

TIM SCOTT, SOUTH CAROLINA, CHAIRMAN
ELIZABETH WARREN, MASSACHUSETTS, RANKING MEMBER

MIKE CRAPO, IDAHO
MIKE ROUNDS, SOUTH DAKOTA
THOM TILLIS, NORTH CAROLINA
JOHN KENNEDY, LOUISIANA
BILL HAGERTY, TENNESSEE
CYNTHIA LUMMIS, WYOMING
KATIE BOYD BRITT, ALABAMA
PETE RICKETTS, NEBRASKA
JIM BANKS, INDIANA
KEVIN CRAMER, NORTH DAKOTA
BERNIE MORENO, OHIO
DAVID MCCORMICK, PENNSYLVANIA

JACK REED, RHODE ISLAND
MARK R. WARNER, VIRGINIA
CHRIS VAN HOLLEN, MARYLAND
CATHERINE CORTEZ MASTO, NEVADA
TINA SMITH, MINNESOTA
RAPHAEL G. WARNOCK, GEORGIA
ANDY KIM, NEW JERSEY
RUBEN GALLEGO, ARIZONA
LISA BLUNT ROCHESTER, DELAWARE
ANGELA D. ALSOBROOKS, MARYLAND

CATHERINE FUCHS, STAFF DIRECTOR
JON DONENBERG, DEMOCRATIC STAFF DIRECTOR

United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON BANKING, HOUSING, AND
URBAN AFFAIRS

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6075

October 16, 2025

Russell Vought
Director
Office of Management and Budget
725 17th St NW
Washington, DC 20503

Mark Calabria
Chief Statistician of the United States
Office of Management and Budget
725 17th St NW
Washington, DC 20503

Dear Director Vought and Chief Statistician Calabria:

I am writing to ask that you immediately act to release the September Employment Situation data and ensure that any data being delayed as a result of the ongoing government shutdown is eventually processed and made public. As families face higher prices, workers confront a weakening labor market, and businesses navigate increasing economic uncertainty, timely access to this data is critical – particularly for the Federal Reserve (Fed), which meets later this month to make interest rate decisions that affect every American.

According to multiple reports published on October 9, the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) was directed by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) to recall staff from furlough to prepare the September Consumer Price Index (CPI) report.¹ While the data for September's CPI report was collected before the shutdown, staff had not yet analyzed it to prepare the report.² This report is critical for calculating the 2026 Cost of Living Adjustment for millions of Social Security recipients.³ On October 10, BLS announced that September's CPI report would be published on October 24, a delay of nine days beyond its scheduled October 15 release.⁴

While I support OMB's decision to recall BLS staff to ensure September's CPI data will be released before month's end, I remain deeply concerned that the Administration lacks a comprehensive plan to ensure other critical economic indicators are released in a timely manner – including the September Employment Situation (i.e., jobs report), which I ask that you publish before the Fed meets at the end of this month, if not sooner.

¹ See, for example, Bloomberg, "BLS Recalls Staff to Ready September CPI Report by Month's End," Molly Smith, October 9, 2025, <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2025-10-09/bls-recalls-staff-to-ready-september-cpi-report-by-month-s-end>.

² The New York Times, "Inflation Report Will Be Released Despite Shutdown," Ben Casselman, October 9, 2025, <https://www.nytimes.com/2025/10/09/business/economy/inflation-report-release-shutdown.html>.

³ Axios, "The BLS is prepping a delayed inflation report," Emily Peck, October 9, 2025, <https://www.axios.com/2025/10/10/government-shutdown-inflation-report-cpi-cola>.

⁴ U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, "September 2025 CPI Release Rescheduled," Press Release, October 10, 2025, <https://www.bls.gov/bls/092025-cpi-reschedule-notice.htm>.

The September jobs report, unlike the CPI data, was ready for release. Former Trump-appointed BLS Commissioner Bill Beach stated it was “likely written in final draft” before the government shutdown.⁵ With BLS employees returning from furlough to work on the September CPI report, there is no operational reason the agency could not also release the September jobs report this month. Yet according to BLS’s announcement regarding the updated September CPI release date, “[n]o other releases will be rescheduled or produced until the resumption of regular government services.”⁶

BLS indicated that employees were being recalled to prepare the CPI report because “[t]his release allows the Social Security Administration to meet statutory deadlines necessary to ensure the accurate and timely payment of benefits.”⁷ But a statutory deadline also exists for the jobs report under a 1930 amendment to the 1913 law that created the Department of Labor: “[BLS] shall also collect, collate, report, and publish at least once each month full and complete statistics of the volume of and changes in employment.”⁸ A failure by BLS to release any employment data in October would be a violation of this statutory deadline.

A failure by BLS to release the September jobs report would also represent a risk to the economy. As I wrote on October 2 when I urged you to release the September jobs report as scheduled, the economy is at a critical inflection point.⁹ Since January, both inflation and unemployment have increased.¹⁰ Last week, following President Trump’s announcement of additional tariffs on China, the stock market experienced its worst day since April.¹¹ And consumer sentiment remains at record lows, as “consumers’ five-year outlooks for their

⁵ The Fiscal Lab on Capitol Hill, “Q&A on How the Government Shutdown Will Affect Reports from the Bureau of Labor Statistics,” William Beach, October 1, 2025, <https://fiscallab.org/financial-markets/qa-on-how-the-government-shutdown-will-affect-reports-from-the-bureau-of-labor-statistics>.

⁶ U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, “September 2025 CPI Release Rescheduled,” Press Release, October 10, 2025, <https://www.bls.gov/bls/092025-cpi-reschedule-notice.htm>.

⁷ *Id.*

⁸ Congressional Research Service, “Current Employment Survey Monthly Revisions,” August 14, 2025, https://www.congress.gov/crs_external_products/IF/HTML/IF13084.html; 29 U.S.C. § 2.

⁹ Letter from Senator Elizabeth Warren to Office of Management and Budget Director Vought and Acting Bureau of Labor Statistics Commissioner Wiatrowski, October 2, 2025, https://www.banking.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/warren_letter_to_vought_and_wiatrowski_on_september_jobs_data.pdf.

¹⁰ The AP, “Fed’s favored inflation gauge accelerates slightly in August,” Paul Wiseman, September 26, 2026, <https://apnews.com/article/federal-reserve-inflation-trump-tariffs-prices-consumer-0a10b8f245eb90115c84026d7061d2b0>; Reuters, “US unemployment rate near 4-year high as labor market hits stall speed,” Lucia Mutikani, September 5, 2025, <https://www.reuters.com/business/us-unemployment-rate-near-4-year-high-labor-market-hits-stall-speed-2025-09-05/>.

¹¹ The AP, “Wall Street tumbles to its worst day since April after Trump threatens more tariffs on China,” Stan Choe, October 10, 2025, <https://apnews.com/article/stocks-markets-rates-ai-f2c8bcc1f46043ab504cf4b0281e3401>.

household finances fell to the lowest in over a decade.”¹² Without federal economic data, the Fed is “flying blind” amid unprecedented economic uncertainty just as it prepares to set monetary policy at its next Federal Open Market Committee (FOMC) meeting later this month.¹³

Fed Chair Jay Powell has stated explicitly that the FOMC is currently “in a meeting-by-meeting situation” and heavily reliant on monthly data.¹⁴ While the September CPI report will provide some insight ahead of the October FOMC meeting, the economic picture is dangerously incomplete without the jobs data. As Federal Reserve Governor Christopher Waller emphasized last week, “[t]he labor market is weak, and that’s the punchline for policy. That’s what we need to know.”¹⁵ Without September jobs data that you could release now, FOMC members will be forced to make consequential monetary policy decisions based on incomplete information. Americans facing higher costs for essentials deserve better than a Fed operating with partial data when making decisions that directly impact their wallets.

In addition to jobs data, the Fed depends on monthly Personal Consumption Expenditure (PCE) data and quarterly Gross Domestic Product (GDP) data from the Department of Commerce’s Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA). PCE data is the Fed’s preferred measure of inflation, making it particularly crucial for monetary policy decisions. The next GDP and PCE releases are scheduled for October 30 and 31, respectively – after the FOMC meeting concludes on October 29.¹⁶

These reports face likely delays, as there are at most three BEA employees currently working during the government shutdown.¹⁷ It remains unclear whether any BEA employees will be recalled from furlough to work on these reports or whether the agency has developed

¹² NBC News, “Consumer outlook for household finances falls to lowest in over a decade: Survey,” Rob Wile, October 10, 2025, <https://www.nbcnews.com/business/consumer/consumer-sentiment-michigan-october-rcna236879>.

¹³ ABC News, “Government shutdown halts release of economic data. The Fed may be ‘flying blind’ on interest rates, experts say,” Max Zahn, October 1, 2025, <https://abcnews.go.com/Business/government-shutdown-halts-release-economic-data-fed-flying/story?id=12611075>.

¹⁴ Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, “Transcript of Chair Powell’s Press Conference,” September 17, 2025, <https://www.federalreserve.gov/mediacenter/files/FOMCpresconf20250917.pdf>.

¹⁵ Bloomberg, “Waller Says Job Market Biggest Concern, Payrolls Likely Negative,” Amara Omeokwe, October 10, 2025, <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2025-10-10/waller-says-fed-chair-interview-went-well-labor-market-is-weak>.

¹⁶ Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, Federal Open Market Committee, Meeting Meeting calendars, statements, and minutes (2020-2027), <https://www.federalreserve.gov/monetarypolicy/fomccalendars.htm>; U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis, Release Schedule, <https://www.bea.gov/news/schedule>.

¹⁷ U.S. Department of Commerce, “Plan for the Continuation of Limited Activities During a Lapse in Appropriations,” September 29, 2025, <https://www.commerce.gov/sites/default/files/2025-09/DOC-Lapse-Plan-2025.pdf>.

contingency plans to protect data integrity and ensure eventual processing and release. This data is critical for our economy – informing not only Federal Reserve decisions but also private sector planning, state and local governments, and ultimately every American.

OMB is responsible for approving the production schedule and any modifications for Principal Federal Economic Indicators (PFEIs), including CPI, PCE, and employment data.¹⁸ In order to inform my legislative responsibilities as Ranking Member of the Senate Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs Committee, and to understand how OMB will ensure the timely release of economic data despite the shutdown, I request detailed answers to the following questions by no later than October 31, 2025:

1. According to the Department of Labor’s updated contingency plan, “[a]pproximately 123 [BLS employees] may be intermittently brought[t] back from furlough to conduct certain excepted work related to the production and release of the September Consumer Price Index.”¹⁹
 - a. What are their specific roles and responsibilities?
 - b. What was the specific legal rationale for recalling these workers?
2. Do any of the 123 BLS employees being recalled from furlough have the authority, access to necessary systems, and resources to publish the September jobs report?
 - a. If yes, will you authorize BLS to release the September jobs report this month?
 - b. Will you commit to releasing the September jobs report before the October FOMC meeting?
 - c. If you will not commit to releasing this report, please provide a detailed explanation for withholding data that is already prepared.
3. Will you commit to releasing an updated production schedule for all PFEIs impacted by the government shutdown, including estimated release dates?
4. Have you considered directing BEA to recall any employees from furlough to work on the October PCE and GDP reports?

¹⁸ Office of Management and Budget, Federal Register Notice, “Statistical Policy Directive No. 3: Compilation, Release, and Evaluation of Principal Federal Economic Indicators-Proposal To Change Timing of Public Comments by Employees of the Executive Branch,” August 25, 2023, <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2023/08/25/2023-18313/statistical-policy-directive-no-3-compilation-release-and-evaluation-of-principal-federal-economic>.

¹⁹ U.S. Department of Labor, “Plan for the Continuation of Limited Activities During a Lapse in Appropriations,” October 10, 2025, p. 8, <https://www.dol.gov/sites/dolgov/files/general/plans/dol-contingency-plan.pdf>.

5. What steps are being taken to ensure data integrity has not been compromised during the shutdown?

The American people, financial markets, policymakers, and the Federal Reserve all depend on transparent, timely access to accurate economic data, and without such data, the entire economy is at risk. The Trump Administration must act accordingly and ensure that all of this data is released in a timely fashion.

Sincerely,



Elizabeth Warren
Ranking Member
Committee on Banking,
Housing, and Urban Affairs