

REPORT · OCTOBER 2026

New York is paying for *Donald Trump's* mess.

Affordability is the top concern in New York — and Trump and Republicans in Congress have spent nearly two years making it worse.

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Trump's affordability crisis is hitting *his hometown the hardest*.

Ask New Yorkers what worries them most, and a majority give the same answer: cost-of-living. Inflation in the New York City metropolitan area, already among the most expensive areas in the country, is the second-highest of any metro. Trump and Republicans in Congress built the squeeze one decision at a time. First, they ripped away over \$1 trillion from Medicaid and the Affordable Care Act (ACA), stripping Essential Plan coverage from roughly 450,000 New Yorkers on July 1 and putting 1.5 million New Yorkers on track to lose their insurance while cutting \$8 billion a year from the state's hospitals. They also cut \$187 billion from food assistance, pushing nearly 235,000 New Yorkers off SNAP and shifting hundreds of millions in new administrative costs onto New York counties. Then, Trump willingly launched a war with Iran that has cost New Yorkers \$3 billion more at the pump and pushed gas in New York to \$4.50 a gallon. Trump also cancelled the emergency housing vouchers that kept thousands of New York City families housed, twice halted the offshore wind project built to power half a million New York homes, and shut down the Head Start office that served New York. Now, he has slapped tariffs on New York's biggest trading partner. All told, the average New York household has had to spend an estimated \$5,000 more on everyday essentials under Trump and, less than two years into his second term, two-thirds of New York voters disapprove of the job he is doing.

Trump's affordability crisis is hitting his hometown the hardest. In New York City, the median rent has climbed to a record \$3,616, and the rental vacancy rate stands at 1.41 percent as nearly 100,000 people sleep in city shelters. Annual childcare costs now run in the tens of thousands, and two in three New Yorkers have had to choose between groceries and rent or utilities in the past year. Poverty in the city has climbed to a record 26 percent, with 2.2 million New Yorkers, including nearly 450,000 children, living below the line. High costs are even displacing longtime New Yorkers, with the state losing a net 137,586 residents to other states last year. New York City alone shed nearly 114,000 more residents than it gained, and its public schools lost 22,000 students. The bottom line: Trump and Republicans in Congress have spent almost two years rewarding their rich and powerful friends at the expense of everyone else, and working families in New York are the ones paying the price.

— BY THE NUMBERS

The Empire State affordability crisis, in figures.

\$5,000

More the average New York household has spent on everyday essentials under Trump.

Office of Senator Gillibrand

66%

Of New York voters disapprove of Trump's job performance – 75% in New York City.

City & State NY

1.5M

New Yorkers projected to lose health insurance under the Trump-GOP law – \$13B/yr stripped from the state's health care system.

Office of Gov. Hochul

\$8B

Annual cuts New York's hospitals face under the Trump-GOP law.

Office of Gov. Hochul

235,000

New Yorkers off SNAP since the Trump-GOP cuts – Brooklyn alone absorbing 42% of recent losses.

Hunger Solutions NY

\$3B+

Extra New Yorkers have paid for gas since Trump's war with Iran – \$521 per family. Gas now averages \$4.50/gal.

Office of Senator Gillibrand

26%

New York City poverty rate – a record, with 2.2M New Yorkers (including 450K children) below the line.

Robin Hood · Poverty Tracker

137,586

Net residents New York lost to other states last year – NYC alone shed nearly 114,000.

Cornell PAD

SECTION 01 · COST OF LIVING

Cost-of-living towers over *every other issue* in New York.

New York residents are facing high prices due to Trump's economic policies. The cost-of-living ranks as the most important issue facing New Yorkers for 53 percent of voters, and 77 percent name it as one of their top two. 86 percent of New Yorkers say the cost-of-living for an average family is not affordable. The average New York household has had to spend an estimated \$5,000 more on everyday essentials since Trump took office again. Nearly one in four New Yorkers say all six of their core monthly expenses are weighing heavily on their budgets. Two-thirds of voters say New York is headed in the wrong direction on the cost-of-living, and 66 percent disapprove of the job Trump is doing (including 75 percent in New York City). New York City's poverty rate has climbed to a record 26 percent, twice the national rate, with 2.2 million New Yorkers, including nearly 450,000 children, living in poverty and three in five city residents living within one setback of it.

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— MARIST POLL · SIENA RESEARCH INSTITUTE

SECTION 02 · DISPLACEMENT

The cost-of-living is *displacing longtime* New Yorkers.

New Yorkers are running out of room in their budgets, and many are answering the only way they can: by leaving. One in three New Yorkers now plan to move out of the state within five years, and 40 percent of them name the cost-of-living as the reason. New York lost a net 137,586 residents to other states between July 2024 and July 2025, up from the year before – leaving the state hundreds of thousands of residents below its pre-COVID population. New York City alone lost nearly 114,000 more residents to the rest of the country than it gained in 2025. The exodus now runs across every income level, but the loss of working- and middle-class residents in particular reflects the high cost of raising a family in the city. Households with young children are 40 percent more likely to leave New York than households without them, and 36 percent of households leaving the state are moving in search of more affordable housing.

New York City schools are emptying out.

New York City's public schools lost about 22,000 students between the 2024-25 and 2025-26 school years, and are projected to lose more than 20,000 more this school year. The city is spending \$290 million this year just to keep shrinking schools from losing their budgets. The system has shed roughly 100,000 students since 2020, a decline experts tie to the affordability crisis pushing families out of the city and, more recently, to immigrant families leaving amid Trump's mass deportations.

SECTION 03 · HOUSING

New York City's housing crisis has *deepened* under Trump.

New York City rents have never been higher, and Trump and Republicans are pulling away the federal help that keeps families housed. The median asking rent in the city has climbed to a record \$3,616. New York families have spent \$1,078 more on housing costs such as rent and mortgage payments since Trump took office, and homebuilders have been heavily impacted by Trump's tariffs, with builders estimating a typical cost of \$10,900 per home from past tariff actions. The citywide rental vacancy rate stands at 1.41 percent, 9.2 percent of all rental housing is overcrowded, and 43 percent of city renters spend more than 30 percent of their income on rent. In July, 96,528 people slept in New York City shelters each night, including 30,842 children.

Trump ripped away housing help from New Yorkers.

Trump cut off the Emergency Housing Voucher program four years early, and more than 5,200 New York City households, most of them formerly homeless, stand to lose their rental assistance by the end of 2026. NYCHA's plan to move those families onto regular Section 8 vouchers collapsed after Trump's HUD denied the agency's request for new vouchers, and NYCHA has closed its Section 8 waitlist altogether. Trump's budget would cut New York City housing programs by up to 42 percent, gutting the Section 8, public housing, and project-based rental assistance programs that serve over 350,000 New York City households.

SECTION 04 · HEALTH CARE

New York 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), the largest health care cuts in American history, and New York has been hit harder than almost any state. On July 1, roughly 450,000 New Yorkers lost their Essential Plan coverage because of the Trump-GOP cuts, nearly 230,000 of them in New York City. By the end of the year, New York City expects 950,000 city residents to lose government-funded health coverage. The GOP law is projected to leave 1.5 million New Yorkers uninsured and to strip almost \$13 billion a year from the state's health care system. Nearly 535,000 New Yorkers have already lost Medicaid/CHIP coverage since the passage of the GOP law. After Trump and Republicans ripped away ACA tax credits, premiums skyrocketed. Already, over 50,000 New Yorkers have dropped their marketplace coverage, and New York insurers are seeking another huge, 20.6 percent increase for 2027.

New York hospitals on the brink.

New York's hospitals and health systems face an estimated \$8 billion in annual cuts under the Trump-GOP law. New York City's public hospital system, where roughly 70 percent of discharges are covered by Medicaid or the Essential Plan, expects to lose more than \$600 million in federal Medicaid dollars this year while absorbing a wave of newly uninsured patients. Analysts estimate that between 45 and 70 New York hospitals are at risk of closing, including nearly a third of the state's rural hospitals. Since the law passed, 74 New York hospitals, clinics, and providers have closed, cut services, or are at risk of doing so.

SECTION 05 · ENERGY & GAS

Trump drives up *utility bills & gas prices.*

Families in New York paid \$190 more for electricity in 2025 under Trump than in 2024, and are projected to have paid \$225 more in just the first half of 2026 than in the same stretch of 2024, while households that heat with oil paid \$248 more this March than a year earlier, a nearly 40 percent jump after Trump started his war with Iran. Con Edison bills for New York City customers are rising 9 percent for electricity and 6 percent for gas over the next three years on top of those costs, and 72 percent of New Yorkers say utility bills are seriously straining their finances. Trump's war with Iran has cost New Yorkers an estimated \$3 billion more at the pump, \$521 for the average family, and gas in New York now averages roughly \$4.50 a gallon with diesel over \$6.50, up roughly \$1.30 a gallon from a year ago.

Trump killed New York energy investments & jobs.

Since Trump's election, \$3.2 billion in New York energy investments have been lost, cancelled, or stalled, putting nearly 8,500 jobs on the line. Trump's Interior Department twice halted construction on Empire Wind, an offshore project built off Long Island to power more than 500,000 New York City homes. The Trump administration shut down Sunrise Wind as well, also built off Long Island, and idled thousands of union workers until federal judges let work resume in January. The project was 60 percent complete and had already cost \$4 billion when Trump tried to kill it.

SECTION 06 · FAMILY COSTS

Raising a family in New York City costs *more* under Trump.

A year of center-based infant care in New York City now costs an average of \$20,978, and family-based care runs \$16,848, higher than anywhere else in the state. Instead of helping, Trump shut down the regional Head Start office that served New York, putting the roughly 50,000 New York children in Head Start at risk, and withheld roughly \$65 million in Head Start funding from New York programs in the first months of 2025 compared with the same period a year earlier. Two Head Start centers in Western New York closed when Trump's funding freeze left them unable to make payroll, laying off 84 employees and leaving the families of more than 200 children without care. Nearly 450,000 New York City children now live in poverty.

SECTION 07 · FOOD

In New York, *food costs* are up.

67 percent of New Yorkers, and 74 percent of families with children, have had to choose between buying enough groceries and paying rent, utilities, or other necessities in the past year, and 52 percent of New York City residents have taken on debt because of the rising cost of food. More than 40 percent of city families cannot afford their weekly groceries, falling short by about \$200. In New York City, the price of a pound of ground beef jumped 14 percent across 20 grocery stores in six months, reaching \$7.59 in Brownsville, Brooklyn.

SECTION 08 · SMALL BUSINESS

New York small businesses are *suffering*.

New York is home to 2.4 million small businesses that employ 3.9 million workers. Trump's trade war with Canada, the state's number one trading partner, is squeezing New York's small businesses. Earlier this summer, Trump slapped a 50 percent tariff on \$20 billion in Canadian goods, from cement and building materials to dairy. Canada retaliated with tariffs as high as 50 percent on American goods, slamming new costs directly on New York's farmers, construction sites, restaurants, and corner stores. New York's exports to Canada already fell by \$3.8 billion last year because of tariffs, according to the State Comptroller, and Canadian tourism to New York City fell by at least 25 percent last year and continues to drop. Canadians were once the city's second-largest source of international visitors. Along the northern border, crossings from Canada fell by more than 3 million, a 21 percent decline, and 66 percent of North Country tourism businesses report losing Canadian customers, with one in four saying they may cut staff.

SECTION 09 · HELP RIPPED AWAY

Help *ripped away* from New Yorkers.

Trump's budget cuts are ripping away vital assistance for food, health care, and more from millions of New Yorkers. Trump and Republicans in Congress cut \$187 billion in food assistance, which helped around 3 million New Yorkers (including nearly 1.8 million New York City residents) put food on the table at the time. SNAP participation in New York has declined by nearly 235,000 people between June 2025 and June 2026 – a roughly 8% decline. In June alone, about 22,200 New Yorkers lost their benefits under the new GOP-imposed rules (more than \$5 million a month in lost food assistance) with Brooklyn alone absorbing 42 percent of the losses. Eventually, the state projects that more than 300,000 New York households will lose some or all of their SNAP benefits. Starting October 1, Trump's law shifted roughly \$170 million in administrative costs onto New York's counties, and the state faces an estimated \$1.2 billion a year in new benefit costs beginning in 2028. Robin Hood projects that the SNAP cuts alone will push roughly 70,000 additional New Yorkers into poverty every year.

DEFEND AMERICA ACTION

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Working New Yorkers 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 Office of Gov. Hochul and Marist Poll to Robin Hood's Poverty Tracker, Hunger Solutions NY, the Joint Economic Committee, and New York's independent newsrooms.

DefendAmericaAction.org

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