



THE TAR HEEL AFFORDABILITY CRISIS:

***COSTS SKYROCKET FOR WORKING
NORTH CAROLINIANS AS TRUMP AND
REPUBLICANS IGNORE WORSENING
CRISIS AND RIP AWAY HELP***



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THE TAR HEEL AFFORDABILITY CRISIS:

***Costs Skyrocket for Working North Carolinians
as Trump and Republicans Ignore Worsening
Crisis and Rip Away Help***

Donald Trump's destructive policies are ripping away North Carolinians' economic security. Between his massive cuts to government spending, the Trump-GOP Big, Ugly Bill, and his disastrous tariff regime, Trump's agenda is hurting the local economy in all areas, stoking a dire affordability crisis as food prices, gas prices, energy bills, health care costs, and housing costs spike.

A majority of North Carolinians believe Trump's tariffs are hurting their families' financial situation – and for good reason. Small business owners are sounding the alarm about rising costs and health care premium hikes. Local food businesses are being forced to raise prices, electricity bills in the state have shot up, and half a million residents stand to lose their health care as a result of the Trump-GOP budget, which has already cut off nearly 100,000 North Carolinians from food assistance benefits. Trump has cancelled millions of dollars in North Carolina clean energy investments, costing the state 1,849 jobs last year alone and driving a top local renewable energy provider to bankruptcy. For buyers and renters alike, housing has become increasingly unaffordable for median-income North Carolina households, with costs rising in all 15 metropolitan areas across the state. Even school closures are on the table as North Carolina educators struggle with rising costs and Trump's education cuts.

Throughout Trump's second term, the President and Republicans in Congress have worked in lock-step to reward their rich and powerful friends at the expense of everyone else. They are obliterating the economic security of millions across the country, and working families are the ones paying the price.

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North Carolina Cost Of Living

- **COST-OF-LIVING IS A TOP CONCERN FOR NORTH CAROLINIANS:** Donald Trump's economic policies have [raised costs](#) for North Carolina residents, and it shows:

- **THREE IN FOUR NORTH CAROLINA VOTERS ARE STRESSED ABOUT INFLATION AND RISING COSTS.** A February Change Research poll [found](#) that a majority of North Carolina voters think Donald Trump has made no or little progress on lowering the cost of groceries (66%), creating jobs and increasing wages (57%), or lowering the cost of gasoline or energy (53%). 59% of North Carolina voters say their incomes are falling behind the cost of living, and more than three-quarters are stressed about inflation and rising costs.
- **MOST NORTH CAROLINIANS SAY TRUMP'S POLICIES HAVE HURT THE ECONOMY.** A March Elon University-YouGov poll of North Carolina adults [found](#) that more than half (55%) believe the national economy has gotten worse since Trump took office last year, with only 20% saying it has gotten better. 53% say they have ex

Citizen Times

Rising food prices, tariffs forcing customers in Asheville to **eat the added costs**

- **COST OF GROCERIES IS UP:** Food costs are [rising](#) nationwide thanks to Donald Trump's tariffs and America-last trade policies – especially in North Carolina. Asheville food businesses are [raising](#) prices due to increased ingredient costs attributed to inflation and Trump's tariffs. A majority (51 percent) of North Carolinians now say basic goods such as groceries, personal care items, and household goods are [unaffordable](#).

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- **HEALTH CARE COSTS ARE UP THANKS TO TRUMP & REPUBLICANS:** The Trump-GOP Big, Ugly Bill [cuts](#) \$1 trillion from Medicaid and the Affordable Care Act (ACA), and **more than half a million North Carolinians** [stand to lose](#) their health care because of Trump and Republicans' changes to Medicaid and the ACA. During the open enrollment period, which ended in January, over **213,000 fewer North Carolinians bought health care coverage through the ACA**, a [nearly 30 percent drop](#) since 2025 and **the largest drop in the country**, accounting for 1 in 6 disenrollments nationwide. The state will [lose billions](#) in funding for hospitals due to these cuts, and North Carolina is [already seeking](#) \$1 billion from the federal government to shore up rural health care in anticipation of slashed budgets.

→ **NORTH CAROLINA RESIDENTS ARE DEEPLY CONCERNED ABOUT RISING HEALTH CARE COSTS:** A large majority (68%) of North Carolina voters are [concerned](#) that Trump and GOP cuts to health care **might make it harder for them to get the care they need**. A [majority](#) of North Carolina voters think Trump has made no or little progress in bringing down health care costs (68%). [63 percent](#) of North Carolinians say **health care and insurance are unaffordable**.

The Charlotte Observer

**Duke Energy proposes [15% rate hike](#)
over two-years for reliability,
growth needs**

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- **NORTH CAROLINA ENERGY COSTS SKYROCKETING:** Since Trump took office in January, household electric bills are [up 11 percent](#). Climate Power estimates that **electricity bills in the state have also risen \$240 annually**, and Duke Energy – which serves about 1.8 million people across Central and Western North Carolina – is [seeking a 15 percent rate hike](#). **A majority (53 percent) of North Carolinians now say energy and utility costs are unaffordable**, and a [majority](#) of North Carolina voters think Trump has made no or little progress on lowering the cost of gasoline or energy (53%).

→ **NC GAS PRICES HIT THEIR HIGHEST IN FOUR YEARS THANKS TO TRUMP'S WAR IN IRAN:** Trump's war in Iran has caused gas prices to skyrocket in North Carolina, where drivers are paying [nearly a dollar per gallon](#) more than they were a year ago, **spiking more than 35% year-over-year at peak**, which could [cost](#) the average North Carolina **an average of \$740 more** at the gas pump by the end of the year.

- **JOB LOSSES & LOST INVESTMENT:** Trump has **cancelled billions of dollars in North Carolina clean energy investments**, terminating [\\$1.3 billion](#) in clean energy funding for the state, including [\\$156 million](#) in solar grants. According to Climate Power, an estimated 1,849 jobs in North Carolina have already been lost due to these cuts:

→ **TRUMP-GOP POLICIES DROVE AN ASHVILLE ENERGY COMPANY TO BANKRUPTCY:** Asheville-based Pine Gate Renewables [declared bankruptcy](#) and [laid off](#) more than **78 percent of its workforce**, and is **closing its local Asheville facility in the wake of** Trump's big, ugly bill. Its subsidiary, Blue Ridge Power, [laid off](#) 517 workers, including 348 in Fayetteville and 169 in Asheville.

→ **THE TRUMP ADMINISTRATION KILLED A \$1.4 BILLION FACTORY PLANNED FOR EASTERN NC:** Natron Energy, which [closed and began liquidation](#) in September, **canceled a \$1.4 billion factory in Eastern North Carolina that would have created 1,000 jobs**. These cuts have prompted North Carolina to [join](#) a multi-state lawsuit against the Trump administration.

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- **TAR HEEL HOUSING CRUNCH:** Affordable housing in North Carolina is [becoming more scarce](#). [Nearly three-quarters](#) of North Carolina voters think Donald Trump has made no or little progress on lowering the cost of housing (71%). [70 percent](#) of North Carolinians also say housing in the state is unaffordable. **Home affordability has declined across all 15 of North Carolina's metropolitan areas** since 2019. Now, buying a home has [become unaffordable](#) for median-income households in all but one metropolitan area market in the state. North Carolina's housing availability rate has [dropped below 1 percent](#), and median home prices have [increased by over 66 percent](#) since 2020. The National Low Income Housing Coalition [found](#) that there is a severe shortage of affordable rental homes, with only 130,930 affordable rental homes available for 326,751 extremely low-income North Carolina households.
- **SMALL BUSINESSES ARE SUFFERING:** Many small business owners in North Carolina [say](#) they are struggling with rising costs, shipping delays, and economic uncertainty. A PNC [survey](#) of North Carolina business owners found that **51 percent of Raleigh-area business owners listed higher prices as an extreme concern**, higher than the national average. Trump's tariffs are threatening local industries in North Carolina. The state's craft brewing industry, for example, which [supports](#) more than 70,000 jobs and generates over \$13 billion in the state, has been [hit hard](#) by Trump's tariffs on aluminum and steel.

→ The Trump-GOP plan to [rip away](#) ACA tax credits will hit North Carolina's small businesses especially hard. **Over 136,000 small business owners** in the state [relied](#) on the ACA for coverage in 2025 – 1 in 7 ACA enrollees in North Carolina – and 87 percent of small business owners [reportedly](#) want Congress to permanently extend ACA tax credits.

- **TAR HEEL SCHOOLS IN CRISIS:** North Carolina schools are struggling amid [Trump and DOGE's budget cuts](#), Republican-caused funding disruptions, and higher costs. Earlier last year, the Trump administration [cancelled \\$121 million in federal grants to North Carolina schools](#) related to teacher training, mental health staff, and school meals. As the school year began, the Trump-GOP budget and government shutdown [disrupted](#) a further \$199 million in federal grants to North Carolina schools. A recent survey found that North Carolina teachers are [bearing the second-highest classroom supply costs](#) in the nation this school year. In Western North Carolina, some school districts have even [considered closing schools](#) in order to address multi-million dollar budget shortfalls.

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- **HELP RIPPED AWAY:** Trump's budget cuts are **ripping away vital assistance** for health care, food, and more from hundreds of thousands of North Carolinians.

→ **RIPPING AWAY HEALTH CARE PREMIUM TAX CREDITS:** Thanks to Donald Trump and Republicans in Congress, North Carolinians who buy health insurance on their own through the Affordable Care Act are [facing](#) an **average premium increase of nearly 29 percent**, and **just under 900,000 people** [across the state](#) will see their coverage costs for this year [soar](#) after the Trump-GOP budget [ripped away](#) critical tax credits that make ACA coverage affordable.

→ **CUTTING NORTH CAROLINA FOOD ASSISTANCE:** Trump and Republicans in Congress [cut \\$187 billion](#) in food assistance, which could [leave](#) hundreds of thousands of North Carolina residents with reduced food aid. **Already, [more than 94,000](#) North Carolinians have lost their SNAP benefits since the Trump-GOP bill was signed into law last July.** These cuts to federal food aid leave North Carolina [without](#) \$2.8 billion in annual federal funds that generate \$4.2 billion in economic impact. If the state is forced to exit the SNAP program altogether due to these cuts, it could leave another 1.2 million North Carolinians, including 600,000 children, [without food assistance](#).

→ **KILLING CLEAN ENERGY:** Trump and Republicans cut billions in clean energy tax credits. As a result, **tens of thousands of North Carolinians** employed in the clean energy industry could [lose their jobs](#), and some North Carolina households could **see their energy bills rise by 18 percent** because of the [removal](#) of tax credits for clean energy.

→ **TEARING DOWN DISASTER AID:** The Trump administration's decision to leave North Carolinians to [fend for themselves](#) in the aftermath of Hurricane Helene [continues to impact](#) Western North Carolina's economy.