



ECONOMIC UPDATE

March 11, 2024

This Week in Focus

The JEC Dems are excited to bring you several important economic policy discussions this week. Tomorrow, the JEC is hosting a [hearing](#) on the fiscal situation of the United States at 2:30 pm (EST) in room 210 Cannon. Democratic staff can also register for our 11:00 am (EST) Wednesday briefing with the Congressional Hispanic Caucus, “[Modernizing Puerto Rico’s Energy Grid: Federal Funding Availability and Challenges for Distribution](#),” and for our 12:00 pm (EST) Thursday briefing, “[Exploring New Research on the Economic Benefits of Federal Funding for Child Care](#).”

We will also be analyzing inflation data for February tomorrow, where the consensus is for the Consumer Price Index (CPI) to increase by 0.4%—a slight uptick from January—and core inflation to rise by 0.3%—a slight downtick from January.

Relatedly, the JEC Dems released a report last week highlighting how big companies have used their market dominance to rake in profits by raising prices on families. These price [hikes](#) have played a large role in driving inflation and resulted in persistently higher prices for American families. Democrats and the Biden administration are pushing back on big companies and these practices by going after [corporate consolidation](#), pushing down the cost of [prescription drugs](#), cracking down on [junk fees](#), and [supporting unions](#). In contrast, Republicans are calling for more [tax cuts](#) for the wealthy and are trying to undo Democrats’ [efforts](#) to [protect consumers](#).

JEC Resources

- [Democrats are Taking on Corporate Greed and Fighting for American Families](#)
- [The Child Tax Credit Expansion in the Bipartisan Tax Bill Will Help Kids in Every State and Congressional District](#)
- [What is a Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism \(CBAM\) and What Are Some Legislative Proposals to Make One?](#)

Economic Indicators This Week

Below are a series of economic indicators that will be released later this week, along with the consensus estimates from a group of professional forecasters about what the data point will be once it is reported.

Monday, March 11th:

- **State Employment:** JEC Dems released a map and interactive tool with state-by-state employment data for January, found [here](#). Data from February will be released next Friday.

Tuesday, March 12th:

- **Consumer Price Index:** The consensus forecast is that overall CPI increased by **0.4%** while core inflation rose by **0.3%**.

Thursday, March 14th:

- **Jobless Claims:** The consensus forecast is for weekly jobless claims to rise to **219k** from last week’s **217k**.

Friday, March 15th:

- **Consumer Sentiment:** The consensus forecast for the University of Michigan's Consumer Sentiment survey predicts a rise to **77** from **76.9**.

What You Need to Know

- YIMBY-ism is starting to attract more [followers](#) on both the left and right to help **build more housing** and help **push down housing costs**.
- **President Biden's** State of the Union [Address](#) included pledges to cut down on **corporate junk fees** and to raise **taxes on the wealthy**.
- A new post-pandemic [status quo](#) leaves a sizeable part of **the workforce** with **fully remote or hybrid** work schedules.
- A boom in [smaller house construction](#) is **shrinking the size** of the median new home on the market.

What to Watch This Week

Tuesday, March 12th

- **Senate Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs Committee**, [Hearings to examine proposals to address housing affordability, availability, and other community needs](#), at 10:00 am (EST).
- **Senate Budget Committee**, [Hearings to examine the President's proposed budget request for fiscal year 2025](#) at 10:15 AM (EST).
- **Joint Economic Committee**, [Hearings to examine the fiscal situation of the United States](#) at 2:30 pm (EST).
- **Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee**, [Hearings to examine youth apprenticeships, focusing on building partnerships and strengthening career pathways](#), at 2:00 pm (EST).
- **Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee**, [Hearings to examine the findings and recommendations of the Wildland Fire Mitigation and Management Commission](#) at 10:00 am (EST).

Thursday, March 14th

- **Senate Finance Committee**, [Hearings to examine the President's proposed budget request for fiscal year 2025 for the Department of Health and Human Services](#), at 10:00 am (EST).
- **Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee**, [Hearings to examine workers benefitting from new technology and increased productivity](#), at 10:00 am (EST).

What to Read From the Think Tank World

- [The Council of Economic Advisers \(CEA\)](#) highlighted how junk fees cost consumers and undermine competition, estimating they cost the U.S. economy \$90 billion per year.
- [Liberty Street Economics at the New York Federal Reserve](#) found moderation in nominal wage growth may have stalled and that wage trends indicate a still-tight labor market.
- Ahead of Equal Pay Day on March 12, several groups released analysis on the national and state-level wage gaps for women overall and women of different races and ethnicities, including the [Economic Policy Institute](#), the [National Women's Law Center](#), and the [National Partnership for Women and Families](#).
- [The Washington Center for Equitable Growth](#) analyzed the state of the U.S. labor market four years after the start of the COVID-19 recession, highlighting the shrinking unemployment rate gaps between white and Black workers, higher labor force participation rate for U.S. workers ages 25 to 54, stronger real wage growth, increased worker power, and greater productivity.
- [The Hamilton Project at the Brookings Institution](#) dug into The Congressional Budget Office's new immigration estimates and how they help explain that faster pace of employment growth.

Latest Academic Articles Selected From NBER

The National Bureau of Economic Research, a private research organization, circulates a series of working papers in economics every Monday morning. These offer an early look at upcoming economic research before it goes through the peer-review process. Below are a few papers out this morning.

- [On the Feasibility, Costs, and Benefits of an Immediate Phasedown of Coal for U.S. Electricity Generation](#)
- [Losing Medicaid and Crime](#)
- [Air Pollution, Wildfire Smoke, and Worker Health](#)
- [Driving Under the Influence of Allergies: The Effect of Seasonal Pollen on Traffic Fatalities](#)