



REPORT · JULY 2026

The Centennial State *Affordability* Crisis

Costs skyrocket for working Coloradans as Trump and Republicans ignore crisis and rip away help.

AN OPEN LETTER · JULY 2026

Costs are skyrocketing for working Coloradans. Trump and Republicans are *ignoring the crisis* — and ripping away help.

Donald Trump's destructive policies are ripping away Centennial Staters' economic security. Between his massive cuts to government spending, the Trump-GOP big, ugly bill, his war of choice in Iran, and his disastrous tariffs, Trump's agenda has caused nothing but pain to the local economy in all areas, stoking a dire affordability crisis as energy prices, food, health care, and housing costs spike at the same time.

The vast majority of Colorado residents are deeply concerned about inflation and the cost of living – and for good reason. Colorado's cost of living now ranks third-highest in the U.S. Prices are rising nearly 20% faster in the Denver area than the rest of the country, housing in Colorado is some of the least affordable in the country, and gas prices are through the roof. Nearly a quarter of a million residents stand to lose their health care as a result of the Trump-GOP budget, and tens of thousands are losing access to food aid. Under Trump, Colorado has lost nearly \$300 million in energy investments, even as electricity costs rise for residents throughout the state. Meanwhile, high costs are pushing workers out of the state as the labor force weakens under Trump's policies.

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.

That is why state leaders like ourselves are coming together to highlight what President Trump has done to hurt Colorado families across our great state and to fight back against this reckless administration. We hope you will join us in standing up to Trump and his agenda, which is skyrocketing costs across the Centennial State.

SIGNED

*Rep. Brianna Titone**Rep. Sheila Lieder**Sen. Lisa Cutter**Sen. Cathy Kipp*

— BY THE NUMBERS

The Centennial State affordability crisis, in figures.

3rd

Highest cost of living in the U.S. – Colorado's current national ranking.

Fox21 News

\$3,300

More that the average Colorado family has spent on goods or services because of inflation under Trump.

Joint Economic Committee

19%

How much faster prices are climbing in the Denver area than nationwide.

Bureau of Labor Statistics

73

Colorado Realtors Affordability Index reading in June – the median household earns just 73% of the income needed to qualify for a median-priced home.

Colorado Realtors

200,000

Coloradans seeing coverage costs soar after the Trump-GOP budget ripped away ACA premium tax credits.

KFF

\$444M

Annual loss in Medicaid funding for Colorado hospitals due to the Trump-GOP health care cuts.

Third Way

\$780M

More that Coloradans have spent on gas since the beginning of Trump's war with Iran.

Joint Economic Committee

\$281M

Colorado clean energy investment lost under Trump, across 14 project cancellations.

Climate Power

SECTION 01 · COST OF LIVING

Cost-of-living is Centennial Staters' *top concern*.

The cost of living is Colorado voters' top concern. Colorado's cost of living now ranks third-highest in the U.S. Nearly 85% of Colorado women surveyed say the high cost of living is outpacing their income. After Trump and Republicans passed their big, ugly bill, polling showed seven in 10 Coloradans were worried they would not be able to afford to live in Colorado in the future. Colorado families have spent, on average, \$3,300 more on goods or services because of inflation under Trump, according to the Joint Economic Committee. In the Denver area, prices are climbing 19% faster than prices nationwide as inflation hit its highest level in years in May.

“*Seven in 10 Coloradans were worried they would not be able to afford to live in Colorado in the future.*”

— COLORADO PULSE POLL · POST-BIG-UGLY-BILL SURVEY

SECTION 02 · HOUSING

Colorado's *housing crunch*.

High housing costs are the second-highest concern facing Coloradans, with nearly 60% of Colorado voters saying the cost of housing is a “very big problem.” Colorado ranks 48th nationally for housing affordability and has the fifth-highest housing costs in the country. The Colorado Realtors Affordability Index hit 73 in June, meaning the median Colorado household earns just 73% of the income needed to qualify for a median-priced home in the state, which is over \$600,000. It’s even worse in the Denver metropolitan area, where the average household earns just 69% of the income needed to qualify for the median-priced home. As housing becomes less affordable, foreclosures are on the rise across the Front Range. Colorado families have spent hundreds more on housing because of inflation under Trump, according to the Joint Economic Committee.

SECTION 03 · HEALTH CARE

Health care costs are up thanks to *Trump & Republicans*.

The Trump-GOP big, ugly bill cut \$1 trillion from Medicaid and the Affordable Care Act (ACA), and nearly 200,000 patients in Colorado could lose their health insurance and access to care because of Trump and Republicans' cuts to Medicaid and the ACA. Already, nearly 35,000 patients have lost health care coverage, including nearly 25,000 Coloradans who have lost Medicaid coverage since the passage of the big, ugly bill.

Colorado hospitals are losing billions in Medicaid spending.

The state will lose \$444 million in funding for hospitals every year due to the Trump-GOP health care cuts. In an attempt to put a band-aid on top of the massive cuts, the Trump administration doled out a pitiful rural health care grant to Colorado that fails to cover the Medicaid spending reductions. Worse still, only 15% of the funding can go to pay facilities for uncompensated care and there is no mechanism ensuring the funding will go to the communities that need it most.

Colorado residents are deeply concerned about rising health care costs.

Before the bill was passed, 73% of Colorado voters said they wanted Republicans in Congress to either maintain or increase Medicaid spending, not cut it. 94% of Colorado voters say health care and drug costs are a problem, and nearly 60% say the current health care system does not meet the needs of most Coloradans.

SECTION 04 · FOOD

In Colorado, *food costs* are up.

Food costs are rising nationwide thanks to Donald Trump's tariffs and America-last trade policies – especially in Colorado. As food costs rise across the state, Colorado families are increasingly feeling the squeeze. Concern with food and grocery prices is near-universal in Colorado, with 96% of voters saying food costs are a problem and 44% saying food costs are a “very big problem.”

“*96% of Colorado voters say food costs are a problem. Concern is near-universal.*

– COLORADO POLLING INSTITUTE

SECTION 05 · ENERGY

Colorado's *energy affordability* crisis.

Since Trump took office last year, his tariffs and wars of choice have sparked a national energy affordability crisis that has hit Colorado especially hard:

Centennial State gas prices skyrocketing.

Trump's war in Iran has caused gas prices to skyrocket in Colorado, where the [average retail price](#) of gas is up nearly 80% since the start of the year. Nearly nine-in-10 Coloradans (89%) [view](#) the cost of gas as a problem, and more than 40% say it's a "very big problem." People across Colorado have [spent](#) \$780 million more on gas since the beginning of Trump's war with Iran.

Colorado utility costs spike.

During Trump's first year back in office, Colorado families [paid \\$80 more](#) for electricity than they did in 2024. Climate Power estimates that electric bills in Colorado are [rising nearly \\$120 annually](#). More than nine-in-10 Colorado voters (93%) [view](#) utility costs as a problem. To make matters worse, Xcel Energy, which [serves](#) some 1.6 million Colorado customers, is seeking to [raise household electric bills](#) and [natural gas costs](#) even more.

SECTION 06 · JOBS & INVESTMENT

Job losses & lost investment.

Trump has threatened hundreds of millions of dollars in Colorado clean energy investments, leading to 14 project cancellations and roughly \$281 million worth of lost investments. Colorado's labor market likely weakened in 2025, with the Denver job market shrinking toward the end of the year. Three in four Colorado voters said they are concerned about the availability of good-paying jobs where they live, according to a March survey by the Colorado Polling Institute. High housing costs are pushing workers out of the state, with 73% of Colorado businesses saying the cost of living is a top barrier to attracting talent.

Trump's war on health care hits CO small businesses hard.

The Trump-GOP effort to rip away ACA tax credits is hitting Colorado small businesses especially hard. Over 51,000 small business owners in the state relied on the ACA for coverage in 2025 – more than 1 in 5 ACA enrollees in Colorado – and 87 percent of small business owners wanted Republicans in Congress to permanently extend ACA tax credits.

SECTION 07 · HELP RIPPED AWAY

Help *ripped away*.

Trump's budget cuts are ripping away vital assistance for health care, food, and more from hundreds of thousands of Centennial Staters.

Ripping away health care premium tax credits.

Thanks to Donald Trump and Republicans in Congress, Colorado residents who bought health insurance on their own through the ACA and received tax credits are faced an average premium increase of 101 percent, and over 200,000 people across the state are seeing their coverage costs for this year soar after the Trump-GOP budget ripped away critical tax credits that make ACA coverage affordable. Already, nearly 10,000 Coloradans have lost ACA coverage since the passage of the big, ugly bill.

Cutting Colorado food assistance.

Trump and Republicans in Congress cut \$187 billion in food assistance, which helped give more than 600,000 Colorado residents access to food. These cuts leave tens of people at risk of losing their food aid and will leave the state without \$519 million in annual federal funds – a 38% reduction – by 2029. Nearly 36,000 Colorado residents have already lost food assistance through SNAP since the passage of the Trump-GOP bill – a roughly 6% drop in enrollees since June 2025.

DEFEND AMERICA ACTION

DEFEND AMERICA ACTION • JULY 2026

Working Coloradans are paying the price. It's time to fight back.

Defend America Action is a 501(c)(4) organization dedicated to defending working families from the destructive policies of the Trump administration and Congressional Republicans.

Every figure and citation in this report links to its source — from state and federal agencies, independent polling institutes, and Colorado newsrooms covering the story on the ground.

DefendAmericaAction.org

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