

DEFEND **AMERICA**
ACTION

REPORT · AUGUST 2026

The Lone Star State *Affordability* Crisis

Everything's bigger in Texas – including the prices, thanks to Donald Trump.

A REPORT · AUGUST 2026

Costs are skyrocketing for working Texans. Trump and Republicans are *ripping away help*.

Costs are skyrocketing for Texans as a result of Donald Trump's failed agenda. Trump's approval rating in Texas, a state he won by double digits in 2024, is deep in the red at around negative 17 percentage points. As Donald Trump burns billions in taxpayer funds on ICE, golden ballrooms, and his war with Iran, polling shows that cost-of-living is Texans' top concern – and for good reason. More than half of Texas renters and nearly a quarter of homeowners are cost-burdened by housing costs. Most Texans rate the cost of everyday necessities as “poor” or “terrible.” Household incomes in the state aren't keeping up with rising grocery prices or energy costs. Household electric bills have risen three times faster than inflation overall since Trump took office again last January. Meanwhile, gas prices were up 50% in mid-August since the start of the year.

Instead of addressing the affordability crisis, Trump and Republicans in Austin and Washington are ripping away help. Trump has threatened thousands of jobs, jeopardized billions in Texas energy investments, and ripped away well over \$1 trillion in federal funding for health care and food aid nationwide. Already, over 365,000 Texans who relied on Medicaid, CHIP, or the ACA have lost the coverage they relied on since Trump and Republicans gutted health care last July. Additionally, 651,000 Texans have lost food assistance after Trump and the GOP passed their massive tax bill – a stark 18% drop in SNAP participation in just over a year. Trump and Republicans in Congress have worked in lockstep to reward their rich and powerful friends at the expense of everyone else. They are obliterating the economic security of millions of Texans and people across the country – and working families are the ones paying the price.

— BY THE NUMBERS

The Lone Star State affordability crisis, in figures.

-17

Trump's Texas approval rating, in points – deep in the red in a state he won by double digits in 2024.

Statewide TX polling

\$2,500+

More the average Texas household has spent on goods and services because of inflation under Trump.

Joint Economic Committee

+50%

Rise in Texas gas prices between January and mid-August. Electricity rates are up 16%.

YCharts

1.7M

Texans who stand to lose their health care by 2034 due to Trump-GOP Medicaid and ACA cuts.

Texas Tribune

367,270

Texans who have already lost Medicaid, CHIP, or ACA coverage since the Trump-GOP cuts passed last July.

Georgetown CCF

\$609M

Annual loss to Texas hospitals from Trump-GOP Medicaid cuts alone.

Third Way

\$21B

Cost of Trump's tariffs to Texas – the second-highest tariff bill of any state in 2025.

CNBC

651,954

Texans kicked off SNAP food assistance since the Trump-GOP tax bill – a stark 18% drop in enrollment.

Center on Budget & Policy Priorities

SECTION 01 · COST OF LIVING

Cost-of-living is Texans' *top concern*.

Inflation, higher prices, and the economy are among Texas voters' top three concerns. 57% of Texans rate the cost of everyday necessities as “poor” or “terrible,” and 58% disapprove of Trump’s handling of inflation and prices. As of July 2026, the average Texas household has spent over \$2,500 more on goods and services because of inflation under President Trump. Wages are not keeping pace: inflation outpaced wage growth for the fourth straight month in July, running at 3.4% against 3.2% earnings growth. More than three in four (76%) Latino voters in Texas say the cost of living/inflation is a very important issue – the top concern among Latino voters statewide. Nearly 80% of Houston residents are concerned about the cost-of-living outpacing wages, and 3 in 4 are concerned about the high cost-of-living.

SECTION 02 · FOOD

In Texas, food costs are *up*.

Food costs are rising nationwide thanks to Donald Trump's tariffs and America-last trade policies, and Texas families are feeling it in both of the state's largest metros. 65% of Texas voters are "very concerned" about the price of food and consumer goods, second only to health care among their economic worries. Groceries have climbed fastest in exactly the categories families buy every week: fresh fruits and vegetables are up 9.5% in Dallas-Fort Worth and 6.5% in Houston over the past year, outpacing overall inflation in both metros by a wide margin.

Houston food prices jump.

Food prices in the Houston area climbed more than three times as fast as overall area inflation over the year ending in June 2026. Dairy products rose 5.1%, and fresh fruits and vegetables rose 6.5%.

Metroplex food prices spike.

Grocery prices in the Dallas-Fort Worth area are also rising faster than area inflation overall, with groceries up 4.2% year-over-year compared to less than 3% overall as of July 2026. All six major grocery categories increased, led by fresh fruits and vegetables at 9.5%, which jumped 8% in just two months. Families in the Dallas-Fort Worth area pay some of the highest grocery costs in the state, and rates of people seeking food assistance are rising alongside prices.

SECTION 03 · HEALTH CARE

Texas health care costs are up thanks to *Trump & Republicans*.

The Trump-GOP law cut over \$1 trillion from Medicaid and the Affordable Care Act (ACA). As a result, more than 3.7 million people across the state saw their ACA coverage costs at least double on average this year, and more than 1.7 million Texans stand to lose their health care by 2034. Already, 220,925 Texans who relied on Medicaid or CHIP have lost their coverage, and 146,345 Texans dropped their ACA health care coverage after premiums skyrocketed – a combined loss of 367,270 people losing the coverage they relied on since Trump and Republicans passed their massive health care cuts last July. Texas hospitals are estimated to lose \$609 million a year due to Medicaid cuts alone. 34 Texas health care providers are closing, have already announced cuts, or are at risk of closure since the passage of the Trump-GOP law.

Health care costs are a top issue for Texans.

Nearly 9 in 10 Texans are concerned about the cost of health care, with two-thirds saying they are “very concerned.” 69% of Texas Latino voters cite health care access and costs as a top issue, the second-highest issue behind inflation and the cost of living. 42% of Texas renters have delayed seeking health care because of other expenses. Health care is Trump’s worst-rated issue in Texas, where just 28% approve of his handling of it against 53% who disapprove, and only 22% of Texans approve of how state leaders and the Texas Legislature have handled health care, the lowest approval of any issue tested.

SECTION 04 · SMALL BUSINESS

Texas small businesses are *suffering*.

Texas small businesses have been disproportionately hurt by Trump's policies. Nearly half of Texas businesses surveyed say they have been negatively impacted by Trump's tariffs, including more than 70% of Texas manufacturers and 60% of Texas retailers. Texas importers paid the second-highest tariff bill in 2025, with the cost of Trump's tariffs running around \$21 billion in the state. The state is home to over 3.3 million small businesses. The Trump-GOP plan to rip away ACA tax credits is also hitting these small businesses especially hard. Over 665,000 small business owners in the state rely on the ACA for coverage – nearly 1 in 6 ACA enrollees in Texas.

“*Nearly half of Texas businesses say they've been hurt by Trump's tariffs – including more than 70% of Texas manufacturers.*”

– DALLAS MORNING NEWS · BUSINESS IMPACT SURVEY

SECTION 05 · HOUSING

The Lone Star *housing crunch*.

More than half of Texas renters and nearly a quarter of homeowners are cost-burdened. Nearly half of Texans (49%) call the cost of housing a major problem where they live, a figure that climbs to 60% among renters, and 58% say they are just getting by or falling behind financially, including 43% of middle-class Texans. 65% of Texas Latino voters cite housing affordability as a top issue facing the state. Texas homeowners also pay the seventh-highest property taxes in the country. Homebuilders and homebuyers were heavily impacted by Trump's tariffs, with builders estimating a typical cost of \$10,900 per home from recent tariff actions and more than 60% reporting higher costs as a direct result.

SECTION 06 · ENERGY

Texas energy costs & gas prices *skyrocketing*.

Since Trump took office last January, residential electricity rates have risen nearly 16 percent — three times faster than overall inflation. Climate Power estimates that electricity bills in the state are rising \$268 annually. Trump's war in Iran has also caused gas prices to skyrocket in Texas, where Lone Star State drivers are paying 50% more at the pump than they were at the start of the year. High gas prices have already cost the average Texas household an average of \$584 more, a cumulative \$6 billion.

SECTION 07 · JOBS & INVESTMENT

Job losses & lost investment in Texas.

Since Trump's election, over \$5.5 billion in Texas energy investments have been lost or stalled, leading to nearly 5,000 jobs lost or delayed – among the highest in the country. 26 energy projects have been cancelled or delayed since Trump's election. Trump and Republicans in Congress killed the clean energy tax credits that built the Texas solar industry, which led the nation in canceled generation projects and abandoned investment through April 2026. Nearly a third of all canceled solar projects nationwide in Q1 2026 were in Texas. Thanks to the Trump administration, rural Texas farmers also lost key energy grants at the end of March.

SECTION 08 · HELP RIPPED AWAY

Help *ripped away* from Texans.

Trump's budget cuts are ripping away vital assistance for health care, food, and more from millions of Texans. Trump and Republicans in Congress cut \$187 billion in food assistance, which helps give about 3.5 million Texans access to food. More than 66,000 SNAP recipients live in the Dallas-Fort Worth area alone. These cuts leave an estimated 275,000 Texas families at risk of losing their food aid and will leave Texas without \$2.45 billion in annual federal funds – a 32% reduction. Compared to last June, before Trump and Republicans passed cuts to food assistance, Texas has already lost 651,954 SNAP participants – a stark 18% loss.

DEFEND AMERICA ACTION

DEFEND AMERICA ACTION • AUGUST 2026

Working Texans 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 the University of Texas Politics Project and the Texas Tribune to KFF, Climate Power, the Joint Economic Committee, and Texas's independent newsrooms.

DefendAmericaAction.org

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