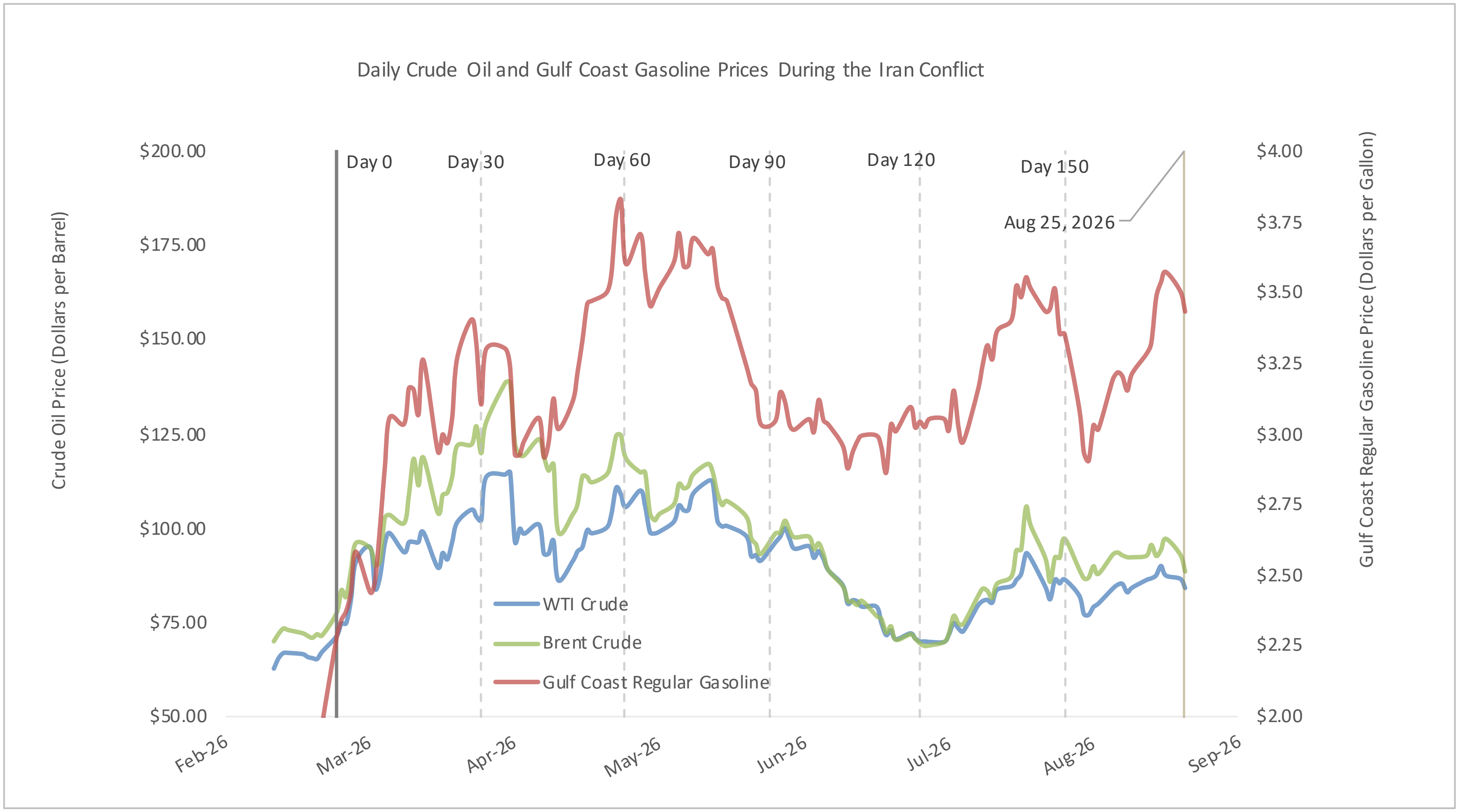
The following figure displays the daily prices of West Texas Intermediate (WTI) crude oil, Brent crude oil, and U.S. Gulf Coast regular gasoline from February 17 through August 25, 2026. Vertical reference lines denote the onset of the conflict (Day 0) and the 30-day incremental milestones used to illustrate the evolution of energy prices over the fivemonths following the event.



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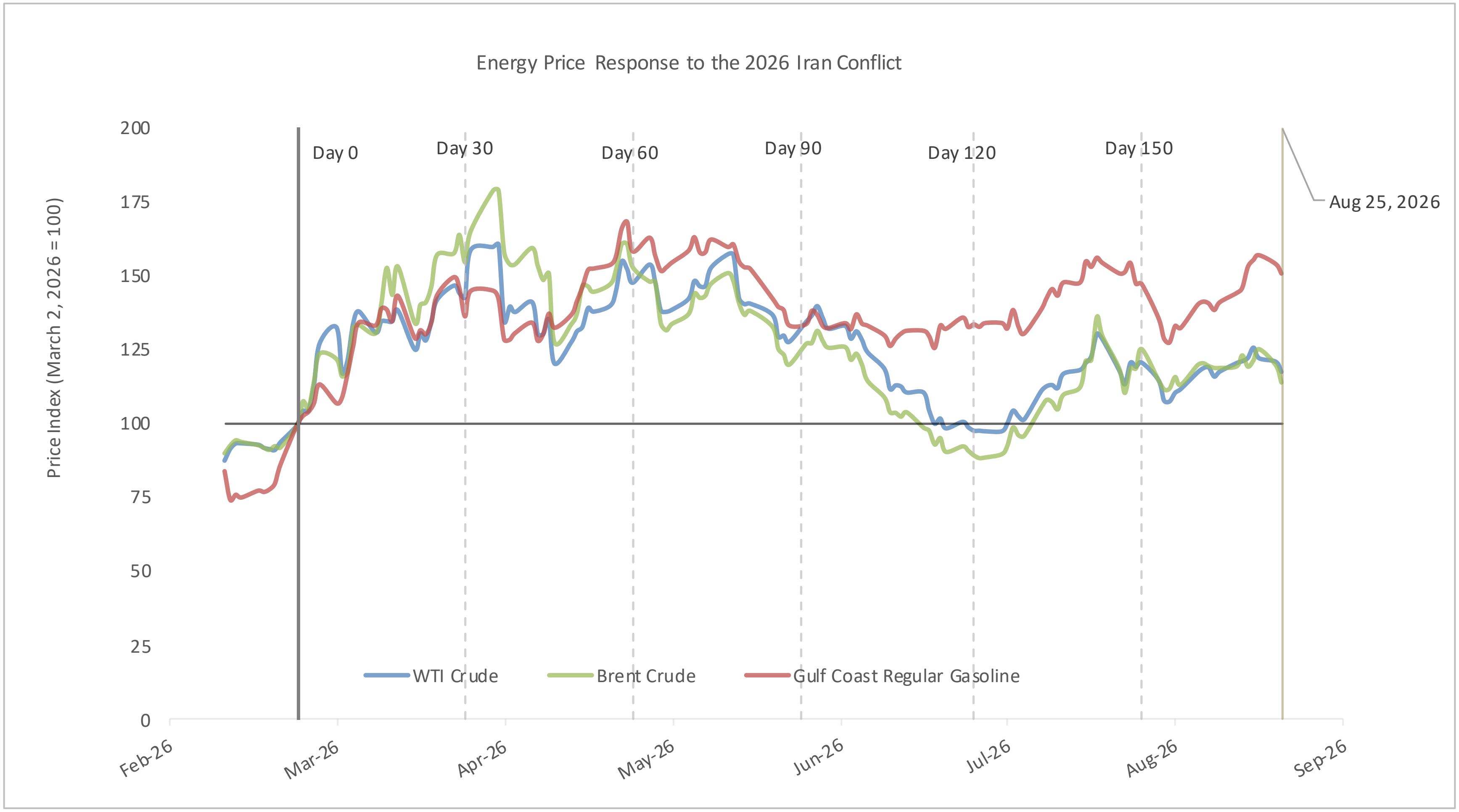
The following figure presents the same daily energy price series indexed to their March 2, 2026 values (March 2, 2026 = 100). Indexing each series to a common baseline facilitates comparison of the relative changes in WTI crude oil, Brent crude oil, and U.S. Gulf Coast regular gasoline prices during the period following the onset of the conflict.



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3. LOUISIANA OIL AND GAS ACTIVITY

Rig counts provide a timely measure of drilling activity and can offer insight into future oil and gas production, although the relationship also depends on well productivity, completion timing, energy prices, and other market conditions. Rising rig counts generally indicate expanding drilling activity, while declining counts suggest activity is easing. Because several Louisiana categories contain very few rigs, percentage changes should be interpreted alongside the underlying rig-count levels.

Source: Louisiana Department of Conservation and Energy & U.S. Energy Information Administration

Key Takeaways

- Louisiana's rig count declined over the weekly, four-week, and annual comparisons, while the U.S. total remained above its year-earlier level.
- Crude oil production has increased since its February low but remains below every earlier comparison period shown.
- Natural gas withdrawals rebounded sharply after February and remained above most recent comparison periods through the spring.

Table 3. Louisiana and U.S. Oil & Gas Rig Counts

Location	8/21/26	8/14/26	7/24/26	8/22/25	Change (%)		
						MoM	YoY
Louisiana (Total all areas)	34	36	37	40	-5.6%	-8.1%	-15.0%
North - Land	25	26	24	26	-3.8%	4.2%	-3.8%
South Inland - Water	0	0	0	2	N/M	N/M	-100.0%
South Inland - Land	1	1	2	3	0.0%	-50.0%	-66.7%
State Offshore	0	0	1	0	N/M	-100.0%	N/M
Louisiana Federal Offshore	8	9	10	9	-11.1%	-20.0%	-11.1%
U.S. Total	588	593	587	538	-0.8%	0.2%	9.3%

Note: N/M indicates that a percentage change is not meaningful because the comparison-period rig count was zero.

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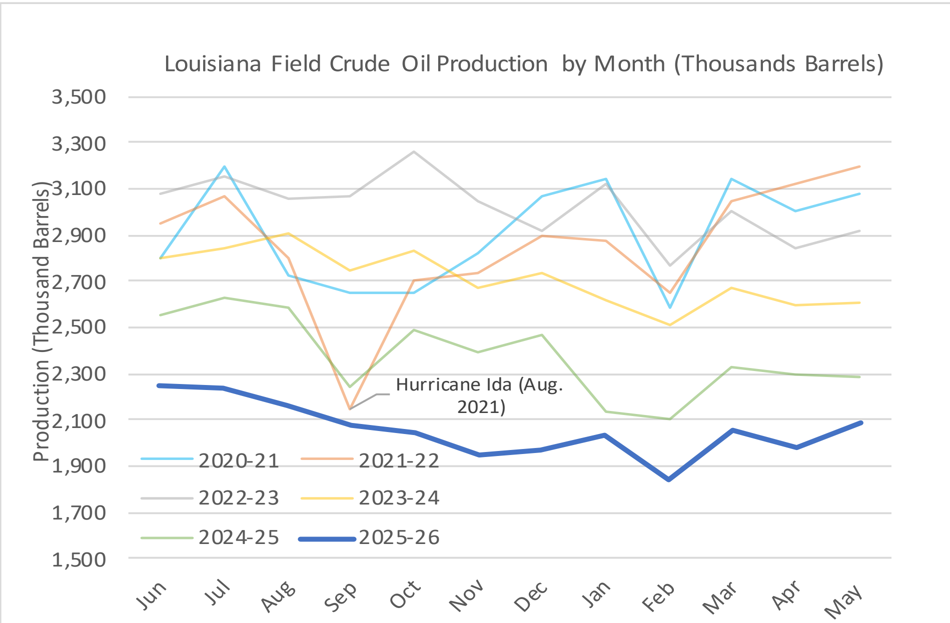
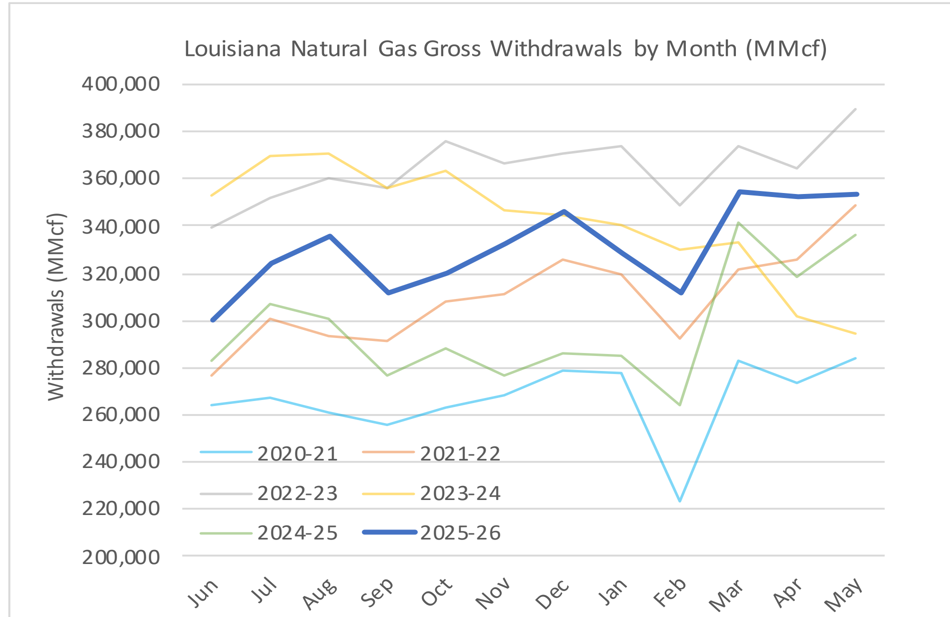
The figures compare Louisiana's monthly field crude oil production and natural gas gross withdrawals across June–May reporting periods from 2020–21 through 2025–26. Aligning the same calendar months across periods shows how the latest production profile compares with recent historical patterns. Note: May 2026 data are preliminary and April 2026 data have been revised.





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4. U.S. GROSS DOMESTIC PRODUCT

Table 4 presents an advanced estimate of U.S. real gross domestic product for the second quarter in 2026. The figure illustrates the breakdown of GDP components that contribute to the annualized change (1.5-percent) in real GDP from 2026:Q1 to 2026:Q2.

Source: bea.gov

Key Takeaways

- Real GDP increased at the same rate as in the advance estimate.
- Changes in the 2nd estimate include an upward revision to consumer spending that was partly offset by an upward revision to imports.
- Compared to the first quarter, the deceleration in real GDP in the second quarter reflects a downturn in government spending and decelerations in investment and exports that are partly offset by an acceleration in consumer spending.
- Imports increased more in the second quarter than in the first quarter.

Table 4. U.S. Real Gross Domestic Product and Major Expenditure Components, 2026:Q2 (Advance Estimate)

Component	2026:Q2	2026:Q1	2025:Q2	Change	
Gross Domestic Product (GDP)	$6,067.4	$6,045.1	$5,942.8	0.4%	2.1%
Personal Consumption Expenditures	$4,207.4	$4,171.9	$4,111.4	0.9%	2.3%
Gross Private Domestic Investment	$1,130.8	$1,123.2	$1,095.6	0.7%	3.2%
Net Exports of Goods and Services	($270.9)	($250.5)	($264.5)	8.2%	2.4%
Exports	$696.9	$689.3	$661.8	1.1%	5.3%
Imports	($967.8)	($939.7)	($926.3)	3.0%	4.5%
Government Consumption Expenditures and Gross Investment	$997.6	$1,000.1	$998.3	-0.2%	-0.1%

Note: Data are seasonally adjusted annual rates expressed in billions of chained (2017) dollars. Because imports are subtracted when calculating GDP, increases in imports reduce measured GDP growth and are shown in red.

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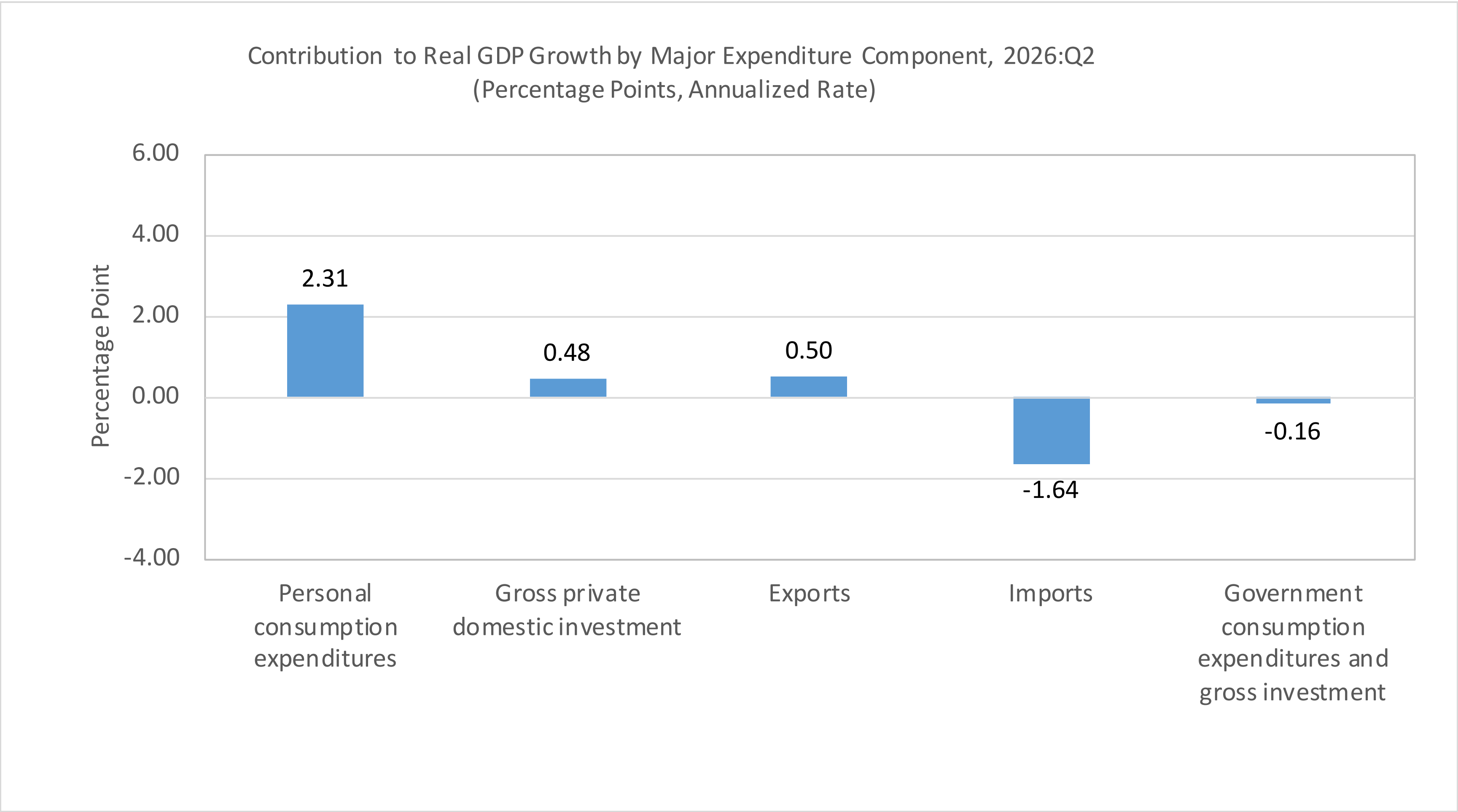

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September

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 in addition to state and local data.
Links to sources are included.

The September calendar will be revised when dates for additional data are announced.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1	2 Metro Employment Situation *[July]* Manufacturing - New Orders *[July]*	3 Construction Spending *[July]*	4 Employment Situation *[August]*	5
6	7 ISM PMI Manufacturing *[August]*	8 NFIB Small Business Report *[August]*	9 ISM PMI Services *[August]*	10 Wholesale Inventory *[July]* Pending Home Sales *[August]* PPI *[August]*	11 CPI *[August]* Federal Budget *[August]* Business Applications *[August]* Real Earnings *[August]*	12
13	14	15	16 Retail & Food Sales *[July; August Advance]* U.S. Import & Export PI *[August]*	17 Housing Starts *[August]*	18 State Employment *[August]* Industrial Production *[July]*	19
20	21 NAHB HMI *[September]*	22	23	24 New Residential Sales *[August]* Business Applications *[August Revised]*	25 Manufacturing - New Orders *[August Advance]*	26
27	28	29 The Conference Board's Consumer Confidence Index *[September]*	30 GDP, State GDP, and State Personal Income *[2026:Q2, 3rd Est) State PCE, 2025]*			