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Six Months In: Trump Economy Faces Setbacks Amid Key Weaknesses

August 3, 2025

— Categories: Economics



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President Donald Trump’s promises of an economic “golden age” are under pressure as fresh data points to growing challenges. With job growth slowing, inflation inching higher, and GDP expansion losing momentum, key economic indicators are signaling potential trouble ahead.

After more than six months back in office, Trump’s aggressive reshaping of trade, tax, and regulatory policy has had a visible impact. His sweeping tariffs and recent tax-spending

package have overhauled much of the nation's economic framework. However, the anticipated boom has yet to materialize.

The Labor Department's July jobs report, released Friday, showed disappointing figures. In response, Trump dismissed the head of the federal agency responsible for compiling the data, claiming the numbers were politically influenced. "Important numbers like this must be fair and accurate," he said on Truth Social, without offering evidence.

While Trump maintains that the economy is "booming," recent figures paint a more mixed picture. Inflation has risen slightly in recent months, and GDP growth has cooled when compared to last year's performance. Economists warn that the real effects of Trump's tariffs announced in early August may not fully hit the economy until 2026, a timeline that coincides with the next presidential election cycle.

Trump's tariffs target countries including Japan, South Korea, the Philippines, and several unnamed nations, while securing exemptions for key trading partners like the European Union. While designed to protect domestic industries, the measures are expected to raise consumer prices, though the extent remains uncertain.

Republican strategists have acknowledged the political risks. "The full inflationary impact of the tariffs won't be felt until 2026. Unfortunately for Republicans, that's also an election year," said Alex Conant of Firehouse Strategies.

White House spokesperson Kush Desai defended the administration's approach, citing a renewed focus on deregulation, tax cuts, and trade realignment. "President Trump is implementing the very same policy mix at an even bigger scale... the best is yet to come," Desai said.

Still, public confidence is waning. A July poll from the Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research found that only 38% of adults approve of Trump's handling of the economy, down from 50% near the end of his previous term.